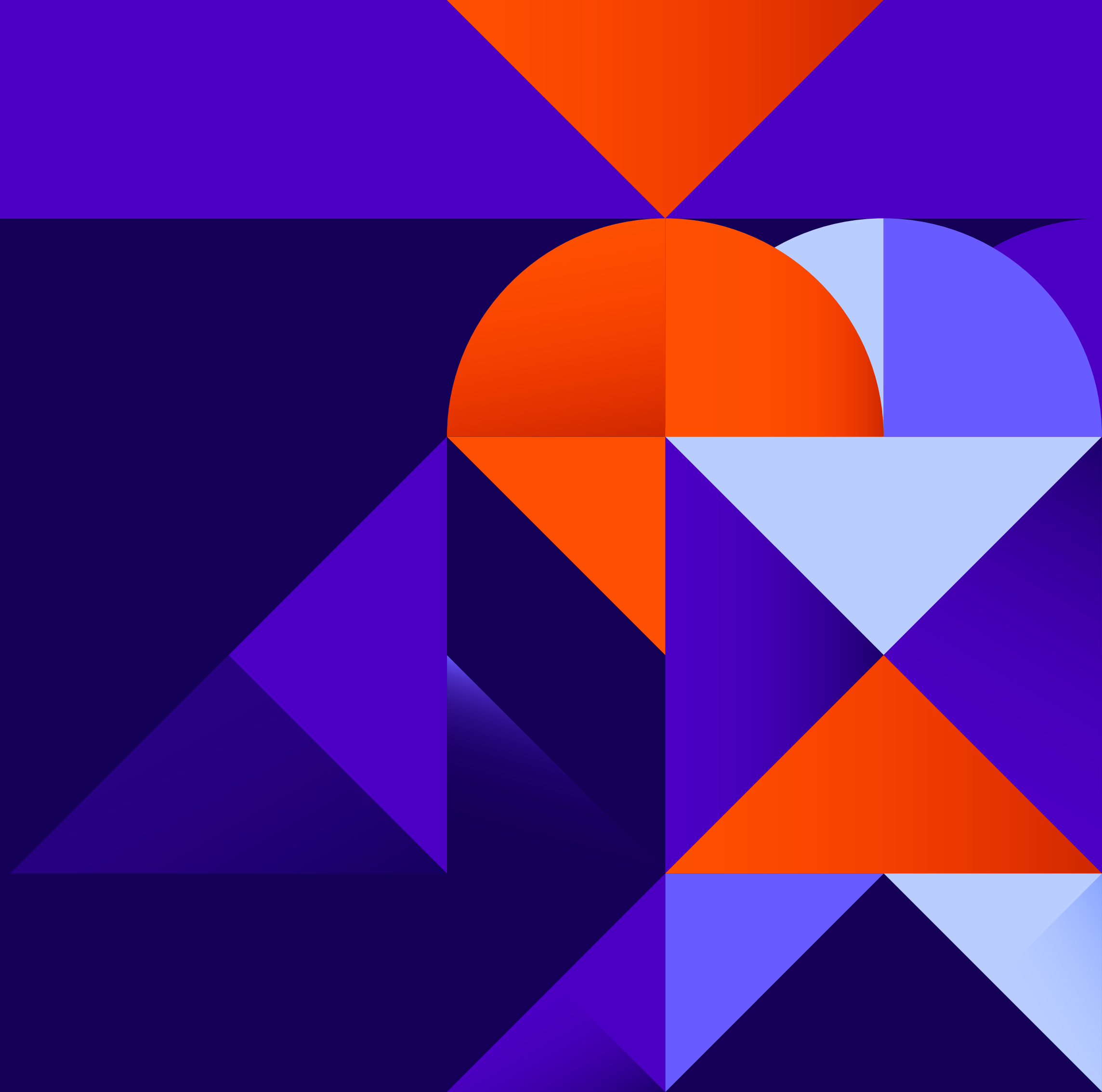


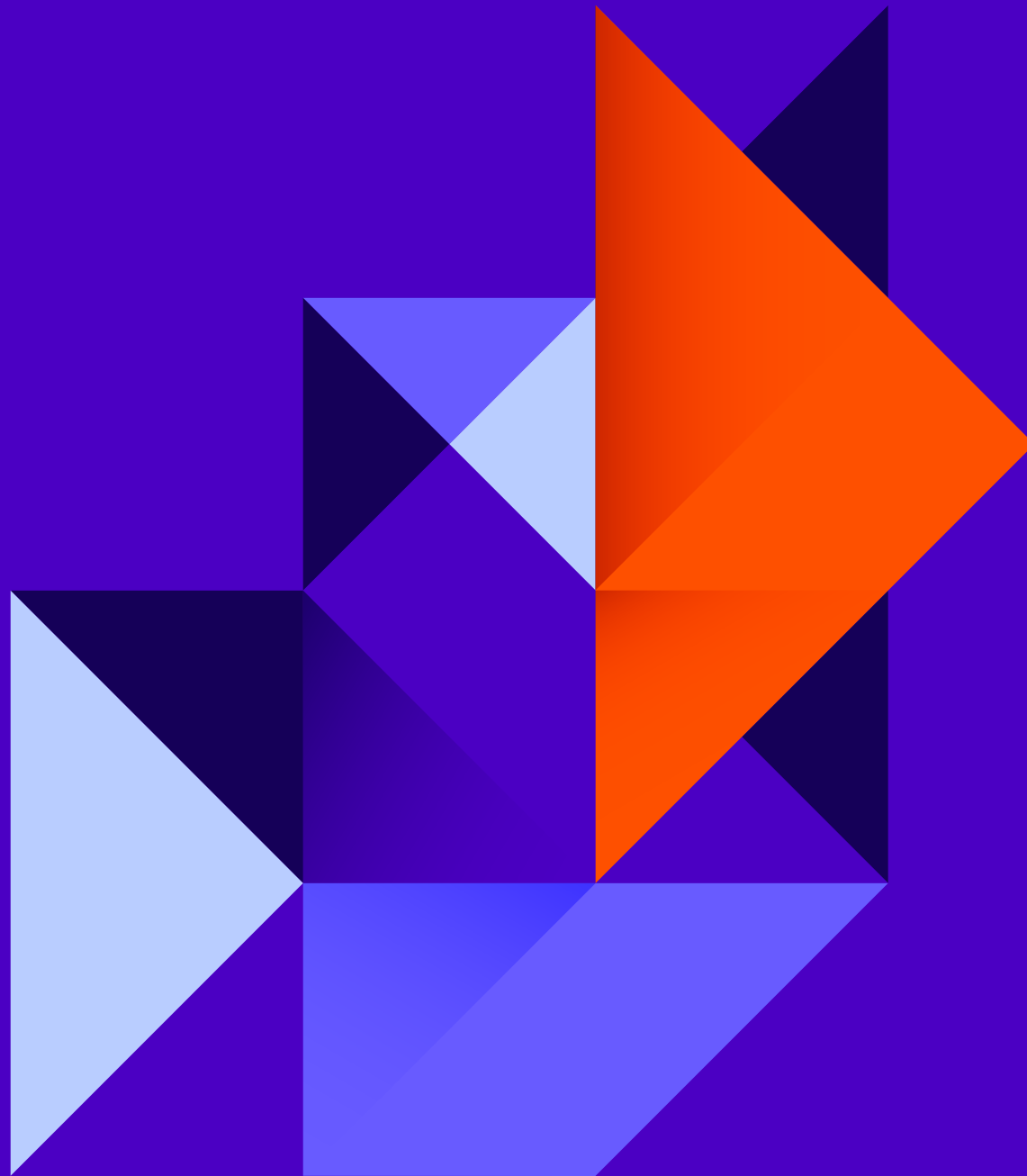
**4** PACK

# Setting up your product launch for success.

The Food and Beverage innovator's guide  
to an agile product launch



**At the heart of scalable innovation is a cost-efficient, collaborative, and compliant process. A central tool can make that happen.**



### **What's inside:**

Successful innovation in the Food and Beverage industry is the product of lots of mission-critical expertise: from alignment with consumers and markets, to deep knowledge about industry processes, regulation and feasible production, and the ability to deliver the whole thing at speed and cost. This short guide is an introduction to how a central digital system - that connects all the key functions involved, from end to end - can set your product launches and updates up for success.

