PACKAGING DESIGN

Successful Product Branding from Concept to Shelf

Marianne Rosner Klimchuk and Sandra A. Krasovec

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SECOND EDITION

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Preface

The primary goal of this second edition of *Packaging Design: Successful Product Branding from Concept to Shelf* is to serve as a guide for those working in the disciplines of packaging and graphic design, marketing and communications, advertising, display and exhibit design, product development, manufacturing, and industrial design and engineering. Marketers, designers, researchers, product developers, manufacturers, printers, and any other professionals involved in the world of consumer branding will find this book an invaluable resource. Consumers, informed and design-savvy in their own right, will also find the process of getting a product "from concept to shelf"—whether that shelf be at the corner store or in a high-end retail environment—enlightening. Many will not have thought before about the complexity of developing the packaging design for all of the products they purchase.

This updated edition details, step-by-step, the design methodology for developing packaging designs and explains how those designs function as the marketing vehicles for consumer products. A condensed historical overview provides a perspective on the business of packaging design. The other sections thoroughly explicate the visual elements; design principles; processes from concept to production; consumer marketing strategies; and environmental, legal, and global economic issues that significantly impact packaging design.

The successful marketing of consumer products hinges on their packaging design; herein you will find more than two hundred images that include typographic studies and illustrations of concept sketches, design development, primary display panels, and packaging redesigns. Case studies round out the depiction of designs that stand out from their competition. The text also includes information on stakeholder roles, anecdotes from working designers, design pointers, and career advice, as well as interviews that reflect the life of an industry professional.

The authors, full-time faculty members at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), the only institution in the United States that offers a BFA degree in packaging design, have each over thirty years of combined academic and professional experience. Their design thinking and business expertise as managing partners at designPracticum, along with their extensive experience and global industry contacts, provide for a comprehensive viewpoint on the business of packaging design.

Acknowledgments

We owe a debt of gratitude to all of our industry colleagues. It was their energy and enthusiasm that kept us motivated in authoring this second edition. It was our professional colleagues who responded to every request and submitted such inspiring work. These professionals, and the firms and agencies they represent, make packaging design successful from concept to shelf.

Projects of all sorts were submitted to us; many came with rich and interesting case studies. It is our hope that in these pages you will get a feel for the enormous effort that goes into creating successful packaging design. Collaboratively stitching together people's innovation, visionary ideas, production mastery, and leadership in sustainability is no easy feat. The fruits of those creative labors—packaging designs that are beautiful, successful, well-produced, and socially responsible—are what make our profession one we are proud to be part of. So thank you: to all the firms whose work is represented, and to the many other colleagues whose talents and support have inspired us.

Twenty-two years ago we met at a design firm, and we have shared an office—one filled floor-to-ceiling with packaging designs—for sixteen years since. During the time that we have been educators and consultants, we have developed a special bond. We owe much of our ongoing passion for packaging design to our students. It is their eagerness and enthusiasm for learning about the profession, their creative minds, their boundless energy, and their support of each other and of us that has kept us on our toes. Our alumni and countless industry colleagues have inspired us by their own enthusiasm for everything *design*.

We are grateful to all of our academic colleagues, outstanding design professionals in their own right: Candace Allenson, Cliff Bachner, Brian Hart, Susan Hewitt, Marilyn Johnson, Joan Nicosia, Diane Sheridan, Adam Straus, David Wagner, Barbara Wentz, George Wybenga, and countless others. Their professional knowledge, superb teaching abilities, and personal support have greatly influenced many aspects of this book. Karen Corell, our partner at designPracticum, and our spouses, Garth Klimchuk and Stephen Yip, have been patient beyond what we had a right to expect and forgave us the distractions of teaching, lecturing, and writing.

Our deepest gratitude goes to our families and friends for their love, patience, and support. In their own appreciation of packaging design, they have spent countless dollars on purchases that are engaging and worthy of our attention.

IN A PARTNERSHIP between marketing, design, and manufacturing, authorship and the creative process are shared so that ideas may flow freely. Professional pleasure comes from playing in a cooperative atmosphere that engenders openness, constructive criticism, and a contagious desire to assist each other in making motivational pictures. It is this attitude that makes anything possible.

Primo Angeli, *Making People Respond*

1 The History

Humans have needed to gather, collect, store, transport, and preserve goods since time immemorial. Following is a brief exploration of how the advancements of civilizations, the growth of trade between peoples, technological inventions, and countless other historical events facilitated the evolution of what we have come to call packaging design.

From as early as the Stone Age, containers were fashioned from woven grasses and fibers, bark, leaves, shells, clay pottery, and crude glassware. These materials were used for holding goods—food, drink, clothing, and tools—for everyday use (fig. 1.1). Archaeologists' discovery of such objects shows that early economies depended on packaging for sharing and transporting goods. As various peoples transitioned from nomadic hunting and gathering to settled agricultural production, demand was created for goods that were only produced in specific places. Trade in such goods was the forerunner to modern market economies (fig. 1.2).

The Sumerians, among the earliest of settled societies, dating back over five thousand years, developed a written communication system, initially consisting of a system of pictographs that enabled new forms of visual identification. With the Sumerian practice of year-round agriculture came a surplus of storable food, and pictographs served to identify these stored products (fig. 1.3). The Phoenician civilization inherited Sumerian

Fig. 1.1
Neolithic jar.

Fig. 1.2
Pictographics, *naos* of the temple at Ed Dakka, Egypt.
Close examination of the image of an interior temple
wall reveals the visual identification of goods by
pictorial representation.
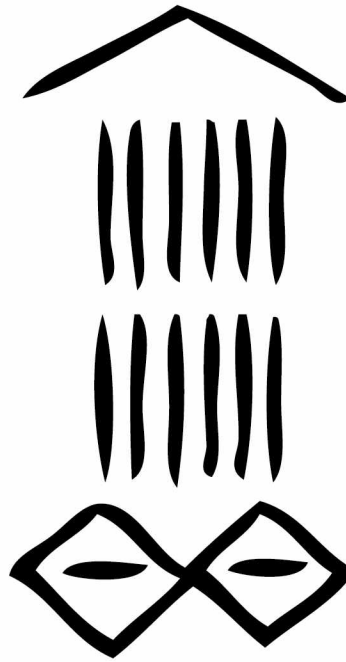
Fig. 1.3
Symbol for wheat.
The Sumerian symbol for wheat is one of
the earliest examples of an icon used for
visual communication.

Fig. 1.4
Early letterforms.

writing and further developed it, creating the single-sound symbols—an alphabet—that became the foundation for the further evolution of Western written languages. Thus Sumerian pictographs evolved into the syllabic symbols that became the basis for the forms of written communication used by many cultures for almost two thousand years.

These early symbol systems developed from the need to establish identity in three ways: personal (who is it?), ownership (who possesses it?), and origin (who made it?). Such symbols were the forerunners of trademarks and brand identities. The Greeks took the letters of the Phoenician alphabet and turned them into beautiful art forms, standardizing each with component vertical and horizontal strokes based on geometric constructions. This marked the beginning of letterform design (fig. 1.4).

Scrolls made from papyrus (a wetland plant) and dried reeds and parchment made from specially prepared animal pelts were among the first portable writing surfaces. The Chinese emperor Ho-di of the Han dynasty produced papers in approximately 105 BCE. Researchers have discovered that the Western Han dynasty used these materials not only for writing but also for wallpaper, toilet paper, napkins—and wrapping used for packaging. Chinese papermaking techniques advanced over the next fifteen hundred years, reaching the Middle East and then spreading across Europe.

The Growth of Trade

As people made their way around the world, goods were transported greater distances and so there was a need for vessels to carry these goods. Certain commodities are particularly identified with trade across great distances: perfumes, spices, wine, precious metals and textiles, and, later, coffee and tea. Merchants, missionaries, nomads, and soldiers traded such goods along early intercontinental trade routes linking Europe and Asia, the Silk Road being the most notable. Crusaders traded along routes between Europe and the Middle East. Such activity created the need for a wide variety of packaging to contain, protect, identify, and distinguish products along the way.

Hollow gourds and animal bladders were the precursors of glass bottles, and animal skins and leaves were the forerunners of paper bags and plastic wrap. Skilled artisans handcrafted ceramic bottles, jars, urns, containers, and other decorative receptacles to house incense, perfume, and ointments, as well as beer and wine (fig. 1.5).

In the twelfth and thirteen centuries, an identifiable merchant class, concerned with moving products from one locale to another, began to appear. Buying and selling goods, as opposed to farming or crafting material necessities, thus became a way to make a living.

Along with the merchant classes came an interest in the wider world and increased demand for goods from faraway places.

Fig. 1.5
Paper wrappers.
Paper wrappers are among the forerunners of modern packaging design. Here the actor Iwai Hanshiro VI holds a dish of rice cakes as a memorial offering, while a child at his feet holds a broadside of a paper game board.

Emerging Communication

Handwritten script on paper or parchment gave way to printing. The Chinese are credited with inventing the wooden printing press and then movable clay type. Tinplate iron, developed in Bohemia (a region in central Europe), allowed printing to take hold throughout Europe.

Around 1450, Johannes Gutenberg assembled his printing press. Utilizing movable and replaceable wooden or metal letters, it brought together the technologies of paper, oil-based ink, and the winepress to print books (fig. 1.6). The use of movable type lowered the cost of printing and, in turn, the price of printed materials. The general public's access to printing led to a rapid increase in the demand for paper and sparked a revolution in mass communication.

Innovations in book design emerged during the Renaissance (from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries) in the areas of typography, illustration, ornament, and page layout, as well as through new kinds of paper and printing materials. Visual communication was thus greatly advanced.

In the mid-1500s Andreas Bernhart, a German paper-mill owner, was among the first tradesmen to print his name (with a decorative design) on paper wrappers to package his products. Bernhart's wrappers pointed the way to merchandising with printed designs.

