



CASE STUDY:

Harnessing Data to Dominate Relaxation Drinks

How Recess used Brightfield Group social listening and consumer insights to dive deep into a new category with strategic ingredients and audiences.



Table of Contents

Overview	2
Diving into a New Category	5
Aligning Ingredients & Innovation	6
Knowing Who Is Behind the Trend	8
Outcomes	9
Working with Brightfield Group	10
About Brightfield Group	11

Overview

In the ever-evolving beverage industry, standing out requires more than just a unique product; it demands a deep understanding of consumer desires, market trends, and the agility to adapt swiftly.

Recess, a trailblazing brand in the wellness beverage space, has not only introduced innovative products but has also mastered the art of staying ahead of the curve. While getting its start with a hemp beverage, the brand quickly pivoted to the emerging “relaxation” beverage space. In a market like beverages that is saturated with options, Recess has carved a niche for itself, offering beverages that promise relaxation and balance at a time when Americans are seeking exactly that.



image credit: Recess

From its inception, Recess recognized the potential of the relaxation beverage category. By harnessing Brightfield Group's deep consumer insights and responsive social listening data, Recess could tap into emerging trends, refine its product offerings, and resonate deeply with its target audience.

This case study explores the role insights played in shaping Recess's success story. From initial market entry to national retail dominance, this is a tale of a brand that listened, learned, and led.

About Brightfield Group



Brightfield Group's AI-driven consumer insights and social listening help marketing and innovation teams see the person behind the trend.

Informed by predictive AI integrated with survey and social media data, Brightfield Group data has the answers innovators need to make brand and product decisions confidently. It's a level of depth you can't find anywhere else.

Brightfield Group's AI-Driven consumer insights empowers marketers and product developers to innovate & brand with confidence.

Problem

Solution BRIGHTFIELD GROUP

Outcome

I need more customers

Category specific consumer insights across brands and channels

Double your customer base!

I don't know what product to develop next

Social listening into trending products, flavors, and ingredients + actual consumer adoption across trendy & traditional segments

New product development that is 10x more efficient!

About Recess

Launched in October 2018, Recess is a trailblazer in the wellness beverage sector, introducing unique beverages infused with functional ingredients and adaptogens. Committed to quality and innovation, it swiftly captured consumers' attention, providing much-needed relaxation solutions in today's fast-paced environment.

Recess started with hemp beverages, but new drink line has been tailored to the evolving preferences of modern consumers. From sparkling waters to mood-enhancing powders, it consistently showcased its dedication to holistic well-being. Today, with a strong market presence and a reputation for excellence, Recess is a company that values innovation, balance, and a deep understanding of the beverage landscape.



image credit: Recess

Opportunities for Growth

Recess leverages Brightfield Group data to strategically navigate the beverage market, ensuring their products resonate with the evolving needs of consumers.

Dive Deep into a New Category

Recess saw the opportunity to help Americans de-stress. But outside of the siloed hemp space, how could they provide relaxation in mainstream channels?

Aligning Ingredients & Innovation

Functional ingredients were booming in 2020, but which would become true trends rather than fads? Recess went to the data to find out.

Knowing Who Is Behind the Trend

Recess had to ensure its fun, relatable branding could expand as it did. The product marketing, sales, and fundraising team needed a crystal clear target consumer to succeed in the competitive beverage category.

Diving Deep into Relaxation

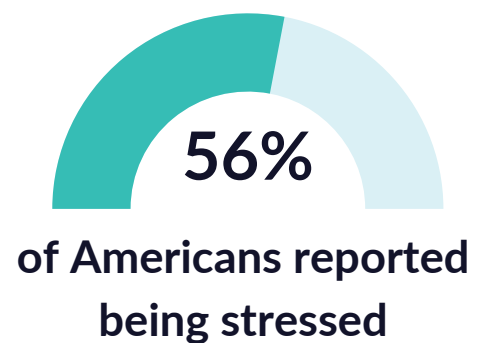
While successful within hemp, Recess could not be limited to the regulatory island that is hemp/CBD in the U.S. Its first hemp beverage line was a hit with “cool, calm, collected” vibes resonating throughout its branding. Recess was destined for more than hemp beverages.

The relaxation category was rapidly growing in 2021. Americans were on the hunt for products that help them get through life and deal with the world around them.

With Brightfield Group Wellness Consumer Insights, Recess got into the data of the **relaxation need state** made up of consumers wanting to destress and relax.

In 2021,

- 56% of Americans reported being stressed
- Millennials were 33% more likely to seek relaxation—the highest of any generation
- 47% of Americans who drank alcohol wished there were more non-alcoholic alternatives for social gatherings
- Higher-income Millennials were the most common consumers of functional beverages



Brightfield Group data helped Recess validate the trend of relaxation and appetite for it within the beverage category. While hemp or a single ingredient may be niche, relaxation had the potential for wide appeal.

Recess has been able to continually take a data-driven approach to its target audience's needs, going onto further serve the alcohol-free crowd with Recess Zero Proof.

