

The Collective Review



A LOOK AT WHAT 'S INSIDE:

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The Evolution Of Our Collective	Consumer Panels	J&K in NYC

2023 Highlights

28

products
launched
this year

Celebrating 10 years



James Shelley & Jane Stratford

Technical Director

Specifications Manager

Welcome our new additions



Kirsten Webster

Compliance Coordinator



Ben Garlick

Technical Manager



Hayley Martin

Trading Assistant

Kirsten Webster

Confectionery is a new sector for Kirsten – and it certainly helps when the products are this chocolatey and delicious! She's appreciating being part of a smaller team, involved in all stages of a product's launch and lifecycle. After being factory-based for the last 10 years, she's enjoying the little perks of office life like getting to wear wacky nail varnish.

Kirsten is Canadian originally but loves exploring & photographing the North of England and all its natural beauty.

Ben Garlick

Ben has joined us with a varied background in technical management, ranging from bakery to toothpaste, and everything in between. He joined us at our busiest time and has been all over Europe, meeting our manufacturing partners and seeing our products being made.

We are sure you have already met his bubbly self and he can't wait to see the responses to the products he has helped launch at J&K already.

Hayley Martin

Hayley has come from retailer such as Matalan and B&M retail.

My background has been in buying and have worked on product areas from fashions to homeware to now confectionary. I

am excited to start a new challenge within the business and to learn so many new skills. I love spending quality time with friends and family and leisurely walks of a weekend.

THE EVOLUTION OF OUR COLLECTIVE



As the founder of our beloved confectionery company, I am deeply proud to reflect on the remarkable journey we've embarked upon over the past two decades. When we first set out on this adventure, we could only dream of the heights we would reach, and the joy we would bring to countless palettes. Today, as we celebrate our 20th anniversary, I am filled with gratitude and awe at how far we've come to the fantastic J&K teams both working for the company (our J&K family all 19 members) and our manufacturing/customer partners.

Our journey began with a simple vision – to supply exceptional product from a safe and high quality environment. It was a vision rooted in the belief that something as simple as a piece of chocolate or candy could create moments of pure delight and taste pleasure.

I remember those early days, when we worked tirelessly as a partnership with all involved, experimenting with ingredients, and perfecting recipes. We faced challenges, setbacks, and moments of doubt, but all of our partners passion and determination never wavered. It was this unwavering commitment to quality and innovation that set the foundation for our success.

Our brand, J&K Confectionery, is not just a name; it represents the love, dedication, and creativity of our incredible teams. It's a testament to the countless hours spent crafting each confection by our quality supplying partners, ensuring it meets the highest standards of taste and quality. Our team of master artisans, chocolatiers, and candy makers have poured their hearts into every piece we have collectively created.

Throughout these 20 years, we've witnessed a transformation in the confectionery landscape. We've seen the emergence of health-conscious consumers seeking better-for-you options. We've adapted to the changing tastes of a diverse and globalized world, introducing unique flavours and textures that have become fan favourites. We've embraced sustainability, committing to ethical sourcing and eco-friendly packaging because we understand the importance of protecting our planet for future generations.

But amidst these changes, one thing has remained constant – our commitment to spreading joy through our confections. The stories we've heard from our customers, the memories we've helped create, and the smiles we've put on faces have been the most rewarding aspects of our journey.

As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we look to the future with excitement and determination. We promise to continue pushing the boundaries of confectionery excellence, to explore new flavourers, and to innovate in ways that surprise and delight our customers.

To our loyal customers, partners, and team members – you are the heart and soul of J&K Confectionery. Your support, feedback, and unwavering loyalty have propelled us to where we are today, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

I am humbled by what we've achieved, and I am confident that our chocolate/candy journey is far from over. Here's to the next 20 years of crafting moments of happiness, one delectable treat at a time.

With heartfelt gratitude.

John

Founder, J&K Confectionery

20 HOURS FOR 20 YEARS

We wanted to celebrate this momentous occasion in a meaningful way that goes beyond traditional festivities. We decided to embark on a journey of giving back to our community by dedicating 20 hours of volunteering each for our 20-year business anniversary.

We have done a grand total of 340 hours of volunteering. Just some of charities we have helped are The Trussell Trust Food Bank, Free School Uniform Project, St Ann's Hospice, Sands, The Firefighters Charity, Parkinsons, Backup, Arts Emergency and Manchester Transport Museum Society. Some of the activities completed are sponsored, cycling, cleaning, sorting at donation stations.