Billboards and broadsides—announcements of laws and government decrees posted on the sides of buildings—were the first forms of advertising. Advertising quickly became a vehicle for selling "consumer" products and frequently depicted the product's packaging design. In fact, in early British newspapers, dating from the early 1800s, vendors posted, or advertised, products

Fig. 1.6
Johannes Gutenberg examining his first press proof.

such as jars of tea, medicine bottles, and tobacco with illustrations of their printed labels.

Packaging design evolved with the marketing opportunities that the visual experience provided, and packaging became critical to sales. Design disciplines grew out of the need to communicate information in graphic form, melding with the material wants and needs of everyday life. In essence, the combination of the physical container, or packaging, and the written communication about the goods it contained became the foundation for packaging design today.

Early Commercial Expansion

Eighteenth-century Europe saw great commercial expansion, accompanied by the rapid growth of cities and a broader distribution of wealth that included the working class. Technological advancements allowed production cycles to keep up with the increased population. Mass production provided at low-cost, readily available goods, which in turn led to the concept known today as mass marketing.

In the 1740s, America, a British colony with a relatively small population, imported most manufactured luxury goods from England, France, Holland, and Germany. In 1750, there were only one million inhabitants of European origin in America, but by 1810 this number had ballooned to six million. Still, there was little to induce most traders to print their names and addresses on their goods, since most of the population of both America and Europe were illiterate. In Britain, for example, of its nine million inhabitants, only eighty thousand could read. However, packaging designs were created to attract these educated, wealthy, upper-class consumers.

Out of concern for hygiene among the growing bourgeoisie emerged two new features in the home: the toilet and the bathroom. As product development increased to meet consumer demand, packaging designs for products such as toiletries, bottled beers, antidotes, pots of snuff, canned and bottled fruits, mustards, pins, tobacco, tea, and powders functioned to identify their manufacturer and communicate the products' purpose (figs. 1.7, 1.8, and 1.9).
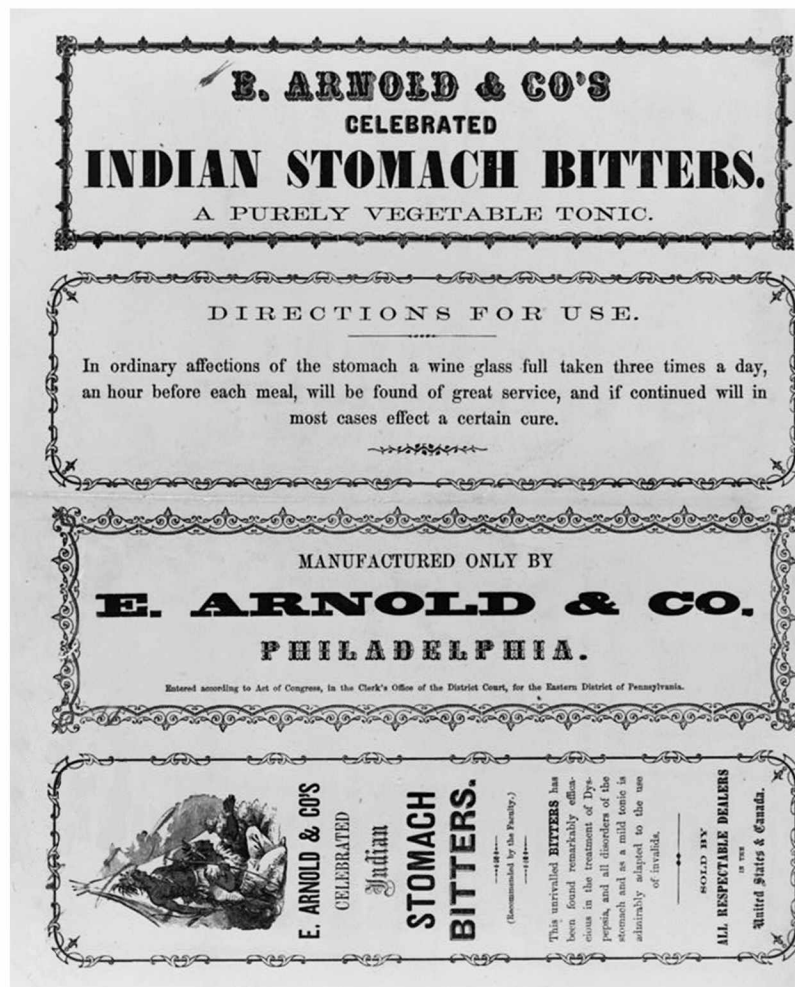
Fig. 1.7
Label for E. Arnold & Co.'s Celebrated Indian Stomach Bitters, circa 1850.

Fig. 1.8
Label for Champion American
Soap Powder, circa 1887.

With the goal of attracting affluent consumers, coats of arms, crests, and shields were commonly used as graphic elements on packaging designs during this period. These symbols, ornately detailed, signified the family that manufactured the goods or provided a regional mark of distinction. Labels also often depicted images of powerful animals such as lions, unicorns, and dragons. Traditionally, such emblems adorned shields and armor as a means of distinguishing warriors on the battlefield; they now served a different form of competition. Their use in packaging designs—particularly on beer and spirits labels—visually communicated nobility, social status, influence, rank, geographical origin, tradition, or trustworthiness (figs. 1.10 and 1.11).

Fig. 1.9
Label for Sands's Sarsaparilla,
circa 1840.

Before the development of lithography, every label or wrapper was printed by hand with wooden presses on handmade paper. By the mid-1800s, multiple-colored designs could be reproduced in large quantities. Wallpaper print techniques inspired by contemporary art influenced the design of labels, boxes, and tins (fig. 1.12).
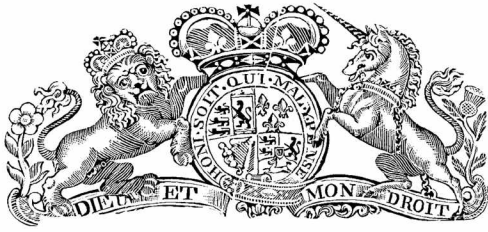
Fig. 1.10
Coats of Arms.
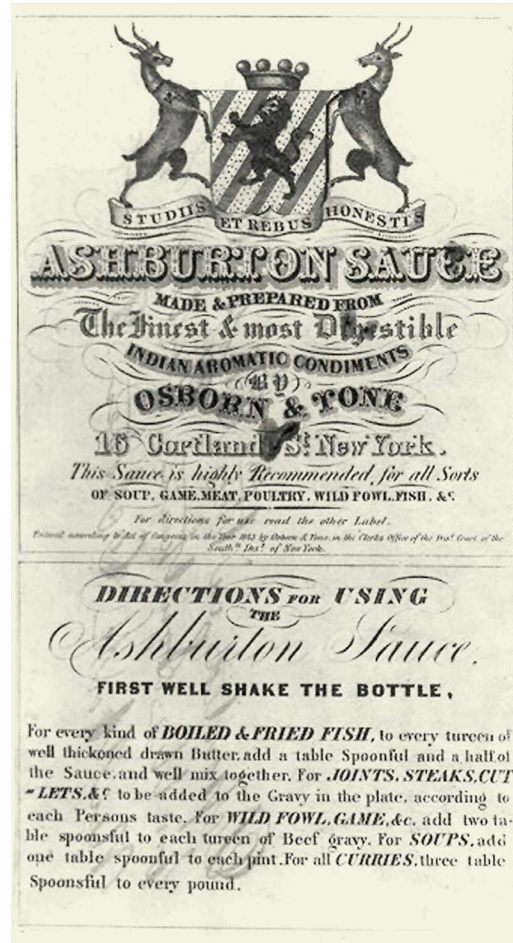
Fig. 1.11
Label for Ashburton Sauce, circa 1843.

Fig. 1.12
Quaker Oats paperboard canister.

Fig. 1.13
Heinz Fifty-Seven Varieties
advertisement.

Trademarked products were established. Brand names sought to make products appealing to the public and, through advertising, made them known worldwide. Packaging designs of consumer products were illustrated for newspaper advertisements, catalogues, signs, and posters. The growth of this form of pictorial advertising had a significant impact on the advancement of packaging design (fig. 1.13).

As early as the mid-1800s, manufacturers adopted the term brand, which derived from the use of a branding iron to burn a distinctive mark into the hides of livestock so ranchers could claim them as their rightful property (fig. 1.14). The communication of ownership through a visual symbol became the means by which merchants and manufacturers guaranteed the promise of the quality of their goods. The brand's symbol or name provided the consumer with a way to trace the product back to its source. The brand also became the vehicle for protecting a manufacturer's proprietary product information, as well as a means of visual recall for consumers.

Fig. 1.14
Branding cattle.

The Smith Brothers pioneered an official brand and trademark for their famous cough drops in Poughkeepsie, New York. First marketed in large glass jars in the mid-1800s, they had to be differentiated from candies sold the same way. The brothers decided to put their own pictures on small envelopes, which they supplied to shopkeepers, who used them to dole out the cough drops to customers. A picture of William with the word *trade* underneath and of Andrew with the word *mark* underneath on these preprinted envelopes helped make their product a success. Their idea of using the packaging to brand the product was revolutionary. As the packaging changed from envelopes to folding cartons, their "trademarked" pictures remained (figs. 1.15 and 1.16).

Fig. 1.15
Smith Brothers Cough Drops. The use of a "trade mark" was revolutionary for its time.

Fig. 1.16
Smith Brothers' Soothing Throat Drops, 2011.

The Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution saw a large-scale shift from rural to urban life throughout Europe in the mid-1800s. There were massive changes in the nature of work, the consumer economy, women's roles in society, and even in the size and nature of families. Up to this time most consumer products were essentially luxuries that served what was known as "the carriage trade," or upper-class customers. New machinery and technologies brought about new products and services that were now available to the masses. Railways and steamships made it easier to move goods over long distances, and manufacturers marketed and distributed consumer goods nationally and internationally as a result. Packaging design grew alongside these developments.