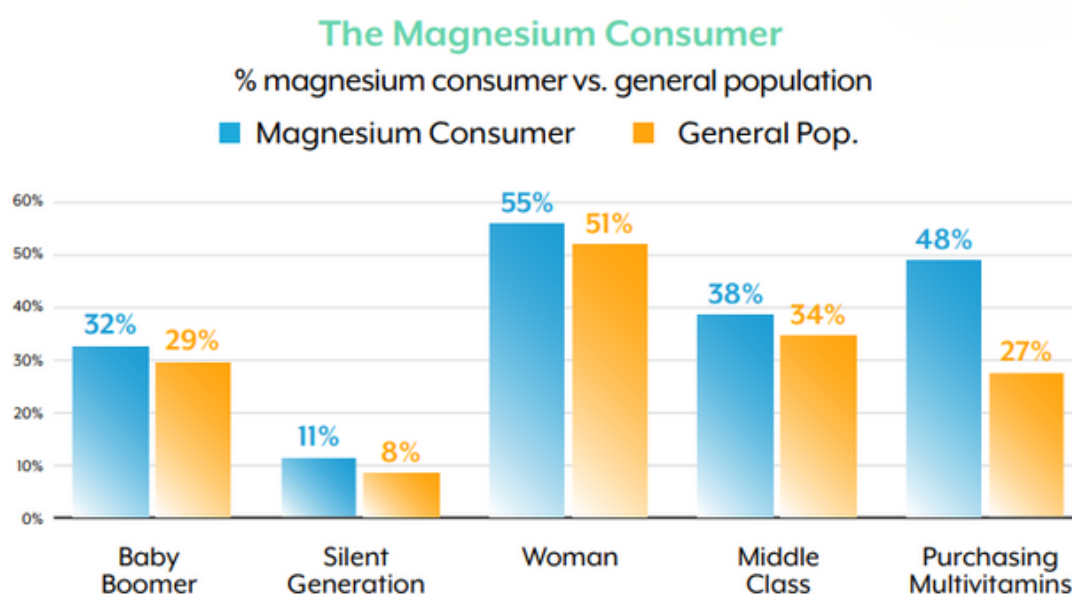


image credit: Recess

Aligning Ingredients + Innovation

Hemp provided a strategic entry into the relaxation need state with CBD being purported again and again for its relaxing properties. But now, it was time to Recess to find a new ingredient to fuel its moods.

When Recess looked at magnesium supplements in 2021, Brightfield data showed those using magnesium were significantly more likely to be in the relaxation need state. Magnesium is the fourth most abundant mineral in the human body. It plays a role in many basic functions like immune and heart function, with many purporting it could help with stress-relief.



Source: Brightfield Group; Wellness Consumer Insights; 2021

But millennials were not the traditional magnesium buyers - despite being the most stressed and likely to be seeking relaxation. So for Recess, it would be about marketing the solution, not the ingredient. Recess' customers were already looking for calming beverages, and Recess wanted to ensure it meet those needs at any time of day.

Knowing Who is Behind a Trend

Recess' success is driven by its intimate understanding of the millennial consumer. The brand has outpaced its competition by appealing to millennials actual needs rather than passing fads while being keenly relatable.

When Recess landed in natural food store and small groceries, its customers showed up in force. This enthusiasm landed Recess big distribution relationships than now bring the brand to mainstream retailers across the U.S.

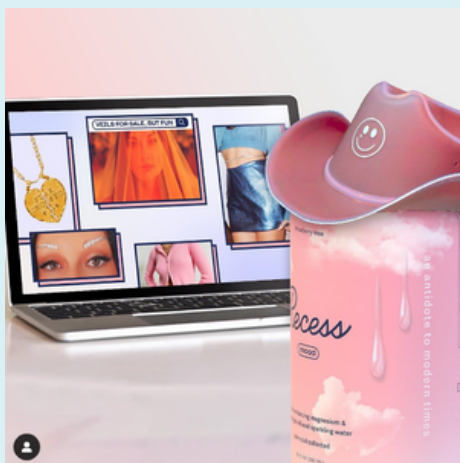
And even with the massive expansion into mainstream, Recess' rate of sale has been higher than average and continues to maintain! - a huge feat for an expanding brand.

Recess created on-trend products but focused on the person behind the trend. This strategic commitment to a hyper-specific demographic has been instrumental in its success.

Recess' creative, millennial-focused branding resonates through every piece of its content - especially on Instagram.



Personifying the canned drinks with trendy IG content



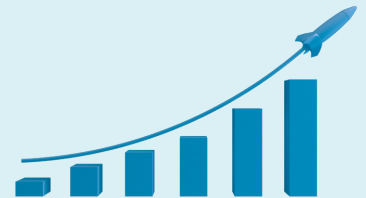
Jokes on pop culture topics that millennials understand



Strategic giveaways with millennial-centric brands

Outcomes

Empowered with Brightfield insights, Recess reached mainstream shelves while others that started in the hemp category have fallen off.



