



PACKAGING: THE UNSUNG HERO OF THE PRINT WORLD

From the moment we wake up in the morning, we wake up to print. Toothpaste, shampoo, soap, skincare products...all come in printed packaging. Then it's on to breakfast with cereal, coffee, egg cartons, etc. And the day goes on. Everything packaged has print!

Packaging is the unsung hero of the print world, influencing an estimated \$2 trillion worth of retail purchasing each year. Especially in retail stores, where similar products are sitting side-by-side on the shelf vying for consumer's attention, printed packaging can make or break a product's sales.

A product's packaging can be the selling point for many consumers

In fact, researchers have studied the ways in which packaging influences buying behavior. One study found that although people differ in their susceptibility to impulsive buying, "the appeal of product packaging has the potential to trigger impulsive buying even for consumers with no intention to make a purchase."¹ In this study, attractive packages evoked more intense positive responses than neutral packages, and unattractive packages activated regions of the brain associated with negative emotions. Proving that when it comes to product packaging, first impressions really do matter.

Packaging is often the first point of physical interaction

For products sold in retail stores, packaging is the first point of physical interaction between the brand and the consumer. And that physical interaction can be vital in the consumer's purchase decision.

Studies in the field of "haptics," or the science of touch, have explored how what we touch can influence our perceptions and actions.² To touch a thing is to trigger a reaction called the Endowment Effect. Merely touching an object can make a person feel possessive about that object, thereby increasing the chances that they will want to purchase it.

Whether or not a consumer will choose to pick up a product often comes down to the packaging. Attention-grabbing packaging design can make consumers linger on a specific product, pick it up and put it in their shopping cart.

Packaging is important for online purchases, too

According to the 2013 eCommerce Packaging Survey,³ 52% of online consumers are likely to make repeat purchases from an online retailer that delivers orders in premium packaging...and 40% would share a picture of an online order on social media if it came in a unique, branded or gift-like box.

As Rodney Dangerfield would say, it seems like packaging just can't get the respect it deserves. But with packaging making such a significant difference in sales at both the product and retailer level, it's time that it did!

1 Marco Hubert, Mirja Hubert, et al, "Neural Correlates of Impulsive Buying Tendencies during Perception of Product Packaging," Psychology & Marketing, 2013.

2 Sappi North America, Eagleman, Dr. David, A Communicator's Guide to the Neuroscience of Touch: Haptic Brain, Haptic Brand, Sappi North America, 2015

3 Dotcom Distribution's 2013 eCommerce Packaging Survey, "Brown Boxes Don't Deliver for Brands," 2013