



The Global Summit Roundup

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#CGFSummit



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IN NUMBERS



1,100
attendees



324
participating
companies



42
countries



92
speakers



44
sessions

The **2024 CGF Global Summit** in Chicago united over 1,100 executives to collaboratively address industry issues and promote societal and environmental well-being.

Centred around the theme of **'Empowering Business for a Better Tomorrow'**, the 2024 CGF Global Summit challenged delegates to face the 'elephants in the room,' referring to issues that may feel sensitive but can be collectively addressed by the industry. Over 1,100 C-suite executives from more than 42 countries and 324 companies attended the event in Chicago, reaffirming The CGF's role as a unifying platform for the CPG industry.

The diverse speaker list reflected the collaborative, cross-sector spirit of The CGF and its commitment to leadership. In addition to over two dozen CEOs and many other industry insiders, speakers included youth

activists, environmentalists and **former US First Lady Michelle Obama**. All encouraged the audience to recognise the power in their positions and use it to promote the well-being of people and the planet.

We look forward to seeing the results of a year of progress at the 2025 Global Summit in Amsterdam. Until then, we hope this round-up will serve as a reminder of the spirit of the 2024 Global Summit and an introduction to those interested in joining us next year.

Warm regards,
The CGF Team



A Warm Welcome to the Global Summit 2024

- **Wai-Chan Chan**, Managing Director, The Consumer Goods Forum
- **Frans Muller**, President & CEO, Ahold Delhaize
- **Dirk Van de Put**, Chairman & CEO, Mondelēz International

In the opening moments of the Global Summit, CGF Board Co-Chairs Frans Muller and Dirk Van de Put asked the more than 1,000 industry leaders in attendance to draw a flying elephant. The elephants, Dirk Van de Put explained, represented 'something that's in your head but that you're hesitant to say'. He encouraged the delegates to consider the Summit and The Consumer Goods Forum more broadly as safe spaces to discuss these topics and help each other solve them. The cooperative message was a fitting way to raise the curtain on the Global Summit.

Key Takeaways

- > The CGF creates a safe space for open sharing and collaboration.
- > CGF members have developed a wealth of content around the nine Coalitions of Action for members to access on The CGF website.
- > The CGF is placing increasing emphasis on decarbonisation, such as by becoming an official Accelerator of the UN's Race to Zero campaign and starting the new Towards Net Zero Coalition of Action.
- > Robust CEO participation ensures that The CGF's initiatives and commitments catalyse action throughout the industry.





The Evolving Consumer: Shifting Values & Behaviours

- **Sajal Kohli**, Senior Partner, McKinsey
- **Kathryn McLay**, President & CEO, Walmart International
- **Malina Ngai**, Group CEO, AS Watson Group
- **James Quincey**, Chairman & CEO, The Coca-Cola Company
- **Hein Schumacher**, CEO, Unilever

Sajal Kohli, Senior Partner at McKinsey, prefaced the Summit's first-panel discussion with an overview of recent changes in the consumer goods sector in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Following his presentation, CEOs shared their observations of consumer demands and how they are evolving to meet them and discussed ways to balance the competing priorities of sustainability and value.

Key Takeaways

- > Due to social media platforms, retail trends are more global than ever before. Consumers in emerging markets seek the same trending products as those in developed markets despite differences in purchasing power.
- > Due to inflation and the rise in the cost of living, consumers are seeking more affordable options, but many are still willing to splurge, especially for holidays and other special occasions.
- > Gen Z is quickly becoming the dominant consumer demographic in all markets, seeking trend-based and personalised products.
- > The elderly population is also growing in emerging and developed markets, leading to a higher demand for wellness products that fit diverse health needs.
- > Sustainability and value may appear to be competing, but companies can meet them simultaneously by reducing food waste and by developing products that help consumers save water and electricity.

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The internet, technology and social media have become a global, powerful platform for (young people) to take reference. ... It's completely broken down borders.

Malina Ngai, Group CEO, AS Watson Group

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What we need to do as companies is to innovate with our increased knowledge of sustainability. Products have to be functionally superior but, at the same time, address sustainability priorities. That's where you can have a big impact as a company.

Hein Schumacher, CEO, Unilever



The Journey to Net Zero

- **Cécile Beliot-Zind**, CEO, Bel Group
- **Anastasia Kouvela**, Managing Director and Partner, Boston Consulting Group (BCG)
- **Nina Jönsson**, CEO, ICA
- **Ramon Laguarta**, Chairman of the Board of Directors and CEO, PepsiCo
- **Scott Price**, Group Chief Executive, DFI Retail Group
- **Antoine de Saint-Affrique**, CEO, Danone

This CEO panel introduced the new Towards Net Zero Coalition, a Coalition of Action launched last year to support The CGF's work as an official Accelerator of the UN Race to Zero. The Coalition's CGF Board-level leaders, ICA CEO Nina Jönsson, DFI Group Chief Executive Scott Price and Danone CEO Antoine de Saint-Affrique, were on the panel, as were the CEOs of several other companies involved in the initiative. Moderated by Anastasia Kouvela of Boston Consulting Group, which is supporting the Coalition leadership team in building and delivering their plans, the discussion highlighted several key methods of decarbonisation and the importance of collaboration.

Key Takeaways

- > Climate change is a problem that no one can solve alone, so companies must collaborate across sectors and with the public sector to drive decarbonisation.
- > In the food sector, climate-positive actions such as regenerative agriculture and reducing food waste can reduce both costs and carbon emissions.
- > There is a clear business proposition to climate action, partly because companies cannot operate on a planet without viable agriculture.
- > Truly achieving net zero depends on standardised and transparent carbon accounting, so the private and public sectors must agree on measuring carbon emissions and offsets.
- > By establishing themselves as sustainability leaders, companies can attract and retain talent and build pride, loyalty and connection among suppliers.