Three important innovations arose almost simultaneously at the end of the nineteenth century:

- The commercial development of lithography

- The invention of the papermaking machine

- The development of American packaging

The printing method of lithography, invented by Alois Senefelder in 1798, was a significant milestone in the history of packaging design and was advanced by methods of industrial production. Since everything from cardboard boxes and wooden crates to bottles and tins had a paper label, the lithographic process of printing labels greatly enhanced packaging technologies.

The Linotype ("line of type") composing machine, invented in 1884 by Ottmar Mergenthaler, was regarded as the greatest advance in printing since the development of movable type four hundred years earlier. The first practical mechanized typecasting machine, it revolutionized the printing industry. The Linotype machine produced solid lines of text cast from rows of matrices. Each matrix was a block of metal—usually brass—into which an impression of a letter had been engraved or stamped. Matrices were selected by a keyboard operator and then transferred mechanically to a mold-making device, producing a bar of type. After its use for printing, the metal was melted down for reuse.

The typesetting machine was much faster than typesetting by hand, requiring fewer employees, and its economy allowed for a new freedom in creating printed materials. Newspapers, books, advertisements, and packaging grew as popular tools for visual communication. The new technology spawned new business trades that served specific manufacturers' needs. For example, a lithographer's directory in 1887 included Robert Gair, the pioneer of machine-made cartons, and George Harris & Sons, who printed colorful cigar boxes. Business listings used the titles such as "label manufacturers," "labels–cigar," and "labels for druggists" (fig. 1.17).

In 1798, Frenchman Nicholas-Louis Robert invented a papermaking machine that began the mass industrialization of paper. Robert's machine formed paper on a looped belt, eliminating the laborious handwork necessitated by separate molds for each sheet. His creation allowed paper to be produced faster and at lower prices. The machine arrived in the United States in the mid-1800s.

The mechanized process of making paper was followed by the invention of machines that made paperboard. This allowed paper, previously used mainly for graphics and the written word, to be used for structural packaging, as opposed to mere wrapping.

Paperboard packaging was being commercially produced by 1839, and within ten years boxes for a wide assortment of products were

being manufactured. Corrugated board appeared in the 1850s as a more durable secondary packaging material, suitable for shipping many items together. As competition between manufacturers took off, specialized equipment was developed to speed production and reduce costs.

Robert Gair, a Brooklyn printer and paper bag manufacturer, invented the bulk manufacture of paperboard boxes in 1890. When a metal ruler used to crease bags shifted out of place during a printing run and made a cut instead, he accidentally discovered that by cutting and folding in one operation he could make prefabricated cartons.

Around 1900, paperboard cartons began to replace the handmade boxes and wooden crates used for trade. This marked the origin of the cereal box, as it is known today. In the early 1900s, box making and tin can manufacturing grew significantly, both in America and England. As trade increased, new machinery was invented not only to *make* boxes but also to weigh their contents, and fill and seal them.

Fig. 1.17
Double Warp lithographed cigar box label, circa 1869.
Lithographed labels were a topic that interested even the *New York Sun*. In 1888, the newspaper commented, "A few years ago any kind of label was considered good enough to put on a cigar box. Then they cost about $10 for 1,000; the average price paid now is $50. The label is often better than the cigar."[1]

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1 Quoted in Alec Davis, *Package and Print* (New York: Clarkson Potter, 1967), 27.

Mass Production

New mass-production and distribution methods, along with new packaging materials, changed the way food was integrated into people's lives. In 1899, wax-seal packaging, invented by Henry G. Eckstein, gave manufacturers the ability to more widely distribute fresh, perishable goods. These advances in packaging technology made staples like flour and meat more readily available. Hermetically sealed containers, which offered consumers shelf-stable food products, were another major development. The use of tin cans to seal cooked food made possible a year-round supply of foods that previously had been available only seasonally.

All the products that used these new inventions were advertised through the packaging design. This marked the beginning of the use of packaging design to communicate technological innovation and product developments (figs. 1.18 through 1.22).

The U.S. Congress, struggling with how to manage a free-market system and still protect consumers, passed the Pure Food and Drug Act in 1906. It was the first set of regulations imposed on packaging design. Although the law prohibited the use of false or misleading labeling, it did not require an accurate statement of ingredients, weight, or measure. Its mandate was, therefore, difficult to enforce.

With the occasional sale of inferior or impure goods making them wary, product protection became increasingly important to consumers. Honest merchants marked their goods with their own identification, both for consumer protection and

Fig. 1.18
Carnation condensed milk.
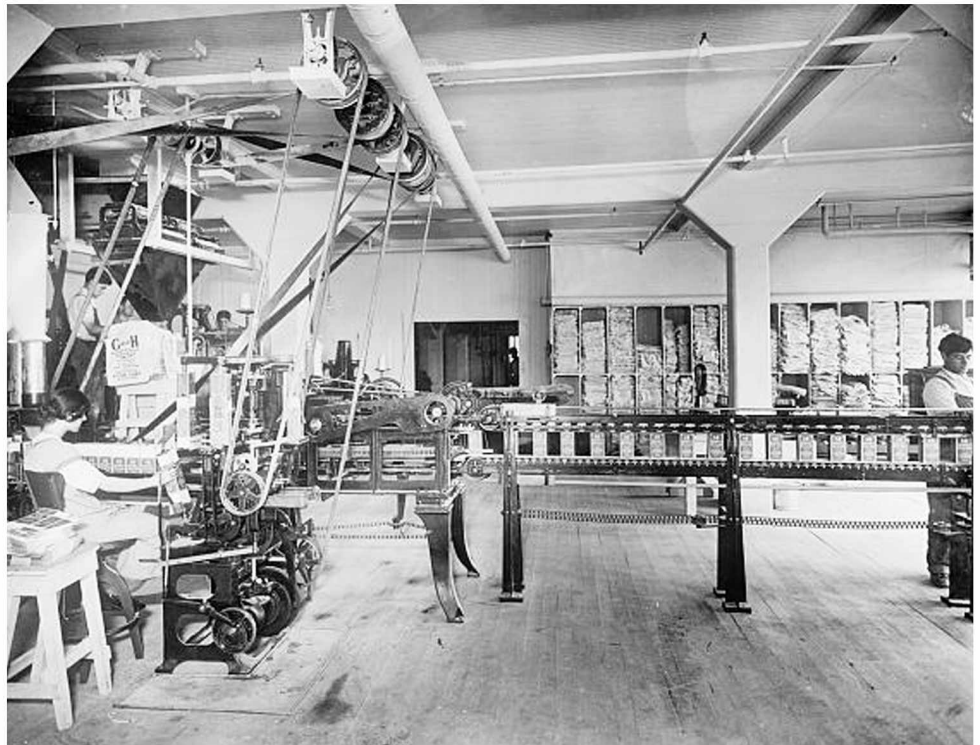
Fig. 1.19
Carton machine, circa 1910. This machine—which folded, glued, filled, weighed, and sealed thirty 2-pound or 5-pound cartons per minute and required only one operator—was revolutionary for its time.

Fig. 1.20
Waiter holding a bottle of
Budweiser beer on a tray,
circa 1908.
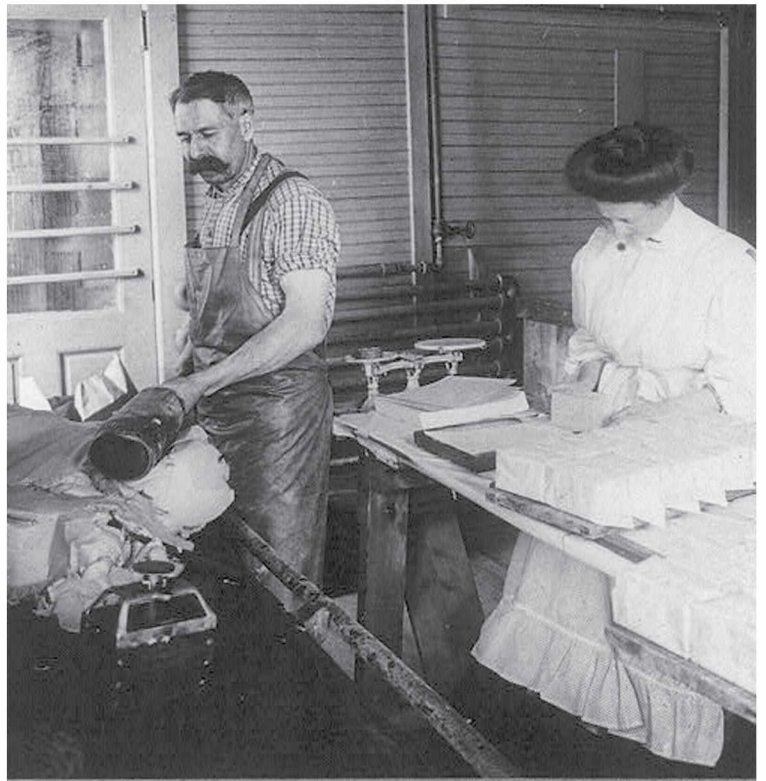
Fig. 1.21
Making up butter in pound
packages, circa 1910.

Fig. 1.22
Ad for Kellogg's Waxtite Toasted Corn Flakes, *Ladies Home Journal,* April 1916. Kellogg's used paperboard cartons to hold flaked corn cereal. A heat-sealed bag of Waxtite was initially wrapped around the outside of the box and printed with the brand name and product information. Later, the waxed bag was moved inside the carton. The marketing of cereal through paperboard packaging reveals Kellogg's keen understanding of its brand's strength through the marriage of the structural and visual elements of the packaging design.

Copyright, 1916, Kellogg Toasted Corn Flake Co.

At breakfast, lunch, or supper, millions of little folks every day look forward to that wonderful good flavor of Kellogg's Toasted Corn Flakes. The whole Kellogg business is built around the idea of making sure that these little friends are never disappointed. The quality, the flavor, the crisp-from-the-oven taste are always there when you open the Kellogg Waxtite package.

It is a remarkable fact that there is no storage space at Kellogg's. Each day's production is shipped crisp from the oven in the Kellogg *WAXTITE* package—that keeps the fresh, good flavor in and all other flavors out.