Success with Relaxation

Continuing with the associations it built with its hemp drinks, Recess made relaxation its mission, serving its audience so well that its cans fly off the shelves - **even as more shelves are added!**



Banner Ingredients

By pinning down **magnesium for relaxation**, Recess' effective expansion meant it was no longer a simple "CBD drink" and could be poised for mainstream success.



Mastering a Trend

Tapped into consumer insights, Recess never misses a beat with its millennial audience. With the data to **deeply understand millennials**, Recess gained a loyal following that propelled the brand to mainstream success.

Working with Brightfield Group

Recess' CFO expressed his delight with our approach to keeping data fresh and relevant.



“The team is phenomenal and dedicated - not just to having a portal - but to constant improvement. It's continued advancement. The data gets better, the story gets better, it gets just deeper and deeper.

My biggest thing is: you listen. When [Recess] is talking about what's important to us and what we're looking for, it actually happens [in the portal].”

- **Chris Crowe, CFO, Recess**



We're delighted to improve to fit the needs of real companies using our insights!

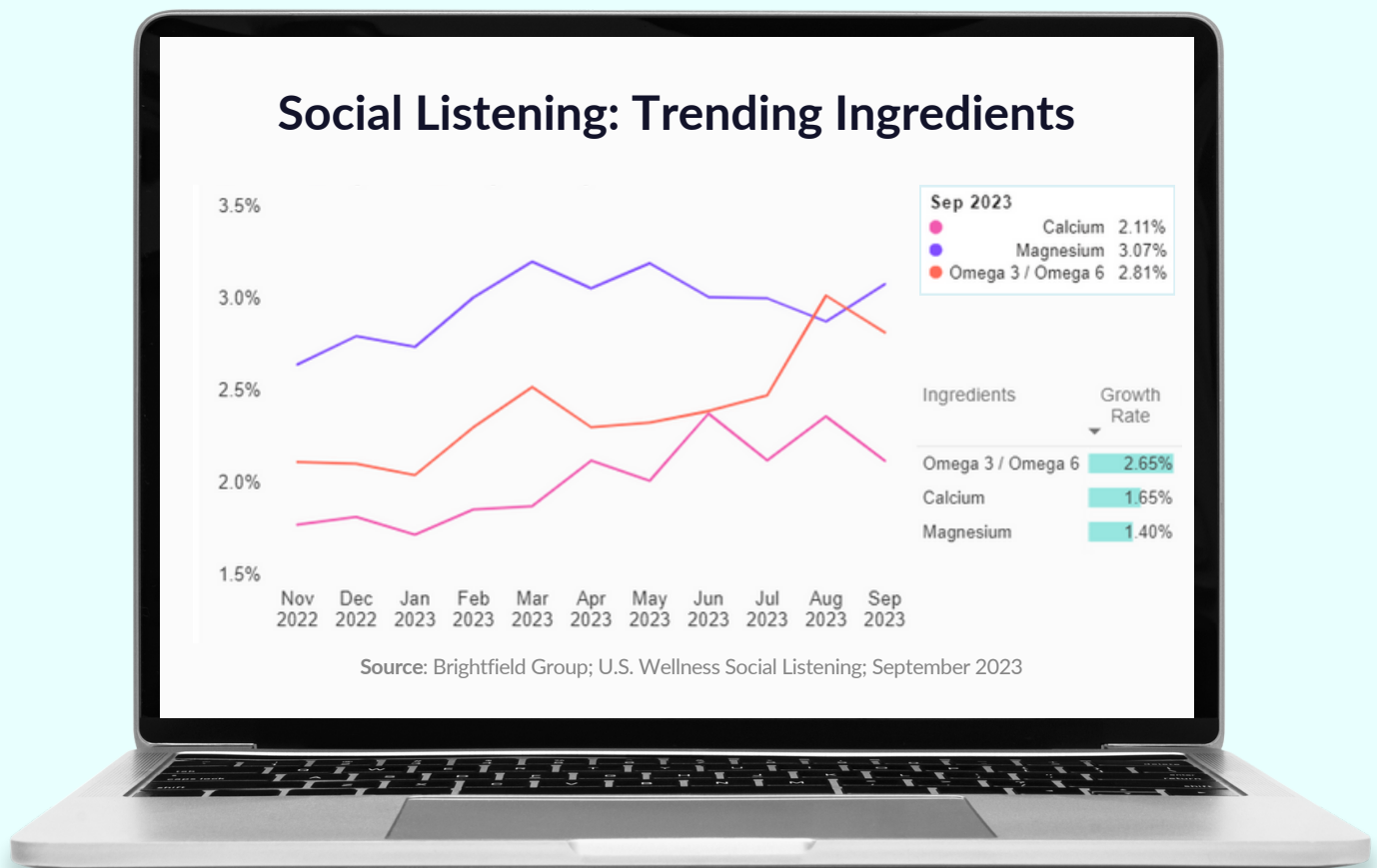
About Brightfield Group



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Our data doesn't just save time and money, it inspires innovation to keep your brand consistently ahead of the curve.



The data is yours to explore with Brightfield Group social listening and consumer insights.

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