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Failure is not an option. If we don't change the food system fast enough, we know we do not have the resources to feed the 10 billion people we will have in the future.

Cécile Beliot-Zind, CEO, Bel Group

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I want to challenge this perception that sustainability is more expensive. Sustainability could be an opportunity to transform our companies and make them more sustainable and at the same time more profitable.

Nina Jönsson, CEO, ICA

Revolutionising Beauty with Technology

Nicolas Hieronimus, CEO, L'Oréal

L'Oréal is the world's largest cosmetics company, with three dozen brands and over 100 years of history to its name. CEO Nicolas Hieronimus took the plenary stage to share some lessons from that century of growth, emphasising L'Oréal's sustainability journey, its attention to diverse definitions of beauty and its adoption of emerging technologies, including generative AI. He said that Technology can help companies personalise their products to a wider range of customers. He also introduced the Colorsonic, an at-home hair colouring tool released the week before the Summit, designed with this approach in mind.

Key Takeaways

- > Far from being frivolous, beauty has always been a central facet of human culture, and the beauty industry remains resilient even in times of economic uncertainty.
- > By providing Gen AI tools to their employees in marketing and other departments, companies can jumpstart creativity without losing the human touch.
- > Consumer goods companies should consider all possible use cases for their products, including use by consumers of different abilities, and develop solutions for these consumers when possible.

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In addition to driving personalisation and unparalleled levels of performance and creativity, I believe that tech and innovation can also play an important role in creating beauty that is ever more responsible and inclusive.

Nicolas Hieronimus,
CEO, L'Oréal





From Pledges to Action: Scaling Up Solutions for Reducing Plastic Waste

- **Isabelle Kumar**, Presenter & Moderator
- **Dame Ellen MacArthur**, Founder & Chair of Trustees, The Ellen MacArthur Foundation
- **Alexis Perakis-Valat**, President Consumer Products Division, L'Oréal
- **Galen Weston**, Chairman, Loblaw Companies Limited

The UN's first legally binding agreement on plastic pollution is currently in negotiations among 175 countries, with a goal to finalise the treaty by the end of 2024. To support this landmark treaty, the Plastic Waste Coalition of Action developed nine Golden Design Rules for plastic packaging aimed at increasing recyclability and efficiency. Dame Ellen MacArthur, a former champion yachtswoman who experienced ocean plastic pollution first-hand, joined industry leaders from the retail and manufacturing sectors to discuss these rules, the treaty and the importance of the circular economy.



Key Takeaways

- > Businesses must make their voices heard in negotiations for the global plastics treaty to ensure the final agreement works for everyone involved.
- > Adopting the Plastic Waste CoA's Golden Design Rules is a simple way to begin or continue your circularity journey and prepare for future legislation.
- > Circularity is good business sense. By improving product recyclability, companies create new forms of value that are restorative and regenerative.
- > In addition to reducing the amount of plastic in packaging and improving its recyclability, companies can prevent plastic waste by encouraging consumers to return their bottles for refill.
- > Investing in circularity involves up-front costs, but it can ultimately reduce overhead and increase sales.



This global plastics treaty is a massive opportunity. ... If it goes right, we will have harmonised regulation, giving a better business platform. If it goes wrong, we can face decades of fragmented regulation, which will be expensive and complicated for business.

Dame Ellen MacArthur, Founder & Chair of Trustees, The Ellen MacArthur Foundation



In the world of ESG and trying to further the sustainability agenda in our industry, there are very difficult challenges in complex system redesigns. The Golden Design Rules are the simplest thing a manufacturer or a retailer can do to deliver success in the circular economy journey.

Galen Weston, Chairman, Loblaw Companies Limited



Inspiring Healthier Ways of Life

- **Sharon Bligh**, Health & Sustainability Director, The Consumer Goods Forum
- **Brian McNamara**, CEO, Haleon
- **Frans Muller**, President & CEO, Ahold Delhaize
- **Ayla Ziz**, Chief Customer Officer, SVP Commercial Europe, Danone

The Collaboration for Healthier Lives Coalition of Action has been empowering healthy consumers for more than a decade. In this session moderated by Sharon Bligh, two of the CHL's three Board Co-Sponsors, Brian McNamara and Frans Muller, joined Coalition Co-Chair Ayla Ziz to discuss recent achievements and its goals for the future. They called special attention to the CHL's Preventative Health Playbook, a resource released in March that enables businesses to launch or accelerate preventive health initiatives. While commending each other on their respective companies' progress, the speakers acknowledged that the high rates of diet-related chronic disease worldwide show that there is still much work to be done.



Key Takeaways

- > Diet-related chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity are on the rise in every region, and 85% of healthcare spending in the US is related to their management. The consumer goods industry can play a role in combating these diseases.
- > The COVID-19 pandemic prompted healthy trends that persist today, including a higher interest in preventative healthcare and in cooking nutritious meals at home.
- > According to a McKinsey study, 80% of consumers want to manage their health more proactively, but only 20% are doing so.
- > Companies can help reduce the strain on the overtaxed healthcare system by providing effective at-home care options for consumers with minor issues.
- > In addition to developing healthier options, companies should invest in promoting those products so that consumers are more likely to choose them over less healthy alternatives.



There's so much opportunity for us to help enable and empower consumers to be more proactive in managing their health.

Brian McNamara, CEO, Haleon



52% of shoppers do not believe the claims you're putting on the label. ... So we owe our consumers transparency on the continents of what they are eating.