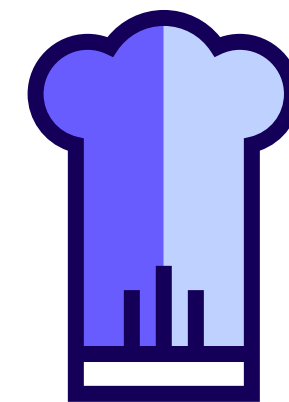
# A great idea is nothing without the ability to execute on it

Fortunately, there's no shortage of good ideas for new products in the Food and Beverage industry – marketing, consumer insight and new product development people tend to be well switched on to the trends that make the market hum.

But that's not all it takes to deliver successful innovation. Without the business savviness necessary to cost the new product competitively, the market insight to know if it will fit into your retailer's assortment strategy, the industry knowledge to test and produce it cost-effectively, and the compliance rigour to get it onto the shelf in a way that's safe for consumers and in accordance with the law - without these things, we're afraid, a good idea is just that: a good idea (whose time may not have come yet).

## **Too much manpower goes into admin, not enough into expertise**

We don't need to tell you: new product development requires one of the most intricate coordination efforts in the industry – and it's bound to bomb without the specific expertise of each function or department, applied at the right moment.



Yet, since cost considerations, looming deadlines, and frequent changes can put enormous pressure on everyone involved, launches and updates often resemble battles of attrition – not a considered and well-coordinated process. And that means that despite everyone doing their absolute best, important approvals, or feasibility checks, can fall through the cracks.

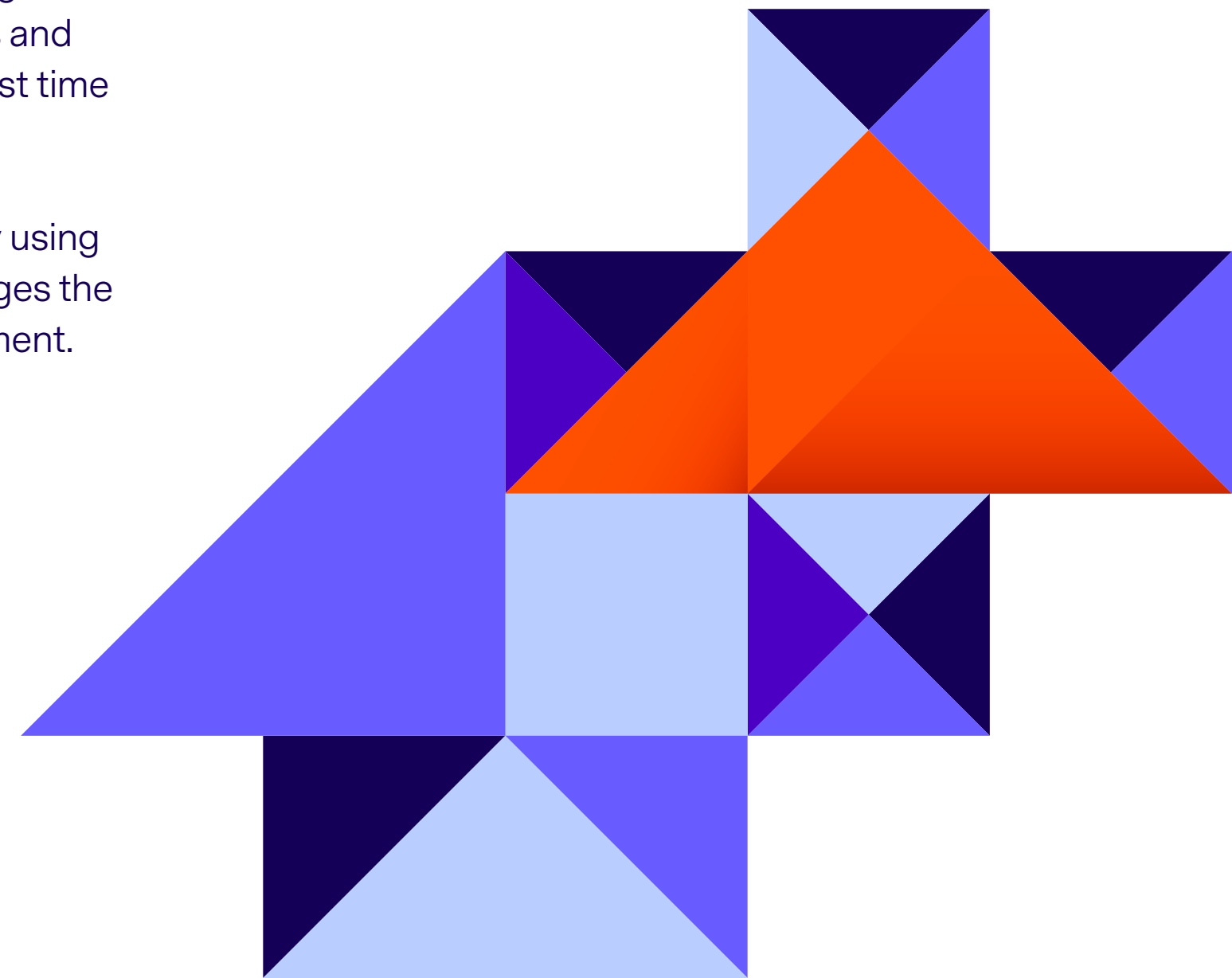
One of the main causes is this: in most organisations, the burden of coordination is still on the people involved. They’ve got little support in the way of tech, and with most departments working from dozens of disparate spreadsheets that are often outdated by the time they get shared, it’s no surprise that up to 40% of people’s time can go into manual admin, and duplicate data entry.