W. K. Kellogg

Kellogg's TOASTED CORN FLAKES
THE ORIGINAL HAS THIS SIGNATURE
W. K. Kellogg
KELLOGG TOASTED CORN FLAKE CO.
BATTLE CREEK, MICH.
The sweetheart of the corn

as a way to build brand awareness. Aluminum foil, which was developed when the first aluminum manufacturing plant opened in Switzerland in 1910, made it possible to effectively seal medications and other air-sensitive products such as tobacco and chocolate.

With the assembly line instituted by Henry Ford in 1913, mass production took off in the United States and soon included the food industry. A number of technical innovations led to the continued improvement of packaging and, consequently, to expanded food choices, thereby improving the standard of living—and increasing the demand on the design of its packaging. Manufacturers needed to address the concerns of consumers leery of paying for the packaging rather than the actual product. Many manufacturers had their printers design labels with a price, so consumers could see that they were not paying for the weight of the packaging materials or a marketer's surcharge. Labels for tea packets were among the first to include weights and prices along with product information.

In 1913, the Gould Amendment to the Pure Food and Drug Act required labeling to state the net quantity of a package's contents, either by weight, measure, or numerical count. This act did little to protect consumers, however, since many took no notice of this statement and continued to purchase products based on the size and shape of the package. This led Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis to apply the term *caveat emptor*, or "buyer beware."

By the early twentieth-century, the dependence of manufactured products on packaging materials and design had become complete: to the consumer, the product and the packaging were perceived as one and the same. Matches could not be sold without a matchbox. Dry goods were boxed through proper and affordable filling and storage methods. Canned goods provided safely preserved foods and consumer convenience (figs. 1.23 through 1.31).

In 1920, Clarence Birdseye, the father of frozen food, invented a system for flash-freezing fresh food. The process safely preserved the taste and appearance of food, which was then packed in waxed cartons. (The practice of preserving food by freezing can, however, be traced back to the early seventeenth century; the first time a business produced frozen food was late in the same century.)

Fig. 1.23
Birds Eye Frosted Foods advertisement, circa 1930.

Fig. 1.24
Birds Eye Frosted Foods box, circa 1930.

1.25

1.26

Fig. 1.25
G. W. Armstrong drugstore, circa 1913.

Fig. 1.26
Sunday shoppers on New York City's Lower East Side, circa 1915.

Fig. 1.27
Interior view of a Piggly Wiggly self-service grocery store, circa 1917.

1.27

1.28

Fig. 1.28
Bottles of shampoo and lotions manufactured by the C. L. Hamilton Co. of Washington, DC, circa 1909–1932.

Fig. 1.29
Woman shopping for canned goods at a Chicago grocery store, 1920s.

1.29

Industrial plastics development began in the mid-1800s, with celluloid material used for photographic film. But the invention of cellophane in the early 1920s marked the beginning of the era of plastics. Every decade since has seen the introduction of new plastic materials. Plastic, in all of its forms and formulations, became one of the most widely used materials for product packaging.

Post–World War I America was marked by several decades of urbanization and industrialization—and an increase in the availability of mass-produced merchandise. The 1920s brought an advertising boom as companies responded to postwar consumerism. New products, introduced at an accelerated rate, created demand and forced leading manufacturers to invent new ways of selling them. Products needed to look good, distinguish themselves from one another, and reflect the ever-changing values of the consumer if they were to sell. Marketing became a priority, and the business of packaging design developed as an important strategy for consumer products companies (figs. 1.32 and 1.33).

By the early 1930s, packaging design was blossoming into a mature industry. The American middle class constituted a growing consumer

Fig. 1.30
Apothecary bottles.
A display of several apothecary bottles containing drugs, on the shelf of the Eimer and Amind Drugstore, 1940.

Fig. 1.31
Arm & Hammer
Brand Soda.

Fig. 1.32
Placing packaged goods on a display shelf, circa 1939.

base, and women, as the decision makers for most household purchases, began to play a greater role in the economy. Marketers competing for their attention sought new ways to attract them to the marketplace.

A variety of publications provided suppliers, designers, and clients with the latest information in the field. *Advertising Age* devoted attention to packaging design, as did industry-specific magazines such as *American Druggist*, the *Tea and Coffee Trade Journal*, and *Progressive Grocer.* The publication of magazines such as *Modern Packaging* and *Packaging Record* signaled the complexity of this growing profession and the collaboration of consumer product companies with packaging design and advertising leaders, packaging materials manufacturers, printers, and others in production roles (fig. 1.34).

Fig. 1.34
Modern Packaging magazine cover, 1936.

Mid-Century Expansion

Companies that manufactured and supplied packaging materials were a resource for packaging designers. These companies, as well as printing firms, were often called upon to provide technical and creative assistance and to supply sample materials. Some large industrial corporations, such as DuPont in 1929 and the Container Corporation of America in 1935, created package design development departments. Collaboration between the three sources for packaging design—the design firm, the in-house design group at consumer product manufacturing companies, and the suppliers (manufacturers, preproduction specialists, and printers) persisted from that time on.

In the 1930s, advertising agencies such as N. W. Ayer & Son provided packaging design services. For some consumer product companies, such as Avon Products and Sears Roebuck, the demand for packaging design was so significant that they employed a staff of design personnel. Other businesses hired industrial-design professionals as "consumer engineers" and "product stylists" to apply their artistic abilities toward creating designs that would satisfy consumer demand. These new industrial designers were the professionals charged with the creative leadership necessary to support the modern consumer product industry.

The leaders of modern packaging design were professionals from diverse backgrounds. Walter Dorwin Teague and John Vassos both began their careers in advertising; Donald Deskey, Norman Bel Geddes, Russel Wright, and Henry Dreyfuss started out designing sets for theaters; and French immigrant Raymond Loewy brought his European sensibility to the consumer arts. Edwin H. Scheele, Roy Sheldon, and Francesco Gianninoto, all industrial designers, were able to move seamlessly into both product and packaging design (fig. 1.35).

It was, of course, important for designers to understand the technical aspects of packaging design in order to avoid creating something that could not be produced or that would not work with contemporary machinery or production lines. A broad understanding of packaging materials, manufacturing, printing, labeling, and shipping were essential for a successful end result.

Industrial designer Ben Nash is credited with "doing more than any other designer of his time to turn packaging design into a profession."[2] By the mid-1930s, Nash's firm had more than thirty designers on staff in its New York City office. Their role was to fuse technological and merchandising practicalities with aesthetic and psychological values. These designers grasped the idea that working with the manufacturer at the beginning of the project, rather than with the retailer at the end, would prove most successful.

Fig. 1.35
Raymond Loewy Associates, 488 Madison Avenue, New York City. Packaging drafting room I, 1950.
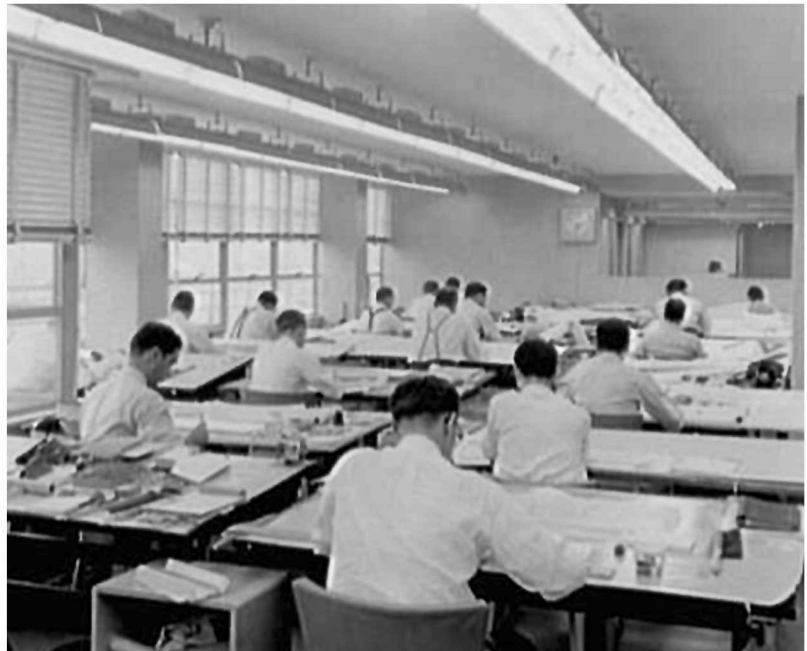
2 Arthur J. Pulos, *The American Design Adventure 1940–1975* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988).

Figure 1.36
American Home cover, circa 1949.

Figure 1.37
Ads in *American Home*, circa 1949.

They believed that a design assignment would be easier if there were known parameters: *what the product did, how it was made, what materials were used, where it was sold,* and so on. This information guided the designers in creating packages that provided a true reflection of the product without the use of deceptive styling. The concept of an understanding of the design constraints as a means to successfully guide a project is the framework of the creative methodology used today.