Ayla Ziz, Chief Customer Officer, SVP Commercial Europe, Danone

DIVE-INS



Leading through Complexity: An Intimate Conversation

- **Vipul Chawla**, Group CEO, FairPrice Group
- **Wendy Davidson**, President & CEO, Board Director, The Hain Celestial Group
- **Thibaut Mongon**, Chief Executive Officer, Kenvue
- **Nathalie Roos**, Chief Executive Officer, LIPTON Teas and Infusions
- **Sarah Van Dyck**, Global Consumer Practice Co-Leader, Egon Zehnder

As the four CEO speakers in this panel asserted, leading a multinational consumer goods company through back-to-back crises is no rudimentary task. Moderated by Sarah Van Dyck of the consulting and leadership advisory firm Egon Zehnder, the CEOs' open and honest conversation touched on sustainability, the pinch of inflation, and the importance of remaining humble in their roles. Delegates came away with actionable advice for their own leadership journeys.



Key Takeaways

- > Leaders should strive to create an environment where their colleagues, including young and entry-level employees, feel empowered to speak up if they have ideas for changes or improvements.
- > Rather than following a rigid script for crises, companies should practise agility and have a system that allows them to make fast, effective decisions in the face of change.
- > Transparency is key to building trust within a company and with consumers, especially regarding sustainability commitments.
- > No decision will make everyone happy. Instead, leaders should define their own 'true north' and act according to their conscience.
- > Setting boundaries is an important leadership skill and necessary to maintain relationships, energy and work-life balance.



Navigating through complexity is something we just have to get used to. It's a new muscle we're all building together, and just being agile is something that's helpful.

Vipul Chawla, Group CEO, FairPrice Group



Scaling AI to Build the Businesses of Tomorrow

- **Sonia Fife**, Global Leader, Consumer Packaged Goods - Strategic Industries, Google Cloud
- **Marc-André Kamel**, Head of Global Retail Practice, Bain & Company
- **Roy Singh**, Head of Global Advanced Analytics Practice, Bain & Company
- **Richard Webster**, Head of Global Consumer Products Practice, Bain & Company

Astounded murmurs broke out in this session during a video demonstration of the more-than-human abilities of Project Astra, an AI-powered virtual assistant under development by Google. This was far from the only revelation that arose in the conversation, which hinged on the potential for generative AI to revolutionise the nature of work in the consumer goods industry and beyond. The global leaders on the panel gave an overview of recent developments in the field and extrapolated them to possible near futures.



Key Takeaways

- > Artificial intelligence and machine learning have existed for decades, but generative AI is a relatively new innovation that is supercharging the pace of technology development.
- > In the next few years, AI will be able to inform negotiations and planning decisions using large-scale modelling, ensuring win-win-win decisions that mutually benefit manufacturers, retailers and consumers.
- > Companies should use their deep understanding of the industry and consumers to determine the uses of AI technology rather than rushing to adopt technology just to be part of a trend.
- > Employees will use Gen AI tools whether or not their employers direct them. To use the technology best and prevent data leaks, companies can provide their colleagues with tailor-made AI tools to jumpstart their productivity.
- > Conversational AI, in particular, has wide consumer-facing applications in the consumer goods industry, such as tools to generate recipes or give beauty advice.



GenAI is not just a tech transformation. Scaling AI is about ultimately building sustainable, competitive advantage.

Marc-André Kamel, Head of Global Retail Practice, Bain & Company

A Business Conversation with Tony Xu, CEO of DoorDash

- **Wai-Chan Chan**, Managing Director, The Consumer Goods Forum
- **Tony Xu**, CEO, DoorDash

DoorDash CEO Tony Xu launched his company with three co-founders in 2013 when they were still Stanford University students assisting mostly Palo Alto restaurants with local deliveries. Weeks after COVID-19 lockdowns hit the US, it became the fastest-growing food delivery service, and today, it is the largest in the US market, with a more than 50% market share and a presence in 29 other countries. Tony Xu joined Wai-Chan Chan of The CGF to recount his mercurial rise and offer insights from his position as a tech-powered industry disruptor.

Key Takeaways

- > Branching a business to a new country is effectively starting a new business. Leaders must develop deep local knowledge and connections before they can expect to see success.
- > To remain relevant and resilient in times of economic uncertainty, brands should reiterate their narratives and hone in on their best-loved products.
- > In the era of generative AI, companies' real strength is in the quality of their data and their knowledge of the consumer, not the amount of money they invest in computing power.
- > Technology is only valuable to the consumer if it solves a real problem, such as finding a product with lower friction.
- > Culture is key to building a successful business, especially a startup. Before building a team, leaders should determine the culture they want and hire for those qualities.



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There is no single channel in which consumers buy things anymore. ... I think the big challenge for all of us and all of us in the room in terms of how we partner is to figure out how we meet that consumer where they are.

Tony Xu, CEO, DoorDash



What is True Collaboration?

Voices from the Next Generation

- 👤 **Molly Lewis**, Food Activist, Bite Back 2030
- 👤 **Dev Sharma**, Youth MP and Food Activist, Bite Back 2030

In the US and the UK, one in three children are likely to have their lives cut short as a result of food-related health conditions. This is just one of the startling statistics presented in this session by two teenage activists from Bite Back 2030, a youth-led charity that demands higher standards for food companies that market to children. Molly and Dev called upon the leaders in the audience to use their positions to provide healthy, accessible options and join the fight against diet-related disease.

Key Takeaways

- > Children and youth are more susceptible to advertising than adults, and responsible marketers should consider that when designing food and drink campaigns.
- > With billions of children worldwide in danger of diet-related disease, the food industry has the power to generate a positive shift in global health outcomes.
- > In the UK, 88% of teenagers want to eat well, but only 6% do. That gap represents a major opportunity for the food industry to meet needs and make a difference.
- > Fast food outlets are often the only locations in a city where teenagers can afford to feel welcome. Recognising this, companies can ensure that young customers find healthy options in their branches, outlets, and free Wi-Fi.
- > Youth-led organisations like Bite Back 2030 offer companies a rare opportunity to hear from and collaborate directly with young consumers.



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You guys are powerful. You're brilliant. You're super talented. Just imagine the world what it would look like if you use all those skills to improve children's health.'