We think you’ll agree: that’s a waste of epic proportions.

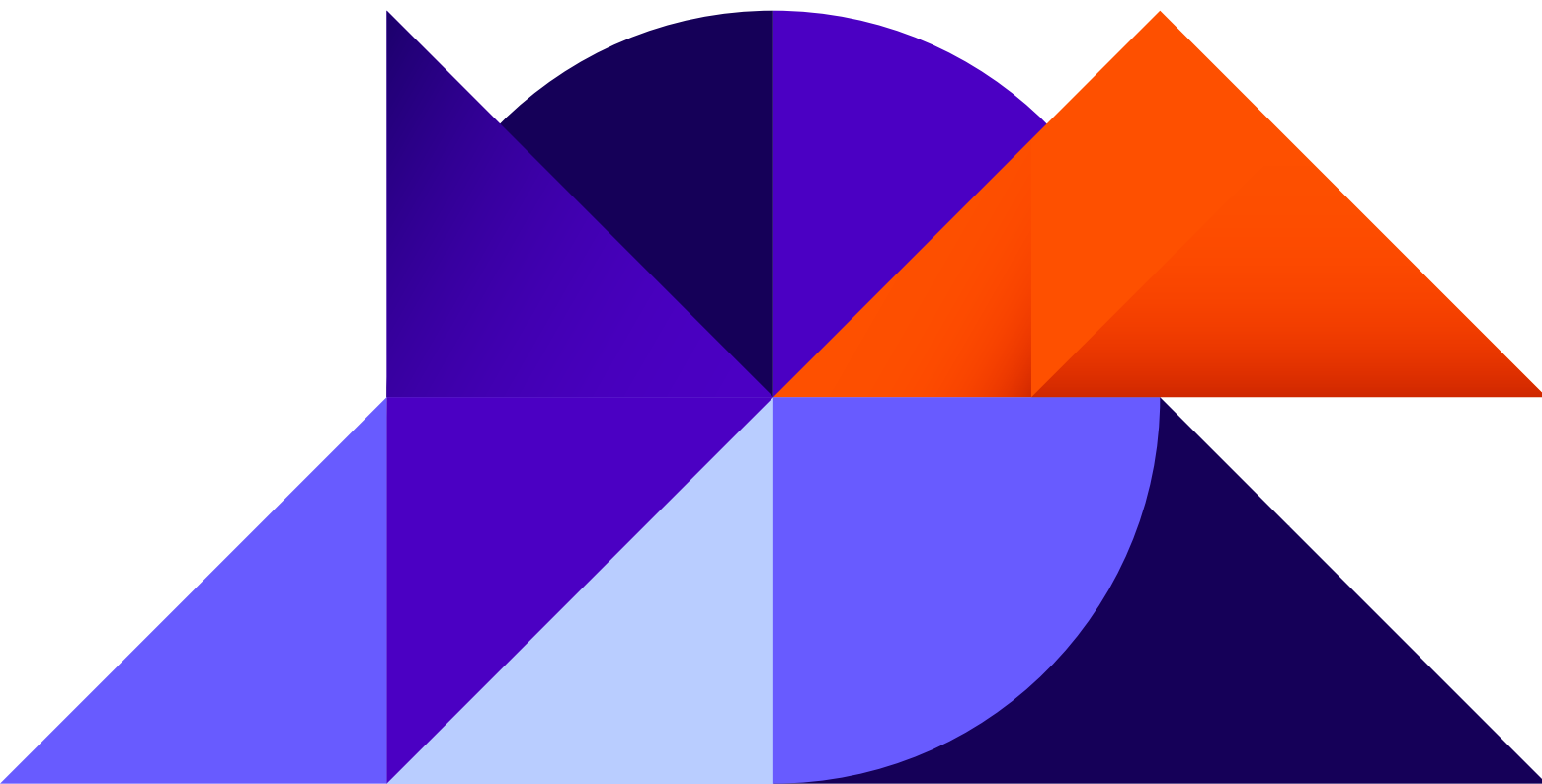
### **A central tool can slash admin and boost quality**

