



Founded over 40 years ago by Jean Nidetch,
Weight Watchers is now the
global leader in weight management services,
providing 50,000 Weight Watchers meetings
each week in countries all over the world.



Across Europe Weight Watchers operates in 10 key territories including the UK, Germany, France, Spain and The Benelux. The supply chain deals with in excess of 100 million units per annum delivered in 2.3 million parcels, to 4,500 destinations located across 1 million square miles. These products service 700,000 meetings per annum with 21 million member attendances.

Weight Watchers' singular mission is to help people lose weight in a sustainable way by helping them adapt a healthier lifestyle and a healthier relationship with food and activity. Constant innovation to find new ways to help more members has been a hallmark of its success.



The success of the project was, in my view, down to a number of factors, including the ability and relevant experience of the team Norbert Dentressangle assembled, the project management processes applied that enabled visibility and control over the scope of the project, as well as the ability of Norbert Dentressangle to call upon a team that could engage our markets predominantly in their native tongue.



Duncan Aspden

*Supply-Chain Director,
Weight Watchers*



THE CHALLENGE

- A European supply chain consultancy study was required, to identify the optimum supply chain solution(s).
- The existing Weight Watchers supply chain had evolved over many years with little uniformity in operations, processes or systems across the 10 operating countries included in the consultancy study.
- Pre-consultancy data gathering highlighted many gaps, areas of confusion and a lack of consistency.
- No uniform reporting mechanism was in place across the 10 countries due to significant variances in languages, organisation & reporting structures, reporting currencies, operating systems and market characteristics.

OUR SOLUTION

- Appointment of a multi-lingual project manager from our experienced team whilst agreeing that wherever possible English would be the common language. Enlisted assistance from local country operations in case interpretation was required.
- Multi-phase approach adopted with a consistent Norbert Dentressangle team which visited each operation across Europe to create individual country reports through personal data gathering and understanding market characteristics. At the same time contact was made with the key stakeholders in each country to personally explain the process, reiterate the reasons why it was being undertaken and discuss the expected outcomes.
- Data and information was re-organised into a common currency (USD), detailed product flow mappings produced and key workable ratios extracted.
- The result was a comprehensive supply chain assessment which provided Weight Watchers with strategic recommendations regarding the changes required including;
 - Clarity on actual supply chain costs and areas for savings / service improvement
 - Cross country standardisation models
 - Demand planning implications
 - Warehouse size and location impacts
 - Current transport flows and alternatives
 - Detailed timeline / implementation plans and additional considerations
 - Methodologies for simplifying complexity
 - A number of quick wins and tactical changes

THE BENEFITS

- **Clear communication channels:** Weight Watchers personnel throughout Europe could communicate easily with the project team in their own native language if required.
- **Reduced costs:** Early adoption of quick wins and tactical changes by Weight Watchers allowed them to gain momentum and reduce costs significantly in a number of areas including inbound supply, cross border stock reallocation and outbound carriage rates.
- **Strategic road map:** The creation of a comprehensive road map for their future European supply chain strategy ensured Weight Watchers maintained focus, had cross border (key stakeholder) understanding of objectives and a reference point for key business decisions (both within the supply chain and other functions).
- **Consolidation of Operations:** The assessment clearly demonstrated that rationalisation of current operations into fewer in-country Distribution Centres, and a European Fulfilment Centre with central planning, would bring significant cost savings, product availability and standardised benefits. This had been a long held belief within Weight Watchers which could not previous be proven.

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