Dev Sharma, Youth MP and Food Activist, Bite Back 2030

“

I dream of a world where products don't have misleading health claims, making it so hard for me to eat healthily. I want you guys to imagine that world too because you guys can bring that world to life.'

Molly Lewis, Food Activist, Bite Back 2030





Sustainable Growth:

Unveiling Shareholders' True Expectations

- **Isabelle Kumar**, Presenter & Moderator
- **Gonzalve Bich**, Chief Executive Officer, BiC
- **Ben Frost**, Global Co-head of Consumer Retail Group, Goldman Sachs
- **Jessica Moulton**, Senior Partner, Consumer Goods Global Knowledge Lead, McKinsey & Company
- **Richard Taylor**, Managing Director, Consumer and Consumer Health, Jefferies

Jessica Moulton of McKinsey & Company began this session with a detailed overview of the consumer goods industry's performance in the 21st century — a story, she said, of relative decline in ROIC compared to earlier decades. In response, companies are diversifying their revenue sources and investing in advanced analytics. Following her overview, three leaders representing the manufacturing, retail and investment sectors formed a panel to discuss these challenges and the way forward.

Key Takeaways

- > The mega-trends behind slowing financial performance in the consumer goods industry include the macroeconomic slowdown, consumer fragmentation, maturity in developed markets, and price volatility due to climate change and other factors.
- > Leading companies aim to have about a third of their revenue from new businesses, such as financial services and retail media networks, within a decade.
- > Companies should focus on category expansion and premiumisation, the latter of which is predicted to be the only source of growth in developed markets.
- > Productivity has long been an insurance policy against growth challenges; it will continue to be despite the extensive work already done on cost reduction.
- > Consumers are feeling the pinch of inflation and the rise in the cost of living, but they remain open to small splurges and special-occasion spending.

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Probably the highest impact emotionally and psychologically on people is “I just can't afford what I did pre-pandemic, two years ago, or even last year. ... I'm squeezed, but I still splurge.”

Gonzalve Bich, Chief Executive Officer, BiC

DIVE-INS



Ensuring Accountability: **Navigating Human Rights Due Diligence in Today's Business Landscape**

- **Didier Bergeret**, Sustainability Director, The Consumer Goods Forum
- **Nathalie Roos**, Chief Executive Officer, LIPTON Teas and Infusions
- **John Ross**, President & CEO, IGA, Inc.

In the Global Summit programme, only two speakers were listed for this Dive-In: moderator Didier Bergeret of The CGF and Nathalie Roos, the first sponsor of the Human Rights Coalition of Action in three years. Halfway through the session, a surprise guest joined the stage: IGA CEO John Ross, who had recently announced that he would join Nathalie Roos as the Coalition's retail co-sponsor. Together, they discussed the universal importance of human rights, why it remains an uncomfortable topic, and how The CGF can help companies tackle the issue head-on.



Key Takeaways

- > Human Rights Due Diligence and transparency are especially important to Gen Z consumers, who are becoming the dominant buying force worldwide.
- > Consumer goods companies have a responsibility to respect the rights of workers throughout their value chains, not only their own employees.
- > Investing in workers' well-being can result in higher-quality products, lower turnover and better consumer value, ultimately improving the bottom line.
- > By applying their expertise in logistics and training deeper into the supply chain, companies can assist original producers and monitor working conditions more closely.
- > In an era of social media-powered transparency, companies can't afford not to apply human rights due diligence throughout their value chains.



Sustainable success requires mutual benefits. In a world plagued by growing inequality, everyone must receive a fair share of the value created for it to last.

Nathalie Roos, Chief Executive Officer, LIPTON Teas and Infusions



If I don't know what my supply chain is if I haven't looked because I'm afraid of what I'm going to find, that is abdication of leadership.

John Ross, President & CEO, IGA, Inc



A Business Conversation with Carlos Abrams-Rivera, CEO of The Kraft Heinz Company

- **Isabelle Kumar**, Presenter & Moderator
- **Carlos Abrams-Rivera**, CEO, The Kraft Heinz Company

Moderator Isabelle Kumar's conversation with Carlos Abrams-Rivera, the CEO of one of the world's largest food and beverage companies, began with an exchange of baked beans. One of Isabelle's favourite foods and the company's most iconic products, baked beans exemplify what Carlos called his 'new dream for the company': food that is good for the soul, the body, the planet, and in terms of value. He went on to detail how the legacy company is evolving for the digital age and how it serves diverse tastes in the global market.



Key Takeaways

- > Consumer goods companies can take lessons from other industries, such as the pharmaceutical, banking and airline industries, to inform their digital transformations and organisational changes.
- > Partnerships with other companies — like The Kraft Heinz Company's collaboration with Taco Bell on a frozen quesadilla that crisps in the microwave — can drive growth and draw consumers' attention to new innovations.
- > Advanced analytics and AI are key investment areas for any company that wants to remain relevant today.
- > Leaders should aim for psychological safety within their organisations, which involves allowing themselves to be open and vulnerable with their colleagues and giving them space to do the same.
- > Emerging markets offer opportunities to CPG companies that take the time to understand local tastes and needs.



Every CPG company has to be fueled by innovation because the consumer is changing constantly.

Carlos Abrams-Rivera, CEO,
The Kraft Heinz Company

DIVE-INS



Fixing Our Food Systems: A Call to Action

- **Sharon Bligh**, Health & Sustainability Director, The Consumer Goods Forum
- **Sheila Bonini**, Senior Vice President, Private Sector Engagement, WWF USA
- **Anke Ehlers**, Managing Director of International Sustainability, ALDI SOUTH Group
- **Janelle Meyers**, Chief Sustainability Officer, Kellanova; Co-Chair of the Food Waste Coalition Steering Committee

Today's food system is grappling with a multitude of challenges ranging from climate change-induced disruptions to socioeconomic inequalities. A critical aspect often overlooked is the significant impact of food loss and waste on our economy, food security, and the environment. If food waste were a country, it would rank third in terms of carbon footprint after the US and China. At the same time, more than 2 billion people globally are food insecure — making the amount of food we waste even more egregious. The CGF is working to solve this issue through the combined expertise of food manufacturers and retailers, who together have an immense opportunity to combat both hunger and global warming. In this session, sustainability leaders from The Kroger Co., ALDI Sud, Kellanova and WWF discussed how to create a more resilient, sustainable, and equitable food system while making significant strides towards mitigating climate change and achieving a net-zero future. The CGF's new report (developed in partnership with AlixPartners) was also launched and demonstrated the full business case for FLW, estimating its true cost to be undervalued by as much as between 25-50%.