We believe: for product innovation to succeed continuously, and at scale, it needs a better approach. One that relieves the experts of their disproportionate admin burden, and gives them back the time to focus on what they do best – which will inevitably boost overall quality. But that can only happen if Food and Beverage organisations start to enlist digital capabilities in a smart way – to provide a single version of the truth, orchestrate the process and make it transparent, and get rid of the biggest time and resource drains.

Some businesses in the industry are already using such a central tool – and it completely changes the way they think about new product development.



## How an integrated tool can orchestrate your entire launch or update project:



### **Digitising innovation**

Nothing can grind an innovation project to a halt like disconnected systems, individual spreadsheets, and communication by email. These things cause workflow jams, manual re-keying of data, and potentially introduce a ton of human error. A collaborative tool that automates workflows and connects all stakeholders around a central pool of data (product information, briefs, spec documents, etc) eliminates this risk and makes all changes traceable and transparent.

### **Inviting true collaboration**

Set up correctly (and with the appropriate permissions), such a tool can also bring external partners and stakeholders into the process, right from the start (e.g. retailers, innovation kitchens, suppliers, your business intelligence folks, etc). This can hugely speed up the innovation process - and because there's central visibility, it makes everybody involved more accountable (and that's never a bad thing).

### **Standardising workflows and data formats**

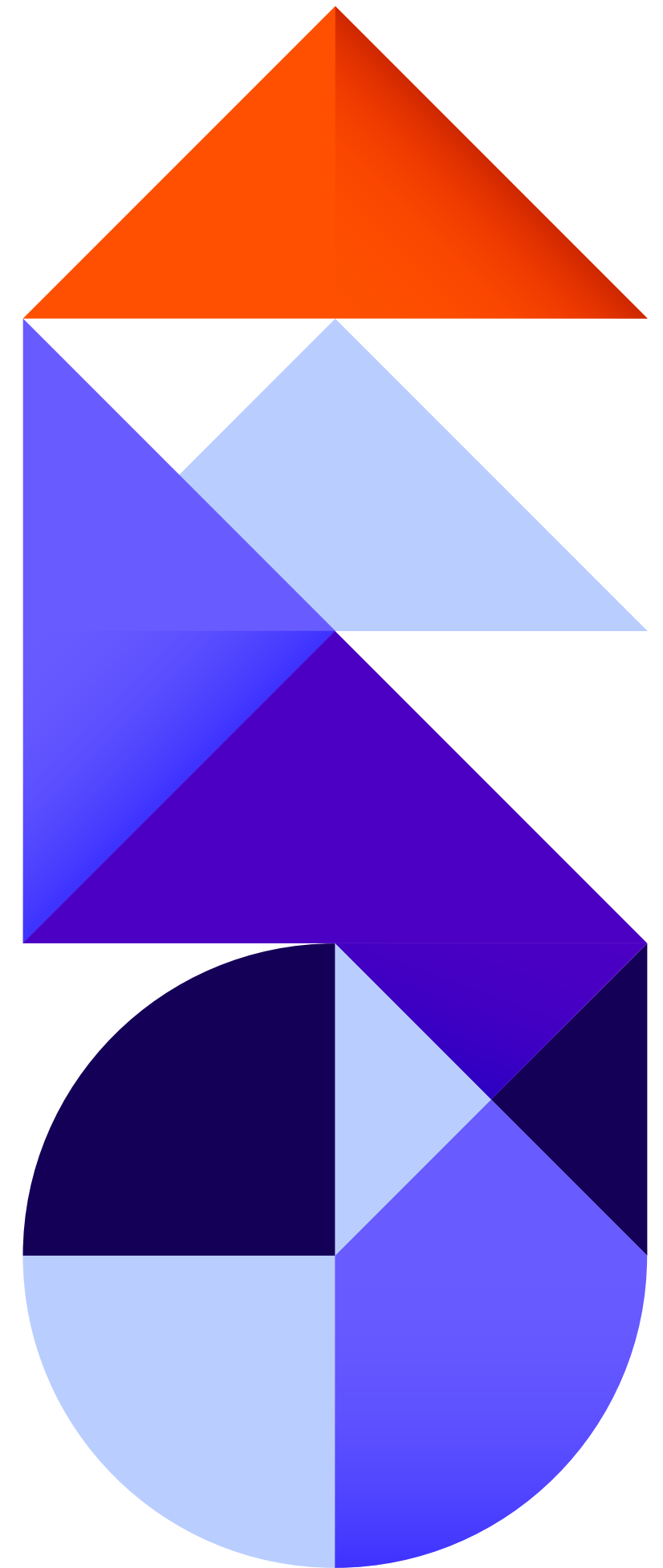
Your tool can help you apply the same rules (whether they're set by your compliance team, Brand, or another department) to all projects. That means you can ensure once and for all that no important checkpoint is missed, and data is always outputted in a defined format (which you can specify for each channel). That means you'll have a solid framework for product information – e.g. categories, required fields, suppliers, dependencies - right from the beginning. And that changes everything: you'll always be able to work with a complete set of specs, you can easily cross-reference information between variants, and when you're updating a product, your most essential data will already be there. That's a gamechanger.

### **Documenting the process and setting you up for best practice**

Remember when we said there's no shortage of new product ideas? That's true – but that's no reason to waste great brainstorming outputs just because their time may not have come just yet.