Our decision to dedicate 20 hours of volunteering each for our 20-year business anniversary was a powerful way to celebrate our success while making a lasting impact on our community. It reinforced our commitment to giving back and demonstrated that, together, we can achieve remarkable things. As we move forward into our next 20 years, we are inspired to continue our tradition of service and make a difference in the lives of those we serve. We believe that our success is best measured by the positive influence we have on the world around us, and we look forward to many more years of growth, collaboration, and giving back.





J&K CONSUMER PANEL

For years, our family and close friends have been our guinea pigs for ideas and have always welcomed tastings of new products we're working on,

in exchange for giving us quick and incredibly honest feedback. Although this information is useful to us, we needed to find a way to channel this into data we can use to present back to our customers and show evidence for why we are suggesting certain concepts.

From this came the idea to create our own consumer research panel, our 'collective of experts' as it were. It was important that when asking people for their feedback, we first had to understand their demographics, their shopping patterns and purchasing habits to support our conclusions. And not forgetting finding out food they would never buy or dislike as this was always going to skew the results!

6 months later and we still rely on

our family and friends for feedback, but now we have transformed them into a database of panellists so we know exactly where they do their shopping for what occasion, what foods they would purchase for themselves but also what they would buy for someone else.

Using the Survey Monkey platform, this allows us to send out targeted surveys which are only applicable to specific members of the panel to collate responses and gain real insight into exactly what they think of our ideas. Our surveys are still often accompanied by samples, but instead of just asking for opinions, we use different styles of questions to understand preference and acceptability, which we can then statistically analyse to build our conclusion.

Our consumer panel is growing and will continue to support our concepts, demonstrating we really are experts in our field and always developing concepts with our customers in mind.

OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE



This year's conference was indeed extra special as we celebrated our 20 years. The venue at the Etihad Stadium, set a magical ambiance and provided the perfect backdrop for a gathering focused on reflection, collaboration, and planning for the future. The primary purpose of this conference is to bring together market experts, visionaries, and creative minds from various sectors of the confectionary and snacking industry.

Our Technical team set the tone for the conference by addressing the challenges encountered in the previous year. They offered insightful perspectives on the changes that will be implemented and outlined a clear path forward. The engaging discussions highlighted the resilience of our team and their commitment to overcoming obstacles.

The Commercial team presented a comprehensive summary of the company's performance over the last year. Their insights into the achievements and areas for improvement provided a valuable overview for all attendees, setting the stage for collaborative efforts to enhance our business strategies.

The New Product Development (NPD) team took centre stage, delivering a captivating presentation on key industry trends. The session not only informed us about the current landscape but also inspired creative thinking about future developments. The interactive segment that followed led to the emergence of several innovative ideas and collaborations that promise to shape the company's future positively.

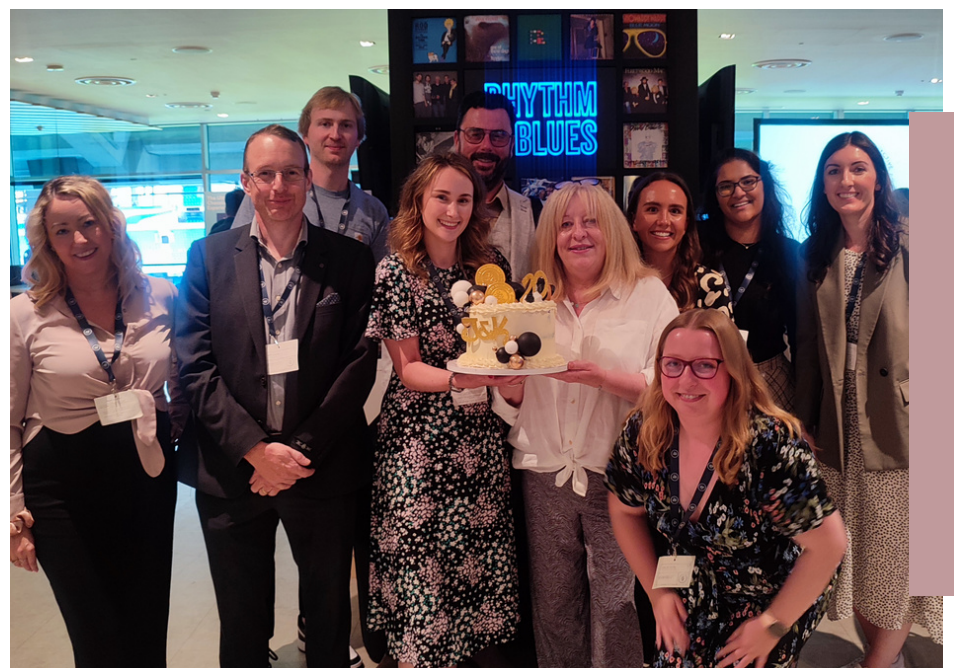
One of the highlights of the conference was the awards ceremony, where we celebrated the outstanding achievements of our partners.