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You can't put the burden on the consumer. You have to make it easy for the consumer not to waste, and I think that's where all of us can play a role.

Sheila Bonini, Senior Vice President, Private Sector Engagement, WWF USA



Key Takeaways

- > Every dollar invested in reducing food loss and waste yields a 14-fold return.
- > Driving efforts to standardize on-farm food loss measurement and engaging farmers is a key lever to drive action to reduce food waste in supply chains
- > Companies can accelerate FLW work internally by setting goals and adopting pledges to meet them by a certain date. For example, The Kroger Co.'s Zero Hunger | Zero Waste action plan, the centre of the company's ESG strategy, includes the pledge to achieve zero operational waste (90%+) and 95%+ food waste diversion by 2025.
- > Internal collaboration is key to meeting FLW goals. For example, ALDI Sud in Austria leveraged expertise across company departments to create Rettenswert, a brand that repurposes imperfect produce into value-added products like chutney, jams and spreads.
- > To begin their FLW reduction journeys, companies can use The CGF's FLW Capability Assessment, which allows retailers and manufacturers to measure their progress on food waste reduction through a review of tangible practices across five pillars.
- > Donation is one lever to combat food insecurity while reducing waste. Companies can work directly with charities to help navigate people's needs and the complex patchwork of regulations regarding food donation.
- > Retailers can support consumers as a significant proportion of food is wasted once it has left the store, up to 70% of the total for some regions.



What's Real vs. Ideal? And How Data Is at the Heart of Value Realisation

- **Rudy Hagedorn**, Director, E2E Value Chain & Standards, The Consumer Goods Forum
- **Justin Honaman**, Head, Worldwide Retail & Consumer Goods Go-To-Market (GTM), Amazon
- **Todd James**, Chief Data & Technology Officer, 84.51° (Kroger)

Launched in 2020, the Product Data Coalition of Action aims to address weaknesses faced in today's data exchange processes in the end-to-end value chain. This session highlighted that artificial intelligence and machine learning are now key parts of that process. The CGF's Director of E2E Value Chain & Standards, Rudy Hagedorn, joined a panel with two experts on AI in the retail sector for a conversation that brought clarity to this often-arcane topic. They discussed the role of data in AI, concrete applications for Gen AI, and the next steps for companies that are ready to continue on their AI journeys.



Key Takeaways

- > The key to effective generative AI is a strong data strategy supported by modern data platforms and technology, which are more flexible and scalable than their predecessors.
- > Marketing is currently an ideal department to leverage generative AI. The tool helps jumpstart human creativity and tailor content to specific audiences, and it is also a relatively safe sandbox.
- > Text large language models can analyse large amounts of content, such as thousands of product reviews or in-depth sales spreadsheets, almost instantaneously.
- > While AI tools can speed up workflows, they do not necessarily replace jobs because it is still necessary for humans to ask questions and interpret results.
- > Do not assume that AI is the purview of the IT department. Everyone in an organisation, especially leaders, should educate themselves on the technology and how it could influence their own work.



Challenge your leadership to make AI a priority if it's not already. Not only is it not going away, but it's moving so quickly that if you're not keeping up with it, I don't want to say you could be left behind, but you'll be playing catch up.

Justin Honaman, Head, Worldwide Retail & Consumer Goods Go-To-Market (GTM), Amazon



Forest Positive: Shaping Sustainable Futures through Corporate Commitment

- **Isabelle Kumar**, Presenter & Moderator
- **Carine Kraus**, Chief Impact Officer and member of the Executive Committee, Carrefour
- **Lauren Richardson**, Chief Procurement Officer, Colgate-Palmolive

The Forest Positive Coalition of Action, sponsored at the Board level by CEO Noel Wallace of Colgate-Palmolive and CEO Alexandre Bompard of Carrefour, works to combat deforestation through multi-stakeholder, integrated land use initiatives. In this session, two executives from the Coalition's co-sponsor companies discussed the challenges and opportunities in fighting deforestation in complex supply chains. They also noted the impending implementation of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and encouraged companies to get ahead of the curve on forest-positive action.



Key Takeaways

- > Sustainability initiatives like Forest Positive require buy-in from the CEO and at every organisational level. Carrefour ties top managers' remuneration to forest targets to ensure everyone is invested in the initiative.
- > Though forest-positive action may not appear to be a revenue source, it drives loyalty from environmentally conscious consumers and may, therefore, prevent revenue loss.
- > Third-party certification is a major step in a forest-positive journey, but companies should also conduct their own due diligence on their supply chains, especially for key commodities like beef, soy, pulp, palm, and cacao.
- > Holistic risk management is as important to a forest-positive strategy as any other business objective.



It's not always easy to fight deforestation inside a company; it's something relatively new. So you need to have the support, of course, of the CEO. Without that, you cannot do anything.

Carine Kraus, Chief Impact Officer and member of the Executive Committee, Carrefour



How to Build Circular Supply Chains That Improve Profit and Planet in the CPG and Retail Industries

Planned obsolescence — the century-old technique of designing products to require replacement after a set period — has led to a world with a major waste problem, posing Deborah Dull of Genpact at the top of this session. She and her fellow speakers argued that companies need to adopt a new school of thought that prioritises circularity from the drawing board all the way to a product's end of life. They also emphasised the importance of collaborating between the public and private sectors and leveraging AI-powered data analytics to improve end-to-end visibility.