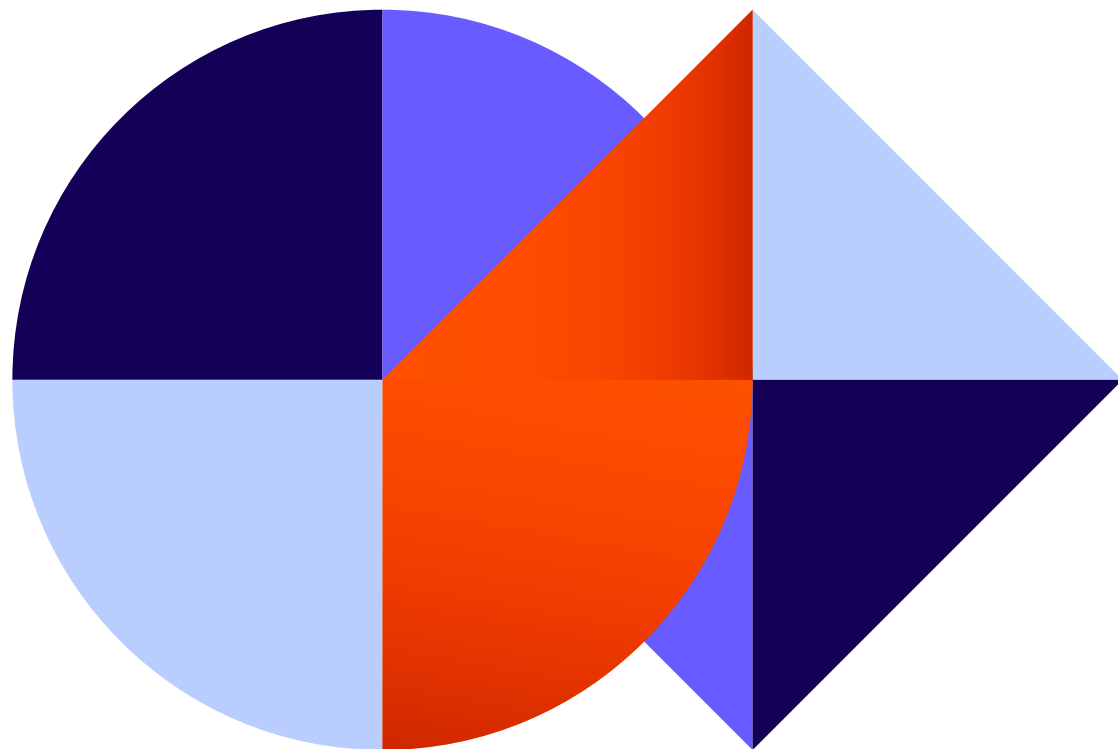
Many Food and Beverage organisations waste knowledge that their business has already gained – by not documenting their ideation sessions at all, or hiding their output in a Sharepoint folder somewhere. And this could be some of your best and most competitive knowledge, such as: consumer insight you've gathered; ideas for new products that your team has come up with (but that got parked, or not pursued for another reason); what you've learned from moving a batch from test to production.

Many businesses are still not doing the post-launch reviews that would turn these individual learnings into collective ones, and feed the next round of innovation. A central system that captures the development process as you go will help, by documenting each step, and making that information accessible to the entire business to learn from.



## How to get buy-in from your stakeholders

Most Food and Beverage businesses can consider themselves lucky. They've got fantastic teams who accept that the admin headaches we described above are simply the cost of getting a product to market. And they plough through, over and over again.



But that disguises the true cost of the broken processes behind innovation. That's why we'd like to encourage you to approach your decision makers and budget holders with two killer arguments:

**#1: A central tool will make life easier for *everyone*** involved - not just the NPD department – by solving the problem of disconnected information and workflows once and for all.

**#2: This translates into cold, hard cash.** The benefits are proven. An end-to-end collaboration tool will deliver cost savings, increased throughput, improved accuracy, and reduced risk. Some of our clients have seen up to:

- **90% cost reduction**
- **50% faster time to market**
- **80% faster packaging updates**

If that doesn't sway them – nothing will. But if you need some help with the swaying: get in touch [[link](#)]. We've got some solid proofs of concept up our sleeves.





## We're 4Pack.

Our cloud-based end-to-end product management solution for the Food & Beverage industry has completely changed the way our customers approach – and think about – their product development process.

We've helped dozens of businesses turn their product management processes from bumpy stop-and-go rides into smooth and well-orchestrated workflows. And we'd love to change the game for you, too. **Get in touch** with Helen Poole at [helen.poole@4-pack.co.uk](mailto:helen.poole@4-pack.co.uk) or on +44 (0)7773 698 950 for a discovery call.

*PS. If you liked this guide, you might also want to read our ebook [End-to-End Product Management](#) here. It's a guide for Food & Beverage companies who want to speed up and scale innovation across all their departments – NPD, Finance, Compliance, Packaging, etc – without compromising on risk, or multiplying the costs.*



Download now →