

# How Nestlé Applied Agile Principles to Achieve New Product Innovation Success

A sprint-based approach helped Nestlé stay ahead of competition and evolving consumers



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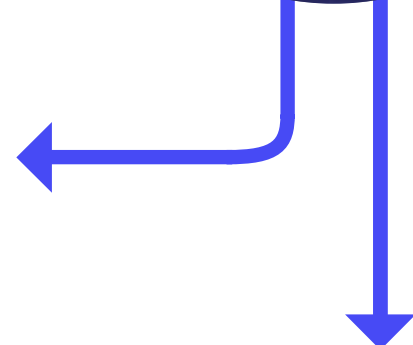
Our first sprint kicked off in September 2018 and the final product launched in May 2019 with in-market testing. Historically, if Nestlé was lucky, we would have been able to launch in 2020 or 2021 using traditional product innovation processes. But the agile methodology we used this time resulted in a significantly shorter timeline—around seven months.

Dawn Ferfolia,  
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## The Challenge

Nestlé, a large consumer packaged goods (CPG) company, was facing a changing world of consumerism. With the proliferation of consumer choice, ecommerce leveling the playing field, and traditional brand loyalty out the door, it was harder than ever for the company to appeal to an increasingly fickle customer base with changing expectations.

The Nestlé team understood they needed to innovate faster to get new products into the market ahead of the competition. That meant letting go of the traditional methods of market research they had relied upon in the past, which often resulted in two years or more to get a new product onto the shelves from the initial idea.



To ensure successful product innovation in an already crowded frozen food subsegment, the Nestlé team wanted to:

- Adopt agile principles for market research to increase the speed of product innovation while still keeping the consumer at the center of the initiative
- Work with a partner who understood Nestlé's processes and overarching business objective to help ensure quality and relevance of insights at every step

## The Solution and Process

To kick off their new sprint-based, agile approach to product innovation, Nestlé partnered with the GutCheck team, who supplemented Nestlé's sprints, team structure, and timeline with agile research methodologies. This approach would maintain a focus on the consumer at all times, while enabling flexibility, collaboration, reflection and optimization, and—of course—faster time to market.

By balancing speed with rigor and empowerment with process, the Nestlé team could slow down and apply more traditional research methods when needed and *agilify* other methods when they wanted to move quickly.



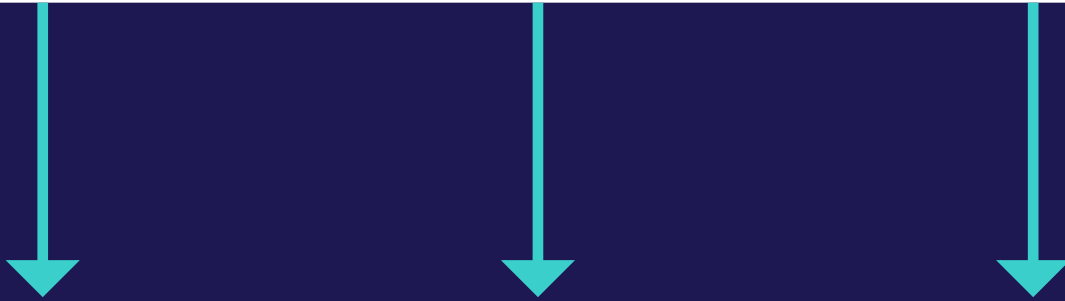
Nestlé's agile process was built upon the following key objectives:

- Kill bad ideas faster
- Achieve faster time to market
- Enable more efficient collaboration
- Strongly integrate cross-functional teams
- Get the right support at the right time

## The Results

Within seven months of Nestlé's initial idea to innovate in frozen food, the GutCheck team helped give the Nestlé team the concept, audience, and naming insights they needed to launch their new frozen food product into the market.

With their first sprint project completed, the Nestlé team now understands how adopting agile principles for both product innovation and market research can help them get the critical insights they need to launch new products into the market much faster—enabling them to:



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Finding an agile partner that supported our process, and understood our business objective and the context in which the initiative was happening, instilled the quality that we were looking for at every step.

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