Data-Driven Synergy: Elevating Retail & CPG Partnerships through AI

Data has long been an important asset in the consumer goods industry, and AI is supercharging how retailers and manufacturers can leverage the asset together. In this panel, Jérôme Hamrit of VusionGroup, a leading provider of digital solutions for retailers, teamed up with experts from the retail, manufacturing and advertising sectors to discuss some collaborative applications for data and AI. One key topic was retail media networks — advertising on retailer-owned assets and/or leveraging first-party shopper data — now driving up to 70% of margins for some retailers. The speakers also discussed the role of AI in commercial decisions and operational excellence.



What does Triple-Win RGM™ (Revenue Growth Management) Look Like for Consumer Goods?

'Shrinkflation' — downsizing products to avoid raising prices — has been a frequent topic in recent news, with shoppers complaining about smaller chocolate bars, lighter cereal boxes and fewer crisps in the bags. As leaders from PricingOne, a consulting and analytics firm specialising in price and pack architecture, explained in this session, these complaints arise when companies fail to take advantage of the full suite of pricing solutions. To drive incremental growth in the face of inflation, companies must base their pricing and packaging decisions on a deep understanding of what the consumer truly wants.



Transform the Value Chain: How Brands Are Creating Positive Impact with Gen AI

As Keith Mercier reminded the audience at the beginning of his talk, 'generative AI is going to change every individual, every team, every industry.' Statements of this type have become commonplace, but the focus of his talk was less common: ways to use Gen AI to spread joy. For example, Microsoft partnered with Rijksmuseum to generate narrative descriptions for over 1 million pieces of art, making the museum more accessible for blind and low-vision people. With the Dutch retailer Albert Heijn, Microsoft helped create the programme Scan & Kook, which generates recipe ideas for ingredients users see in the store or at home. These examples and others demonstrate that Gen AI can make the world a more accessible, happier and better place.



Beyond Plastic: Impact through Collaboration

With plastic pollution everywhere, from deep-sea trenches to Antarctic snowbanks, it's clear that achieving a circular economy is one of the great challenges of our day. A panel of experts, several of whom were involved in the Coalition of Action on Plastic Waste, discussed concrete ways to address this challenge in this session. Their proposed solutions, already being used in various locations, included alternative packaging materials such as paper foam and mycelium, centralised distribution systems for reusable containers, and incentives for using recycled plastic. They agreed that a robust global plastics treaty is an indispensable foundation for these solutions.



Executive Fireside Chat: Navigating McDonald's Digital Transformation Journey

McDonald's has grown from a small-town burger shop to one of the world's best-known restaurant brands, with over 41,000 locations that serve 1% of the global population daily. In the past few decades, that growth has been underpinned by a robust digital strategy that emphasises loyalty, efficiency and value. Joshua Sloser, who describes himself as McDonald's longtime 'digital guy', outlined the key points in that strategy, including the development of the McDonald's app (the most downloaded food app in the world) and the value of the data involved in digital interactions.



Roland
Berger



Consumer Delight with AI: Identifying Concrete Actions and How to Make It Work

The rapid evolution of AI is transforming consumer goods companies, and it's crucial to understand consumer perception during this transformation. To help build that understanding, Robert Baker started this session with an overview of recent surveys on AI among consumers and business leaders, showing that most people are interested in AI but demand transparency on how brands use it. After his introduction, Sióbhán Gehin moderated a panel discussion between leaders from Mars, Amazon and the Gen AI provider retail.ai. The speakers agreed that responsible AI requires balancing benefits and ethics in practice.

NielsenIQ

Unlocking Generational Consumption Trends to 2030

While several of the Summit's presentations discussed Gen Z, this session brought them on stage: KaRa Awakoaiye and Sara Liang from NielsenIQ. After Elizabeth Buchanan, President of NielsenIQ North America, introduced some overarching characteristics of the generation, which she defined as being born between 1997 and 2012, KaRa and Sarah joined to talk about their own personal tastes and demonstrate that the age group is far from a monolith.



From Peddlers to Pixels: Retail Rewired

👤 **John S. Phillips**, SVP Customer Supply Chain & Go-To-Market, PepsiCo

Groceries delivered by drone to high-rise windows. Pilotless freight planes. Shelf-stocking robots that can detect spills. These are just a few of the rapid-fire retail visions that John S. Phillips presented to delegates during his talk. And, he noted, most of these technologies are already serving shoppers around the world. From visual search to the metaverse, digital innovations are 'fundamentally changing how you expose products and drive conversion in a much more frictionless, seamless way', he said.

Key Takeaways

- > Due to a rise in regulation around online tracking and cookies, retail media networks are becoming a major new revenue source for retailers with unparalleled personalised information on their consumers and their behaviours.
- > Visual search tools, such as Google Image Search, are seeing a resurgence today as shoppers use them to find items they want to buy from TikTok and Instagram. An estimated 33 billion USD will be spent in this space in the next few years.
- > Generative AI tools like Adobe Firefly are turbo-charging marketing teams' abilities, such as tailoring content to specific demographics and locations within seconds.
- > Companies are already using autonomous robots, trucks, drones and freight planes to streamline delivery, especially in the last mile.
- > RFID chip technology can help reduce theft in stores by allowing consumers to unlock anti-theft cabinets themselves with apps.



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We're all chasing nuanced growth, and there's no better way to change nuanced growth within than using a retail media network to be much more targeted in the audience you're trying to convert.