The designers of the 1940s and 1950s, with their diverse backgrounds, were the masters of a new profession of creating art for industry. Young designers came from commercial graphic design, theatrical set design, typographic design, fashion illustration, and engineering. Over time, successful design professionals developed a common set of principles to guide their business practices and processes. This new design professional was known as a packaging designer.
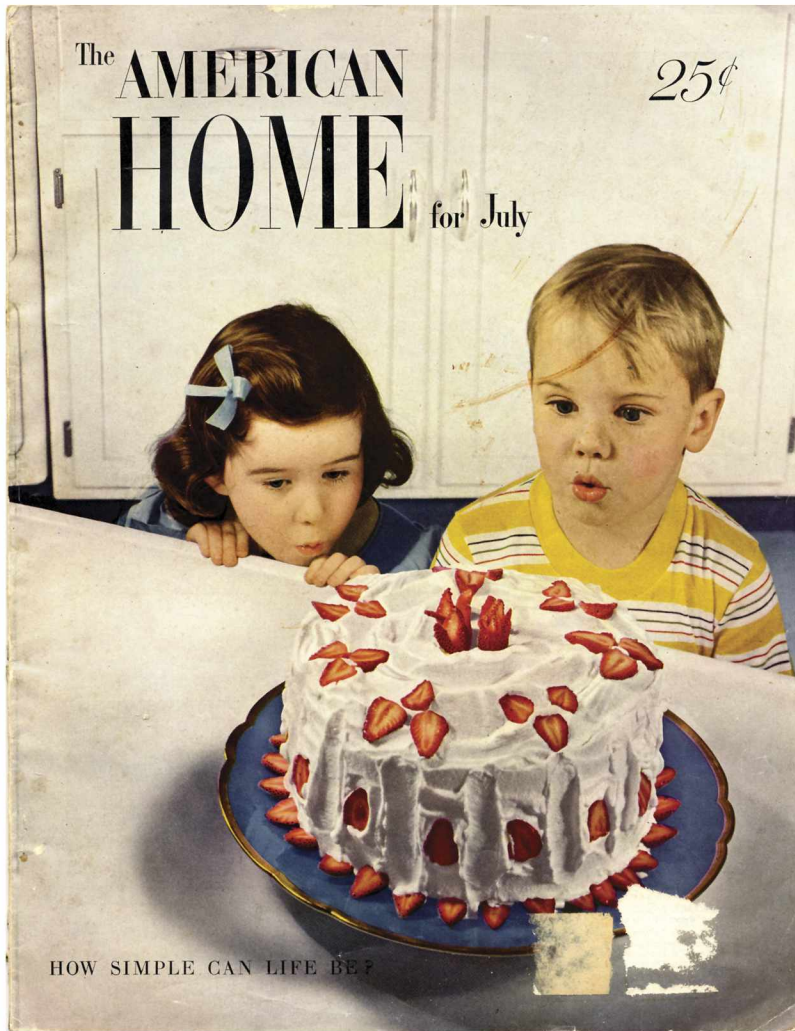
The invention of the shopping cart, introduced in 1937 at Standard Food Stores, added significantly to the shopping experience. Consumers could now pick out their own purchases instead of requesting items from a store clerk; the cart provided the convenience of not having to carry in hand all one's purchases. This tool also encouraged an increase in the number of purchases made at one time, which thrilled retailers. Women from all socioeconomic levels, who did the majority of shopping, found it more of an experiential activity. They shopped often and prided themselves on their ability to find reasonably priced goods. Packaging designs competed for their attention as the number of product choices in the marketplace grew (figs. 1.36 and 1.37).

In the mid-1940s, frozen food packaging was improved. Vegetables and fish products, considered a luxury after wartime rationing, were among the introductions in the frozen food category. Tin, steel, and aluminum were the materials used to manufacture cans, with the lighter aluminum eventually coming to dominate for some products (fig 1.38) Although the aerosol can with a propellant system and a spray valve had been invented as early as 1927, it was not until the spray valve was perfected in the 1940s that it became significant in the market, as an inexpensive way to dispense liquids, foams, powders, and creams.

Although aesthetic appearance was important, safety, convenience, production costs, and the choice of materials guided the packaging designer's creative process. They determined early on that while appearance may lead a consumer to make a purchase, it could not lead to product satisfaction. The ideal product packaging design provided the perfect complement of form and function (fig. 1.39).

Among the effects World War II had on packaging design was the proliferation of the supermarket and prepackaged food. Where once there had been a local store clerk to weigh and package the product, the container now stood

Fig. 1.38
Coca-Cola cans, circa 1940–1942.

independently in a brand new marketplace. This changed the marketplace forever: consumers came to rely less on their grocer to provide them with information about a product, and more on the product's packaging. In Europe, many goods continued to be sold in bulk, but in the United States, mass marketing caused goods to be sold in prepackaged form.

The growth of self-service stores in the late 1940s furthered the need for packaging design to be quickly identifiable; it was often termed "the silent salesman," since there was no live voice to plug a particular brand. Packaging design was propelled into a dynamic profession devoted to making consumer products more enticing to the discriminating public and to making brand recognition integral to product marketing (fig. 1.40). In this new competitive marketplace, packaging design was responsible for promoting a brand and positioning it prominently on the retail shelf (fig. 1.41). Food manufacturers became food marketers, and consultancies in brand management, product marketing, advertising, and packaging design sprang up everywhere.

Fig. 1.39
Poland Water ad, circa 1944.

Fig. 1.40
Packaging for Bon Ami Tidy Home sandwich bags, 1950s.

Fig. 1.41
Grand Union supermarket, circa 1952.

THE GROWTH OF COMPETITION

Marketers now saw most products as having established affinities that reflected gender roles, class, race, and other social characteristics of consumers. Decorative beer labels, for example, that had previously appealed to marketers did not appeal to the serious beer drinker who had different tastes and reacted negatively to delicate scroll-style labels more appropriate for female consumers. Marketers realized that different brands appealed to different kinds of people and that brand image is what sells the product (fig. 1.42).

The scientific and technical accomplishments of the National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA) during the 1960s did much to advance packaging materials and technology. Bite-size cubes, freeze-dried powders, squeezable aluminum tubes, and beverage packaging made from a foil laminate were all developed to provide protection, convenience, accessibility, and longer shelf life.

Advancements in typography in the 1960s supported packaging design's need to communicate the visual personality of a product more immediately. Phototypesetting created the image of the text in either positive or negative, according to need, on a photosensitive, usually transparent surface by exposing that surface to light

Fig. 1.42
Decorative beer cans.

through transparent matrices of the letters and symbols. It gave designers greater control over letterspacing and line spacing. With the commercial typographic work of designers such as Herb Lubalin and Milton Glaser, the mastery of typography became highly valued.

Packaging design and advertising (now deemed "commercial art"), along with typography and graphic design, emerged as a key part of the latter twentieth century's cultural landscape. They were all challenged by the pop art movement to redefine the boundaries between fine and commercial art. Pop art celebrated postwar consumerism and bridged the gap between "high" and "low" art by making common, mass-produced objects appear grand and unique (figs. 1.43 and 1.44).

Increased competition engendered the need for corporations to present a unified and consistent image to ensure that the public associated the company with its products. Graphic materials that represented a company—such as letterheads, logotypes, truck signage, and business cards—became part of that company's corporate identity. The emphasis on corporate identity and the outpouring of new products forced companies to update and unify their products' visual image regularly in order to secure a strong, lasting impression of the company in consumers' minds (fig. 1.45).

Fig. 1.43
Pepsi graphic, 1960s.
Designer: John Alcorn
Client: Pepsi

Fig. 1.44
Campbell's Tomato
Soup graphic, 1968.
Designer: John Alcorn
Client: Campbell's Soup

Fig. 1.45
Revlon 'Super Natural' packaging
design, 1964.

Consumer Protections

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy gave the first presidential address before Congress devoted entirely to consumer interests. In this speech he recognized that consumers' rights to safety, information, choice, freshness, convenience, and attractiveness needed protection. Gaps between the existing regulatory bodies—the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Federal Trade Commission (FTC), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)—meant that the consumer was inadequately protected. As a result of the work of consumer interest groups throughout the 1960s and of Esther Peterson, the special assistant to the president on consumer affairs, Congress enacted the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act (FPLA) in 1967.

The FPLA directed the FTC and the FDA to issue regulations requiring that all consumer commodities be labeled to disclose net contents, the identity of the commodity, and the name and place of business of the product's manufacturer, packer, and distributor. The act authorized additional regulations where necessary to prevent consumer deception or facilitate value comparisons with respect to descriptions of ingredients, slack fill of packages, use of "cents-off" or lower-price labeling, and the characterization of package sizes. The Office of Weights and Measures of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, a branch of the Department of Commerce, was authorized to promote uniformity in state and federal regulations for the labeling of consumer commodities.

The federal mandate for accurate packaging labels meant consumer product companies had to revise their packaging to meet these new standards. As a result, many design firms, in an effort to increase business, expanded their capabilities to include packaging design.

The Packaging Design Firm

The need for distinctive packaging to drive sales forced manufacturers to develop new materials and structures. Packaging designers, with specific professional capabilities and experience, were needed to extend existing designs not only to new packaging forms but to apply the federally mandated requirements as well.

Through the mid-1960s, the U.S. economy grew rapidly. Production exceeded consumer demand, so competition increased. New products entered the market swiftly, but product failures increased as profits diminished. Sophisticated consumers became harder to reach; they showed greater shopping selectivity, were suspicious of false claims, and appeared totally unimpressed with superficial product or packaging changes.

As differences in the products themselves became negligible or even nonexistent, manufacturers began to look for ways to distinguish their products from those of the competition. There were also improvements in the distribution and selling of goods, while technological breakthroughs advanced new production techniques, processes, and entirely new material concepts. The challenges presented by marketing and technology ushered in an era of ambitious new product development.

In 1966, designer Alan Berni urged manufacturers to concentrate on the development of metal surfaces to provide designers with greater creative flexibility in creating unique packaging. Other designers, including Hayward Blake, suggested that more attention be directed to the tactile aspect of the container design. Among the materials developments was grainless paperboard that allowed designers to develop contoured and multicurved packages.

By the 1970s, a number of packaging design firms had opened offices internationally. Raymond Loewy had worked on packaging designs for Maxwell House, Kellogg's, Nabisco, Quaker Oats, Ivory, Duncan Hines, Heinz, and Betty Crocker. The role of packaging design became one of expressing a well-defined marketing strategy rather than merely creating a container and point-of-sale billboard.

In the United States, the cultural and sexual revolution spawned new strategies for marketing innovative product packaging. The sensory stimuli of subliminal marketing found its way into packaging concepts (figs. 1.46 and 1.47).

The year 1977 marked the incorporation of Apple Computer, with Steve Jobs at the helm. The company launched the Apple II personal computer that same year. This new consumer access to affordable and user-friendly computer technology was revolutionary. The Macintosh operating system, which had first appeared with the Macintosh 128K computer, changed the design world forever and established Apple's computers as the cornerstone of any design business.

