

If, after reading these, you would like to know more, or would like to explore options to improve the way that your supply chain works, then please contact either **Alan Stevenson** or **Rona Sutherland**, of SAOS, to whom you can talk in confidence.

Alternatively, if you are already working collaboratively and would like to shout about it, let us know and we will be pleased to promote you and your partners in our case study series.

Contacts: Alan Stevenson: 07771 935567
Rona Sutherland: 07855 790749
SAOS Head Office: 0131 472 4100
Rural Centre
Ingliston
Newbridge
EH28 8NZ



Collaboration Delivers Real Commercial Benefits

ADDING VALUE: MARKET AND BRANDING

Why collaborate? The question should really be why not? When we talk about collaboration, we simply mean working in partnership. You can be as competitive as you like, but there are always some areas where co-operating with others makes more sense.

We've produced a series of case study examples to illustrate where companies have worked with other partners in their supply chains for mutual benefit. That last bit is key. There has to be something in it for everyone involved, or it is not true collaboration. This doesn't mean that the benefits are necessarily shared equally by all partners, but it does mean that they're shared fairly, recognising the effort that each has contributed.

The series looks at how companies are working together to tackle business issues for mutual success. However, it's not easy to start collaborating with others if you are operating in a supply chain where there is very little trust and openness.

No collaborative processes will work, unless you can develop relationships based on trust, so we've also tried to include good practice examples of what other companies have done to develop the right sort of relationships and ensure the benefits are shared with everyone.

CASE STUDIES

To successfully market your products, you have to research what consumers want, develop a product or service to match and ensure that your target customers know about it. It's then down to your sales team to sell - at a profit, of course.

Branding can become a vital component of your marketing strategy, helping to communicate information about your product or service in a logo and/or 'strapline'. People nowadays are very brand conscious and see certain brands as reflecting their personalities and image. Powerful brands can drive success in a competitive market and can become an organization's most valuable asset.

The brand identity of **Marks & Spencer** (M&S) is very well known and is particularly strong in the food sector, where freshness and convenience are paramount to its customers. The brand value at M&S extends through its collaborative supply chain to include fishermen, who recognise the importance of maintaining resources through sustainable fishing. At the same time, **Coldwater Shellfish** and M&S have to ensure that the highest quality produce is presented, at the right price and specification, to satisfy M&S customers. Brand value requirements extend from the retail shelf right through to the trawler men.



“We have sourced our product from Coldwater for a number of years and we work closely with them to ensure that we market a wholesome and natural product that our consumers demand. Our collaboration goes beyond the nephrop sourcing content. For example, working along with Coldwater we have developed processes that have allowed us to reduce the amount of additives which results in a much more consumer friendly product.”

Andrew Mallison (Marks & Spencer)

Scottish branding of pork has only recently come to the fore as a way to add value throughout its supply chain. For producers, this means that they are directly associated with the Scottish brand and are the vital first link in the supply chain. The members of **Scottish Pig Producers and Wholesome Pigs (Scotland) Ltd**, decided that to grow their businesses profitably over the long term, a strategic meat quality and marketing investment was necessary. This resulted in defining and marketing pork meat eating quality as 'naturally tender', to meet with consumers' expectations. Supply chain collaboration has led to the development of naturally tender pork products to deliver these consumer expectations of 'Scottish Pork'.

Mackays has two brands - “Mackays”, the everyday premium brand marketed through supermarkets and “Mrs Bridges”, a deluxe range marketed through independent retailers. Three components - reputation, artisan manufacturing and product quality - all contribute towards Mackays' premium proposition. “Scottishness” is another significant part, highly valued by consumers both in the UK and overseas, and the inclusion of the finest jam-making Scottish berries, grown locally in Tayside, help to reinforce this in an authentic and meaningful way. Collaborative working with its **Farmer Suppliers** ensures that Mackays receives consistently high quality produce, and maintains the integrity of its brands.



Prince Charles launched the “Mey Selections” brand of **North Highland Products** in 2005. The success of this brand is down to the collaboration between producers, processor **Dunbia** and retailer **Sainsbury's**, all working together to capture a market opportunity for premium branded product. Matching top quality beef and lamb from the north of Scotland, with the demand from premium markets across the UK has added value to the red meat supply chain, to the benefit of those local farmers.

“The primary commercial driver in the formation of North Highland Products Ltd and the Mey Selections brand was to add value to the red meat supply chain to the benefit of local farmers in the North of Scotland. From the results of the initial feasibility study, it was clear that a collaborative supply chain arrangement was the best method to match top quality beef and lamb from this area with the demand from premium markets across the UK.”

Danny Miller (North Highland Products)