John S. Phillips, SVP of Customer Supply Chain & Go-To-Market, PepsiCo



Retail Best Practices

Tobias Wasmuht, CEO, SPAR International

CEO Tobias Wasmuht of SPAR International is well-placed to give a global overview of the state of retail — as leader of the 92-year-old Dutch company, he oversees independent retailers in nearly 50 countries, from Western Europe to emerging markets in Sub-Saharan Africa. He presented some of the solutions SPAR has developed to meet diverse needs in these markets, including fully automated convenience stores in northern Norway, which has some of the highest labour costs in the world, and new hypermarkets in Kazakhstan that incorporate traditional clay ovens. He also touched on SPAR's sustainability initiatives in various regions.

Key Takeaways

- > Consumers in emerging markets are just as interested in social media and online trends as their counterparts in more developed markets.
- > Multinational companies can only succeed in new markets if they empower their colleagues and partners to make decisions, implement changes and tailor their services to local tastes.
- > Though each region has its own tastes and challenges, consumers everywhere seek the same basic services and convenience.
- > Developed markets are not the only regions interested in and able to benefit from sustainability initiatives. In South Africa, for example, solar panels allow SPAR locations to stay open during the country's frequent blackouts.



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The independent retail sector demonstrates the ability or capacity of the system, enterprise or person to maintain its core purpose and integrity in the face of dramatically changing circumstances.

Tobias Wasmuht, CEO, SPAR International





Northern Stars in Retail

- **Hannu Krook**, Chairman of the Board and CEO, SOK Corporation
- **Rolf Ladau**, President and CEO, Paulig

After Tobias Wasmuht's global overview, the lens focused on Finland, a country of 5.5 million dominated by three main supermarket players. The CEO of Finland's biggest supermarket company, SOK Corporation, formed a panel with the CEO of one of the country's largest food and drink companies, Paulig, to discuss regional trends and how they reflect the global picture. They paid special attention to the competing priorities of sustainability and value, which are particularly important in a country with both a high level of environmental awareness and a high cost of living.

Key Takeaways

- > All companies, especially those involved in agriculture, should take steps to encourage biodiversity and thereby prevent another coronavirus-like pandemic.
- > Consumer goods companies and retailers can encourage consumers to participate in net-zero journeys by helping them calculate the carbon footprint of their own market baskets.
- > Instead of only focusing on the business case for sustainability, companies should pay attention to the loss involved in not being sustainable.
- > Younger consumers are especially likely to make buying decisions based on ESG criteria and know how to find the information necessary to make those decisions.
- > Sharing sustainability data should not be a 'box-ticking exercise'; companies must also share best practices and collaborate to drive action.

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Sustainability doesn't live in middle management. You need to ensure that the CEO, the board, the owners and the management team are all supportive, and then that trickles down.

Rolf Ladau, President and CEO, Paulig

The US Retail Landscape

JJ Fleeman, Chief Executive Officer, Ahold Delhaize USA

The focus returned to the host country with a conversation with JJ Fleeman, CEO of Ahold Delhaize USA, one of the country's largest retailers with five brands over 23 states. JJ Fleeman has been in retail for 35 years, during which time he watched his chosen field evolve from a relatively simple business centred around P&L and operations to a complex and multilayered sector involving omnichannel commerce, advanced data analytics and sustainability concerns. He suggested retailers leverage the new technology to return to their core focus of providing affordable, high-quality food and other products.

Key Takeaways

- > Customer confidence has plateaued in the US, with a historic high in interest rates, credit card spending and student loans. Meanwhile, food insecurity is on the rise, and over 12% of families receive government funding for food purchases.
- > In an era of economic volatility, retailers should create solutions for their customers that meet their need for value and their desire for sustainability.
- > Retailers' strength is their deep connections with towns, neighbourhoods, and individuals; they can make personal connections with their customers in a way few other sectors can meet.
- > The 'new normal' in retail is constantly integrating new business models into the core model, such as retail media networks and social commerce.

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What really matters is the opportunity to make that connection locally. I personally believe that's where we win. We win at the local level. We win when we meet customers where they are.

JJ Fleeman, Chief Executive Officer, Ahold Delhaize USA



China's Retail Landscape and Digital Future of Grocery Stores

Dr. Wenzhong Zhang, Founder, Wumart/Dmall

To round out the day's whistle-stop tour around the world of retail, Dr. Wenzhong Zhang took the delegates to China, where he founded the supermarket chain Wumart in 1994. A mathematician and engineer by training, he started his first supermarket to showcase the retail software he had developed. He went on to have a front-row seat to China's exponential economic and technological growth over the following decades. Wenzhong Zhang highlighted some key points in that trajectory and pointed out trends in Chinese retail that may be coming to the rest of the world.

Key Takeaways

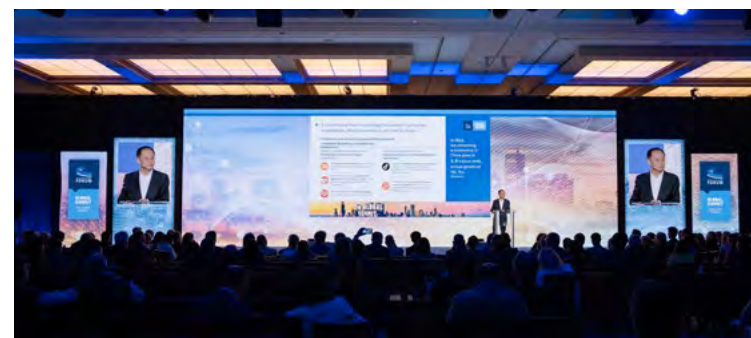
- > China's retail sector has seen exponential economic growth since the country opened to foreign retailers in 1992. The sector is still growing but slower than in the previous three decades.
- > Online sales in China represent 2.2 trillion USD — more than twice the value of US online sales (981 billion USD) and one-third of the global total.
- > Social retail—driving sales through social media platforms—is a major growth area in China, especially on Douyin (Chinese TikTok), where livestreamers can sell millions of USD worth of products in a few hours.
- > A digital operating system is the core of an effective omnichannel retail business. It can replace traditional enterprise resource planning, manage real-time data, and power consumer-facing and colleague apps.
- > In China, retailers like Wumart/Dmall see the majority of online sales through their consumer apps. Apps can help share promotions, reduce friction, and drive loyalty.