Apple installed itself not only as a leader in technology but, with the launch of the first iMac computers in an assortment of "flavors"—bright colors radically different from the standard beige

of most other computers and computer-related hardware—pioneered the idea that design is critically important and a driving force in product differentiation. The iMac flavors started a trend not only in the computer industry but also in small electronics, office supplies, housewares, fashion accessories, and packaging design.

By the 1980s, the growth of large shopping centers and supermarkets spurred the demand for more products. Supermarkets expanded their food operations, offering all types of prepared and frozen foods. Small specialty shops within the supermarket played to consumers' nostalgia for the local butcher, florist, and baker, prompting a new direction for packaging designs and a greater demand for merchandising display systems. Successful product sales in supermarkets depended heavily on the brand's packaging design (figs. 1.48 and 1.49).

The steady increase in marketplace competition and the realization by both marketers and manufacturers that good design is a corporate asset gave rise to the establishment of design firms throughout the United States. New firms sprang up, and existing firms opened offices in other regions of the country in order to redesign stagnant brands, extend the product lines of existing brands, and design the branding for new products. Packaging design gained worldwide recognition.

Design associations that supported the interests of packaging designers provided networking opportunities, created public awareness of the profession, and facilitated communication among design professionals. Membership in organizations such as the Package Design Council (United States), the Design Council (United Kingdom), the Japan Package Design Association, the Thai Packaging Association, and the World Packaging Association gained recognition both nationally and internationally. In the United States, The Coleman Group, Deskey Associates, Gerstman + Meyers, Landor Associates, Primo Angeli, and Teague Associates were among the numerous design firms whose primary business was packaging design.

Fig. 1.46
L'eggs pantyhose packaging, circa 1969.
Designer: Robert Ferriter
Client: Hanes

Fig. 1.47
Tickle antiperspirant packaging, circa 1977.
Designer: unknown
Client: Bristol-Myers

Fig. 1.48
Trix, Circus Fun, and Pac-Man cereal boxes, 1980s.

Fig. 1.49
Brillo, S.O.S., and Chore Boy packaging, 1980s.

New Refinements in Packaging Design

By the 1990s, consumer product companies, with their many products branded and merchandised together, recognized the need to make packaging engineers part of the product development team and packaging designers part of the marketing team. The demand for convenience and value dictated many aspects of materials development and marketing. Space efficiency, reusability, and environmental concerns also gained in importance, reflecting consumers' changing values. Soda can design shifted from disposable pull-tab openings to easy-open pull tabs that remained affixed to the top of the can after opening in order to address consumers' environmental concerns, and glass was replaced by plastic to reduce breakage. These innovations, along with laminates and specialty coatings for paperboard, all provided new design opportunities for packaging designers.

By 1998, the average American supermarket had approximately thirty thousand SKUs, or stock-keeping units (a specific product's numeric identifier represented in a scanable bar code that allows inventory to be easily tracked), approximately 50 percent more than five years earlier.[3] Mergers between consumer product companies and innovations in technology yielded even shorter product life spans. In response, companies redesigned their packages to ensure that a product's message grabbed consumers' attention and made a sale more quickly than ever before (figs. 1.50 through 1.53). Opportunities for packaging designers skyrocketed.

In the early twenty-first century, luxury emerged as a consumer priority, and design became a means of depicting opulence. Design—from that of fashion, home products, and automotive to cell phones and computers—became an even more critical factor in a world of rampant consumerism. With consumers' aesthetic sensibilities sharpened by the ever-escalating quality of packaging design, companies became keenly aware of—and focused on—the impact of design on purchasing decisions.

3 Daniel Pink, "Metaphor Marketing," *Fast Company*, March 31, 1998.

Fig. 1.50
Gillette shaving cream and shaving gel cans, 1990s.
Design firm: Kornick Lindsay
Client: Gillette

Fig. 1.51
Frito-Lay snack canisters, 1990s.
Design firm: Kornick Lindsay
Client: Frito-Lay

Fig. 1.52
Heinz "EZ Squirt" ketchup bottles for colored ketchup.
Design firm: Interbrand
Client: Heinz

Fig. 1.53
Special K cereal
packaging ad, 1999.

Changing Times and Values

Throughout history, packaging designs have had varied objectives that reflected the different values and needs of different time periods. Although no one theme or approach has tied together the state of packaging design in the early twenty-first century, simplicity has emerged as a defining philosophy. This highly regarded value—the thoughtful process of reducing the unnecessary complexity of design—advanced a streamlined focus to packaging design communication. The challenges of an effective and impactful packaging design communication strategy in an increasingly cluttered marketplace, along with the growing value consumers place on sustainability, has elevated the value of the packaging design and, in turn, the packaging designer (fig. 1.54).

Packaging design is an integral part of a company's overall brand strategy, and, consequently, there has been a heightened value placed on packaging design. The professions involved in the business of bringing a product to market are key stakeholders in the process. Previously, the marketer was in the advantageous position of decision maker, while other industry professionals functioned as service providers or vendors. The global business world no longer perceives the role of design as a means to an end, but rather as a core component of a comprehensive corporate strategy.

With this evolving understanding of the value of design, marketers have come to rely heavily on the innovations, knowledge, and expertise—along with the creative strategies—of designers and suppliers in order to meet their business objectives. Additionally, with their long history of administering brands, packaging design professionals have a unique understanding not only of marketing communication strategy but also of all the specific design challenges, from visual, structural, material, production, and regulatory to

Fig. 1.54
Evian designer water bottle, circa 2007.
Designer: Christian Lacroix
Client: Evian

cross-cultural communication challenges (figs. 1.55 through 1.58).

The examination of packaging design throughout history begins with the needs of people, societies, and civilizations. With the growing understanding of consumerism's impact on the planet, packaging designers, along with marketers, have come to recognize sustainability and collaborative responsibility for the environment as critical components to packaging design in the twenty-first century. Economic challenges, shifting lifestyles, technological advances, and market innovations have brought about a reassessment of the function and role of packaging design. Technological innovations continue to be the driver of changes and advancements in the function of packaging

Fig. 1.55
Method Dish Soap revolutionized a category in 2001.
Designer: Karim Rashid
Client: Method

Fig. 1.56
5 chewing gum, 2007.
This packaging design revolutionized the category with a sleek envelope structure and eye-catching black and bold graphics.
Design firm: Baker
Client: Wrigley

Fig. 1.57
Heinz ketchup PlantBottle, 2011.
In partnership with Coca-Cola's plant-based plastic bottle technology, Heinz introduced its iconic packaging as sustainable.

design; however, the conservative use of natural resources and energy, the reduction and reuse of waste, and the moderation of consumption are critical to the function of packaging design as a responsible societal tool. Packaging design's on-going development is bound up in meeting new demands and desires while focusing on the environment first.

Executive summary

THE SAUCY FISH CO.™

Imagine you're an own-brand supplier of chilled fish. One day, your key client, Tesco, challenges you to create a winning product strategy to boost sales across their entire underperforming chilled fish category.

Would you have predicted that a £22,750 design investment could, in one year, become £10million of projected sales? With next to no marketing support or promotional activity? That's what happened when chilled fish supplier, Seachill, asked Elmwood to create a brand and packaging for The Saucy Fish Company – a new, premium range of chilled fish and sauces.

From
£22,750 to **£10 million**
projected sales for Saucy Fish in its first year with no above the line support

In first 13 weeks there were only 2 weeks on POS promotion. There has been no ATL promotion at all since launch.

Paid for itself on
1st day
of sales

The design paid for itself on the first day
3 sku's were trialled in 332 Tesco stores at launch in January 2010. Initial investment for 3 sku's was £13.5k. First day sales were £22k.

497%
sales increase in six weeks

Sales within Tesco's Added Value Fresh Range category saw a 497% increase over the period from March to mid-April. And we're not talking about a high-volume Value product: Saucy Fish is a premium product retailing at £4.00.

219 words

Project overview

The challenge:
People don't know what to do with fish. And they don't know what sauce goes with which fish

Our task:
Position Saucy Fish as the solution: Experts in the Fish and Sauce category

1. Outline of brief

Business challenge
Tesco's chilled fish category was underperforming. To boost sales, they challenged Seachill to come up with a winning product strategy. Seachill then came to us. Once we'd discovered that Tesco had only one or two premium chilled fish products on offer which were not doing the premium job they were supposed to do, and with little innovation in the category, we realised we had a golden opportunity to make a real splash in a stagnant sector.

Consumer challenge
Consumers are generally unsure about what to do with fish, and how to cook and serve it. Added to this lack of consumer interest was the category packaging itself, which is uniformly lacklustre and practically invisible next to the more 'foodie', dynamic chilled food cabinets. Our work was cut out.

2. Description

Seachill came to us with a basic 'fish with sauce' product. Building on this and the need to make chilled fish more appealing, our packaging concept brought fresh fish and sauce together – a category first.

3. Overview of market

Chilled fish is a low-interest, low-growth category. Even though Tesco have a 26% market share of the UK's grocery category, they only have a 22% share of the fresh/chilled fish market – an underperformance of 6%. In other words, lots of people are shopping at Tesco but not many were buying their fresh or chilled fish. In fact, Tesco were losing customers to Waitrose and M&S.

533 words

Project overview cont.

**Simple Proposition
Simple name**

4. Project launch date
January 2010

5. Size of design budget
An initial investment of £13,500 to trial three SKUs in 332 Tesco stores
An additional investment of £9,250 for a further ten SKUs, rolled out across all 800 stores
Total investment = £22,750

6. Outline of design solution – Simple proposition, simple name

Our mission was clear: create an authoritative, premium brand identity and packaging concept. This had to:
- Position Saucy Fish as the experts in the Fish and Sauce category
- Attract customers and reassure them that chilled fish is a safe, simple and delicious option
- Inject the category with some much-needed personality, attitude and innovation.
- What's in a name? – We had to 'tell it like it is' because of lack of consumer understanding.