The winners of the 2022–2023 awards were as follows:

- Serious Sweet Co.: Best Complaint Performance
- Vidal: Best Innovation
- Desobry: Best Audit Performance
- Gudrun: Packaging Sustainability Award

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all our suppliers and express our gratitude to everyone who participated in making this conference a resounding success. The collaborative spirit and enthusiasm displayed at the event are a testament to the strength of our partnerships and the bright future that lies ahead.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to our shared goals.



J&K IN NYC

In the fast-paced world of retail, staying ahead of trends is crucial for success. For businesses operating in the UK, understanding and adopting American market trends can be a key strategy for staying competitive. Recently, our team embarked on a comprehensive shopping expedition to New York, aiming to gain valuable insights into the American market and identify trends that might influence the UK retail landscape.

Inbar Ronan, our guide through the delectable landscapes of SoHo, led us on a chocolate and bakery tour of. As the founder of NYC Sweet Tours, Inbar's extensive knowledge of the chocolate and bakery world is unparalleled. From the moment she moved to NYC she dreamed of hosting sweet tours as she has always had a passion for sweets, having studied pastry art, then worked for a chocolatier in Germany she decided to take a chocolate course at Le Cordon Bleu in Paris. Her real passion is finding and celebrating the high quality delights of the world and where better than the melting pot of culture in the big apple.

Through her, we connected with a network of chocolatiers, bakers, and confectioners, gaining invaluable insights into the city's thriving culinary scene.

Our encounter with Inbar Ronan has sparked a promising collaboration. We plan to tap into her expertise regularly, gaining ongoing insights into the ever-evolving world of confectionery, sweet and savoury snacking, and biscuits. By aligning with local experts, we aim to stay at the forefront of emerging trends and continue delivering innovative products to our consumers.

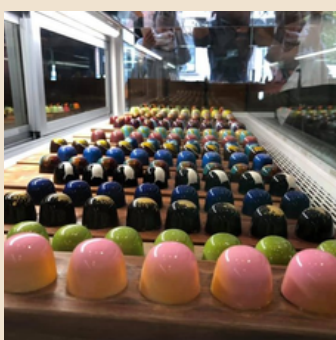
If you are ever in New York, we highly recommend getting in touch with her.



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TOP TRENDS SEEN

Wellness Takes a Bite

One of the prominent trends we discovered was the integration of wellness and health into snacks. Consumers are increasingly seeking options that not only satisfy their taste buds but also align with their health-conscious lifestyles. From nutrient-packed bars to guilt-free sweets, the market is witnessing a surge in products that boast both flavor and nutritional benefits.

Indulgence Redefined

Indulgence remains a key player in the snack game, with a twist. The flavor profiles we encountered were nothing short of decadent, showcasing a departure from the ordinary. From exotic spice blends to rich, velvety chocolate, snack enthusiasts can expect an array of indulgent options to satisfy their cravings.

Packaging with Panache

Packaging has evolved into an art form, and New York's snack scene is no exception. Distressed metal finishes are gaining popularity, providing an edgy and contemporary look to the products. The packaging isn't just a vessel; it's an experience, promising a tactile connection with the consumer.

Shapes that Spark Joy

Say goodbye to traditional forms; novelty shapes are making waves in the snack aisle. Unique and whimsical designs add an element of fun to the snacking experience, turning every bite into a delightful adventure.

The Spice of Origin

Chillies, with a focus on provenance, are making a fiery entrance into the snack world. Whether it's the nuanced heat of regional peppers or the bold kick of international varieties, spicy snacks are taking centre stage, offering a journey for the taste buds.

Sustainable Snacking

Environmental consciousness is at the forefront, with an increasing commitment to sustainability in packaging. From biodegradable materials to eco-friendly designs, brands are stepping up to reduce their ecological footprint.

For more in-depth findings, and insights please refer to our Christmas Wished email on 21/12/23 where we have attached a powerpoint presentation.