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In this conference, we talk a lot about how to build up loyalty. I believe the solution is smart and digital.

Dr. Wenzhong Zhang, Founder, Wumart/Dmall





Conference Close: The Road to The Global Summit Amsterdam 2025

- **Frans Muller**, President & CEO, Ahold Delhaize
- **Dirk Van de Put**, Chairman & CEO, Mondelēz International

In the final minutes of the Global Summit, the CGF Board Co-Chairs looked back on notable moments from the week and shared their personal takeaways. Both were impressed by the speakers' and delegates' vulnerability and honesty — their willingness to engage with the 'elephants in the room'. After inviting delegates to the 2025 Global Summit in Amsterdam, near Ahold Delhaize' headquarters, they encouraged them to use the intervening year to apply their learnings and put change in motion.

Key Takeaways

- > Awareness, collaboration and leadership are three main tenets of the Global Summit and The CGF.
- > The CGF's objectives are pre-competitive, and companies must be open and transparent with each other to achieve them.
- > Many CGF resources are freely available online, including dozens of publications by the Coalitions of Action.

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It's a gift to be here in this room with such diversity of thought. We would like to make sure that we use this richness to face and address the many topics, including the challenging ones.

Frans Muller, President & CEO, Ahold Delhaize

The fact that this is the biggest Summit that we've ever had shows that we are dealing with a group of leaders who are interested in the subject and want to move the needle on ESG, and I feel very encouraged by that.

Dirk Van de Put, Chairman & CEO, Mondelēz International.

Store Tour

The Summit Store Tour allows the host city to introduce the international delegation to its diverse retail scene. This year, more than 200 tour participants explored the Chicago food retail scene, a city defined by its diverse population, deep agricultural roots and innovative spirit. Stops included Chicagoland mainstays like Potash Markets, Jewel-Osco and Mariano's, and international retailers Amazon Fresh, ALDI and Eataly, with a coffee break at the world's largest Starbucks. Each host location provided insights into successful retail strategies and customer engagement tactics.

Store Tour
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Tomorrow starts today



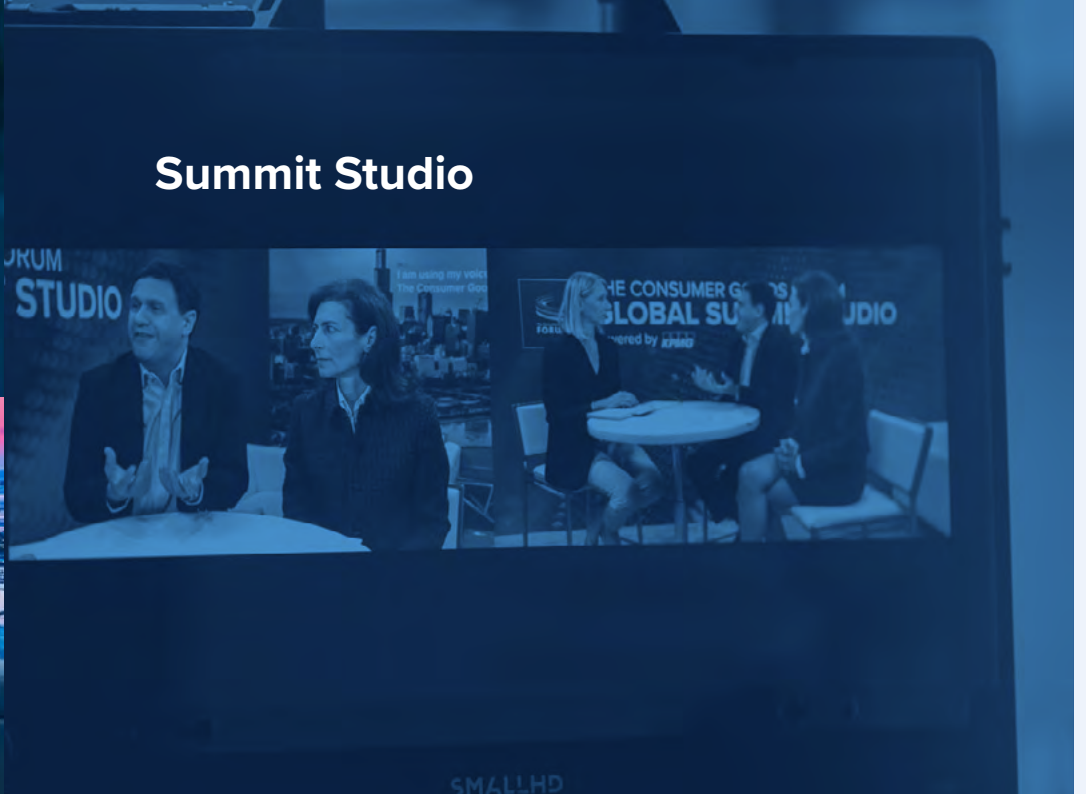
I-Talks

The vibrant networking area was the heart of the Global Summit campus, showcasing innovations, demonstrations and even samples (personalised chocolate bars, anyone?) from some of the world's leading consumer goods companies. The highlight of the hall was the Presentation Theatre, where subject-matter experts presented focused, 15-minute talks on topics including the power of AI, social impact strategies, decarbonisation initiatives and more.





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About The Consumer Goods Forum

The Consumer Goods Forum is a global, parity-based industry network that is driven by its members to encourage the global adoption of practices and standards that serves the consumer goods industry worldwide. Uniquely positioned as the organisation bringing consumer goods retailers, manufacturers and their service providers together globally, the organisation is expertly placed to drive positive change across the industry to benefit both people and planet, and help members secure long-term, sustainable business growth.

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