We combined vibrant design with clear signposting. The simple graphic of a fish topped with sauce immediately communicates 'fish with sauce'. Which meant we didn't need to show the customers how it's served – one of the biggest consumer challenges.

The 'ping' of white with the 'wave' of sauce draws your eye to the range, while the different colours for the sauces aids navigation. The brand language takes things a step further with a tone of voice that's designed to charm, disarm and be accessible to any home cook.

Packaging innovation
We used vacuum packaging to clearly showcase the quality of the fish, and an integral cardboard sleeve to show off the sauce (contained in transparent sachets).

To create better stand-out and accessibility, we designed 'shelf-ready' trays so the packs could be merchandised vertically rather than horizontally.

Summary of results

Saucy Fish will be worth £10m in its first year

We turned a £22,750 design investment into £10 million projected sales
And this was just year one in only one of the big four grocery outlets.

This investment paid for itself on day one
The initial £13,500 design investment (3 sku's) paid for itself on the very first day of being trial-launched in 332 Tesco stores in January 2010 – £22k sales on first day, generating sales of over £100k per week.

Increase in market distribution

↑ **332 to 800**

After the first month, Tesco increased its distribution from 332 stores to 800, in just four months.

300
332

Summary of results cont.

Total sales from launch to end of April 2010 in Tesco alone
£750,000

Total profit from launch to end of April 2010
£60k (gross)

497% sales increase in six weeks
Sales within Tesco's Added Value Fresh Range category saw a 497% increase over the six-week period from March to mid-April – with very little promotional activity.

Total sales from launch to end of April 2010 – £750,000
Total profit from launch to end of April 2010 – £60k (gross)

£40k ROI to date

Saucy Fish has generated sales of £750,000 in the four months since launch – a ROI of £40k to date.

£22,750 Investment

£40k ROI to date

Summary of results cont.

3x normal market growth

Tesco's chilled fish category has out performed the market norm 3 times over

£10m growth
in market value at Tesco

Increase in market share (triple the growth of the UK market)
Considering Tesco had been underperforming by 6%, it's market share in the UK's chilled fish category has grown by 6% against an average market growth of 2% – outperforming the market three times over.

Tesco's market share of the UK's chilled fish category at end of 2009 was 21.7% (value £292.4m). At 18th April 2010, Tesco's market share has grown to 22.3% (value £292.4m).

Increase in market value
Tesco's market value in chilled fish category has grown by £10m, of that Saucy Fish accounts for 10%. This means that Saucy Fish is acting as a signpost for the category, and is attracting more customers in to shop it.

Consumers can't get enough
Repeat and trial rates are impressive. The repeat rate is 19% after 12 weeks against a category average of 12%, and 39% of shoppers have purchased more than one variant.

> Dear sirs, My wife and I have just tried your lemon and pink peppercorn sauce on cod and found it to be top restaurant quality. This is the first time we have tried your products and it most certainly won't be the last. We will use your products to entertain with and also recommend them to our friends. Truly Great Product!!!!.
> Kind regards, James Pearse.

> "I've just tried your Haddock with mustard and dill vinaigrette and it was absolutely beautiful!!! I came across this product in Tesco and having never seen or heard of it before, I thought I may as well give it a go and am so pleased I did. Reasonably priced, easy to cook, no bones (and that's a big plus) and the vinaigrette, just gorgeous. Can't wait to try more in the range!!!
> Paula B, Leyland Lancs.

Fig. 1.58
Saucy Fish brand strategy.
Design firm: Elmwood Leeds
Client: Debbie & Andrew's

2 Defining Packaging Design

What Is Packaging Design?

Packaging design is the connection of form, structure, materials, color, imagery, typography, and regulatory information with ancillary design elements to make a product suitable for marketing. Its primary objective is to create a vehicle that serves to contain, protect, transport, dispense, store, identify, and distinguish a product in the marketplace. Ultimately, the goal of a packaging design is to meet marketing objectives by distinctively communicating a consumer product's personality or function and generating a sale.

There are tens of thousands of different products lining the shelves of the average supermarket. Department stores, mass merchandisers, specialty stores, outlets, and the Internet are all retail marketing sites where products are brought to life

and attract consumers through their packaging design. The vastness of consumer choice brings about product competition that, in turn, fosters the need for market distinction and differentiation. In a consumer society, products and the design of their packaging become so intertwined that they are no longer perceived as either separate objects—or, ultimately, objects of necessity. Successful packaging design, in fact, creates desire (fig. 2.1).

Planning, execution, pricing, placement, promotion, advertising, merchandising, distribution, and sales are all part of the mix of activities involved in moving goods from producer to consumer. Packaging design is one component of this multivariate series of marketing activities designed to create brand loyalty and sell product.

Fig. 2.1
Shelf set of soap brands. Without distinctive packaging, products would all look the same.

Successful packaging design depends on a clearly defined strategy—the tactical plan that delineates a product's distinguishing characteristics and the contrast between it and competitive products. There may be a difference between ingredients, performance, or materials—or there may not be any discernible difference at all between similar products. Marketing is often simply about creating the perception of a difference. Whatever it is, marketers define the approach that will capitalize on what makes their products salable. The packaging design is a vehicle in the competitive challenge of communicating product differentiation.

For many brands, the packaging design establishes the look of the category. Competitors may adopt a similar appearance or launch a packaging design that breaks away from other products in their category. The use of color, typographic styles, characters, structure, and other design elements often become category cues for consumers.

Ideally, the packaging design provides the consumer with clear and specific information (whether consciously or subconsciously) and, possibly, a point of comparison (which one appears to be a more effective product, a better value, a more convenient package?)—and incites a purchase. Whether it's a calculated decision or an impulse buy, the physical look of the product's packaging is frequently the sole reason for a product's sale. These goals—to stand out from competitors, to avert consumer confusion, and to influence the consumer's purchasing decision—make packaging design a critical factor in the success of a company's integrated brand marketing plan (fig. 2.2).

Fig. 2.2
Proprietary structures: Ultra Palmolive Pure + Clear and Ultra Palmolive Baby.
An established brand's line extension is positioned for different usage occasions.

Culture and Values

As a part of the material ephemera of society, packaging design reveals and reflects the cultural values of the market. Since packaging designs exist primarily in marketplaces (the supermarket, merchandiser, specialty store, department store, or e-tail) where people with varied cultural backgrounds and values come together, it must function as the aesthetic means of communicating to a diverse consumer population. In many ways, the successful designer employs aspects of anthropology, sociology, psychology, ethnography, and linguistics throughout the design process in order to develop strategic design solutions.

It is through extensive market research and the planned employment of the complicated mix of design elements that packaging designs communicate the appropriate cultural values for attracting the target consumer. Successful packaging designs create a window through which consumers see themselves and their desires (fig. 2.3).

The impact of cultural values and beliefs on the consumer's purchasing decisions should not be overestimated. Fads and trends; fashion and art; the consumer's age, upward mobility, and ethnicity—all are reflected in packaging designs.
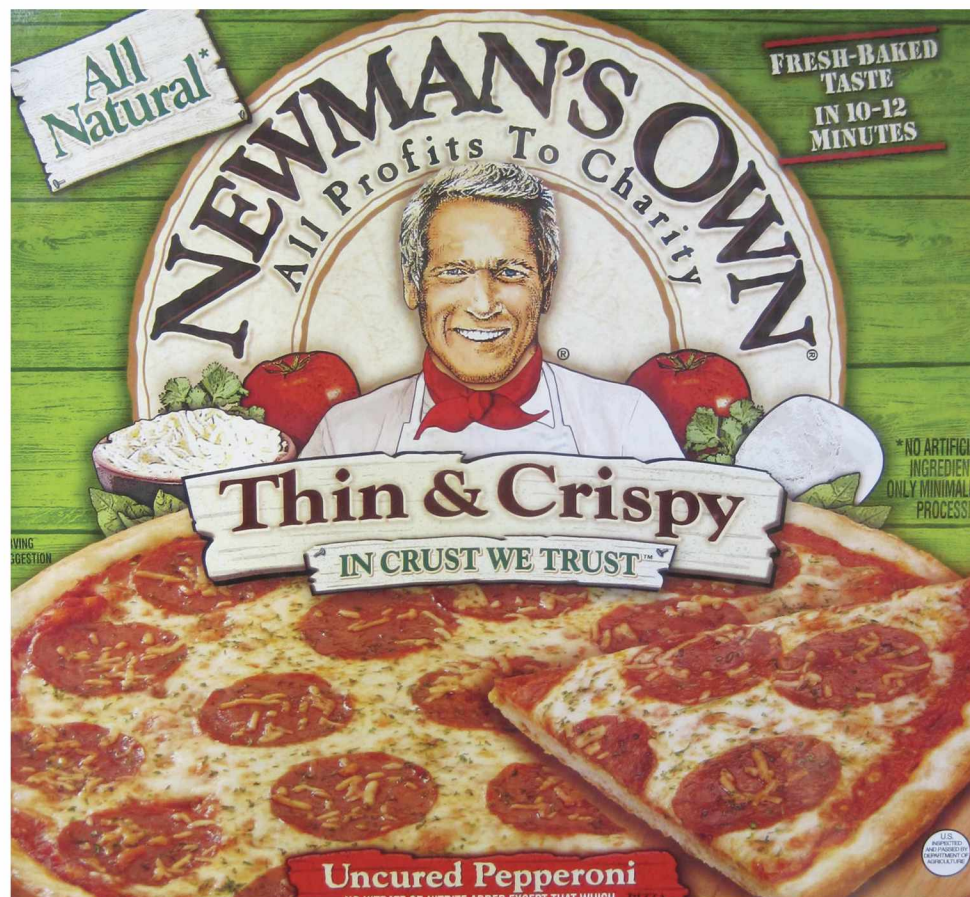

Fig. 2.3
Newman's Own Thin & Crispy pepperoni pizza.
Tagline: "In crust we trust!"

