



bulletin board

If you're not focusing on WACnD, then maybe you should be!

In case you're wondering, WACnD stands for 'What Amazon Can't Do'. More and more businesses, both retail and e-commerce, are realizing that to survive against the Amazon onslaught they'll need to focus on offering their customers anything that Amazon can't. When travelling around the country I'm often inspired by how some retailers have embraced this idea and are successfully maintaining a healthy, loyal customer base.

If you look at these individual successes, it's the personal touch that makes the difference. Of course, we all like to receive a friendly reception in store, but for me it's the expertise of the staff that really drives customer loyalty. Let's face it, most consumers are confused about which supplements to take – but when given clear, confident, expert advice, then suddenly saving a few quid on Prime doesn't seem so important.



John Todd

is general manager of Lamberts Healthcare Ltd and an HFMA council member

The fantastic advice that's available in so many health food stores in effect equates to offering a personalized nutrition service. In fact, 'personalized nutrition' is very much in the news, with

"When given clear, expert advice, saving a few quid on Prime doesn't seem so important"

several companies developing sophisticated software to deliver online personalized supplement regimes. I'm sure their popularity will grow over the next few years;

but they've a long way to go before they'll be able to cope with the huge number of factors that need to be taken into account when recommending which supplements a customer should take (such as 'I can't swallow big tablets'; 'I'm taking warfarin'; 'fish oil repeats on me'). My point is that this help is already available when you visit one of the hundreds of great health food stores in the UK.

Back to WACnD; I'm sure that when a customer is given expert advice on supplements, their compliance is far higher than if they'd randomly bought 360 tablets for £7.95 on Amazon. One final tip relates to pricing: Amazon is always going to be cheaper than you, so try to stock products that aren't being heavily discounted. This avoids the problem of 'showrooming' – that frustrating scenario where customers seek advice and recommendations before then buying the product on Prime.

Getting the best from the HFMA

Staying connected

While as an industry we may feel further removed than ever from the decisions on legislation and food law being made in Brussels and Westminster, being a member of the HFMA gives a direct link to the debates that will shape the regulation of our industry in the wake of Brexit.

The HFMA takes the lead in representing the views of the natural health products industry to key decision makers and influencers in Parliament.

During this uncertain time, HFMA members can take advantage of the association's key contacts, and the organization's expertise helps them lobby legislators effectively, and ensures the interests of responsible manufacturers are properly represented.

News ...

Vitamin B12 and Parkinson's

New research published in the journal *Cell Research* has suggested vitamin B12 may have a neuroprotective role to combat hereditary Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's is a chronic neurodegenerative disease which currently has no cure. It affects 1% of the global population over the age of 70.

By and large, Parkinson's is not considered a genetic disease; however, mutation of the LRRK2 gene is the greatest known hereditary contributor.

According to a new study, vitamin B12 has turned out to be a neuroprotective vitamin in animal models. Therefore, this nutrient could be used as a basis to develop new therapies to combat hereditary Parkinson's associated with the LRRK2 gene.

This marks a huge step forward and exciting development in research around the therapy area.

DIETS CAUSING MORE PREVENTABLE DEATHS THAN SMOKING

Bad diet accounts for a fifth of all deaths globally and kills far more people than smoking, a new study published in *The Lancet* medical journal has revealed.

The research estimates that 11 million deaths a year could be prevented by better diets.

However, the study shows that the biggest issue is not the unhealthy junk food that people are eating, but rather the healthy, nutritious foods people are missing out on.

In the countries ranking low on consumption of nutrient-dense fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes, there are a higher number of deaths caused by diseases, including heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

While it's not news to people working within this industry that missing out on these nutrients can have a tragic impact, the huge benefits of these food groups are often focused on less in the media than the pro-

cessed junk foods we need to eat less of.

Rather than trying to persuade people to reduce their intake of sugar, salt and fat – which has been the main focus of discussion around dietary policy recently – there needs to be more public health information about why it is vital that healthy food groups are regularly being eaten, as well as more urgent, top-level intervention to ensure these behaviours are changing.