IT IS WELL DOCUMENTED that over two-thirds of purchase decisions are made at the point-of-sale, as the shopper stands at the shelf or display. Therefore, it follows that each point-of-sale presence (packaging and merchandising) has a direct and significant impact on its sales revenue.

To communicate effectively at the point-of-sale, you need to begin with an understanding of exactly which decisions shoppers are making at your category. In other words, do they approach the shelf looking for a certain brand? A certain color? A product for their skin, their hair type, or their condition? Of course, the trends vary widely across product categories.

While these differences make it difficult to generalize...I can offer one consistent observation: in most cases, there is a great deal of opportunity to "trade up" current brand users to larger sizes, multiple items, and/or higher-margin products. In fact, we've found that this is usually a far more realistic objective than "winning over" a competitive brand user in the five to ten seconds that she spends at the shelf. However, the challenge is to "trade people up" in a way that minimizes cannibalization and maximizes overall revenue. Here we've found that positioning products or sub-brands for different usage occasions is typically more effective (i.e., more likely to encourage multiple purchases) than the "good/better/best" strategy that many companies employ.

Scott Young, "Breaking through the Clutter,"
Perception Research Services International, 2012

In many cases the packaging design's specific goal is to project certain cultural values; in others, the design communicates to the values of a broader consumer audience. In some instances, the brand or the packaging design takes on a perceived value predicated on a very specific, or target, consumer demographic. Whatever the case, packaging design should always be culturally appropriate, linguistically accurate, visually logical, and competitively designed.

Target Market

As a selling tool, packaging design is most effective when a marketer has identified a niche to claim or a specific consumer group to target. Though companies want to sell the most products to the largest number of consumers, defining an audience provides a clear focus for the marketing of the product and its packaging design. A clearly defined target market—one that defines consumers' values, preferences, lifestyles, and habits—provides a framework that helps determine design strategies and appropriate product communications.

Other considerations include the determination of which consumer base would benefit most from the product and who would be most receptive to it. Marketers use the answers to these and other questions as a means of devising packaging design, advertising, and all brand communication to attract the target consumer group. In the competitive retail arena, the packaging design must visually stimulate interest and affect a consumer's purchasing decision—all in the blink of an eye. The goal is for the packaging to have unique features that attract a specific audience (fig. 2.4).

Packaging Design and Brand

If packaging design is part of a bigger picture—the brand—then what defines a brand? In its most basic form, a brand is the trade name given to a product or service. *Brand* has, however, become an all-encompassing term for everything that identifies a seller's good or services. Although it has been used for decades, its overuse and varied interpretations across professions causes much confusion.

In packaging design, a brand is a name, a design, or symbol of ownership, along with the identification of products, services, people, and places. Consumer product brands are defined by their presence in our consumer society, by their products' physical attributes and emotional connections, and by how they relate to con-sumers' aspirations. This includes everything from product names, packaging design, advertising design, signage, uniforms, vehicles, stationery and printed materials, Web and social media presence, and even architecture. The brand becomes the means by which a company differentiates itself in the minds of consumers. Through the combination of three-dimensional materials and structure with two-dimensional visual communication elements, packaging design creates the image of the brand and builds the relationship between the consumer and the product. The packaging design visually articulates the brand's promise, whether it be quality, value, performance, safety, or convenience (fig. 2.5).

Fig. 2.5
Coffee packaging design. With consumer products, the lines are often blurred between the packaging design and the brand.

BRAND EVOLUTION

One way to understand brands is to anthropomorphize them. Brands are conceived, and then they are born, grow, and continue to evolve. They have identifiable characteristics that distinguish them from others. Their designs define them and communicate their purpose and position. In fact, the term *evolutionary* is commonly used in packaging design to refer to the process by which brands grow and develop over time.

A packaging design that has undergone a redesign whose outcome is a similar but slightly updated or refreshed version of the previous design is termed an "evolutionary design." The opposite of an evolutionary design is a complete alteration of the previous design; this is called a "revolutionary design." Revolutionary redesigns are often radical design changes. Evolutionary and revolutionary redesigns are both effective strategies for successful packaging designs (figs. 2.6 through 2.13).

A BRAND IS A PERSON'S GUT FEELING about a product, service, or company. It's a gut feeling because we're all emotional, intuitive beings, despite our best efforts to be rational. It's a person's gut feeling because, in the end, the brand is defined by individuals, not by companies, markets, or the so-called general public.

Marty Neumeier, *The Brand Gap*
(New York: New Riders, 2003).

2.6

2.7

Fig. 2.6
Luden's cough drops, prior packaging design.

Fig. 2.7
Luden's cough drops, evolutionary redesign (boxes).
Design firm: The Goldstein Group
Client: Luden's

Fig. 2.8
Luden's cough drops evolutionary redesign (bags).

2.8

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BRAND IDENTITY

The brand identity is the brand's essential components, including the name, colors, symbols, and other design elements. The visual representation and combination of these elements defines the brand and serves to differentiate the products and/or services of one marketer from another. Brand identity creates an emotional connection with the consumer. Whether it conveys abstract or concrete ideas about a product, the identity becomes a consumer's mental picture or perception of the product. The strength of a brand identity is evident by consumers' visual recall of key design elements. A brand connection is a must-have for a packaging design's marketing success (fig. 2.14).

BRAND PROMISE

Brand promise is the marketer's or manufacturer's assurance or guarantee about the product and its claims. In packaging design, the brand promise is communicated through the brand identity. Fulfillment of a brand's promise is key to gaining consumer loyalty and a means toward ensuring a product's success on the shelf.

Brand promise, like any other promise, can be broken. There are many ways this can happen. When it does, not only is the reputation of the brand and the manufacturer discredited: consumers may choose to go elsewhere or purchase another product.

The perception of a brand promise and a product's perceived value can be adversely affected by the following failures of its packaging design:

- The design malfunctions by not dispensing or opening easily.

- The typography is difficult to read, the product name is hard to pronounce, or the nature of the product is not clear. For example, the text on the package is illegible or communicates the product's function poorly.
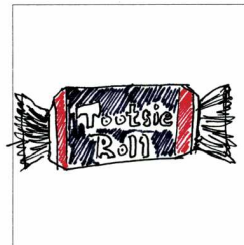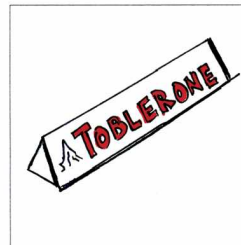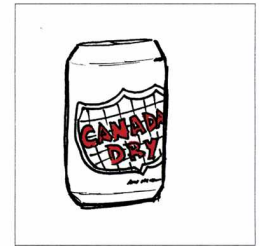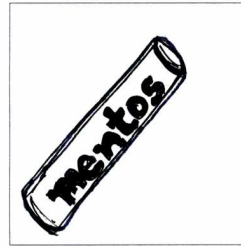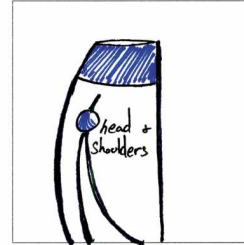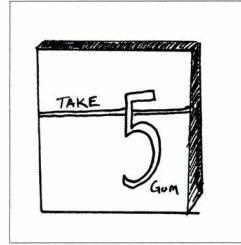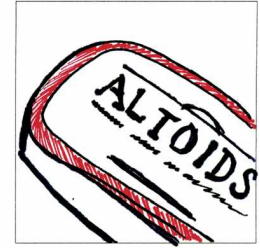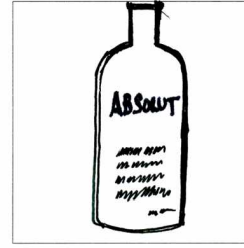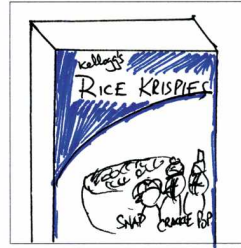
2.14

- The design communicates a product superior to its competition, but the product is actually inferior. For example, an appetizing photograph on the packaging does not resemble the actual appearance of the contents.

- An overly elaborate design communicates that the product is too expensive, so the consumer chooses not to buy it. For example, the special papers, elaborate die cuts, foil stamping, or other embellishments might be used in an effort to impress but are perceived as mere frivolity.

- A poor-quality design is perceived as packaging a cheaper product with inferior quality. For example, the design's materials do not reflect the product's actual quality, price point, and personality.

- A design appears too similar to its competition and causes confusion in the market.

- The product contents are inaccurately reported on the packaging (e.g., its net weight).

- The brand identity elements are out of scale with the packaging structure.

- Inconsistent, unbelievable, or inaccurate claims are included on the packaging.

- The packaging structure is difficult to use or unable to be scanned.

BRAND EQUITY

As the packaging design becomes a brand's image, consumers come to recognize and visually identify with its values, qualities, features, and attributes. From a marketing standpoint, the associations of the packaging design with the product—from its physical structure and visual identity to a consumer's intangible emotional connection with it—become inextricably linked to the brand's legitimacy and reliability. These identifying characteristics can be measured by how much and how often the consumer identifies with them. These visual identifiers become valuable assets, or brand equity.

Companies manage their brand equities with the utmost care. Since it is often difficult to separate the consumer's perception of the brand from the packaging, the elements that comprise the brand's identity are priceless. When a brand delivers on its commitment to its product attributes and promise of quality and value, it builds brand equity.

Brands become established category leaders because of the strength of their equities through the consistent delivery of their brand promise—a trustworthy, reliable, quality product. Consumers favor brands with strong reputations, which facilitates and simplifies product choice. Consumers buy what they trust.

For existing brands, typography, symbols, icons, characters, colors, and structures are among the visual elements of a packaging design that can comprise a company's brand equity. For new brands that have only a short history in the marketplace, there is no existing equity to build on. The packaging design establishes the new product's image in the eyes of the consumer.

The value of brand equity is found in consumer awareness of, familiarity with, associations with, and loyalty to a brand's image and personality. Brand equity is a key component of a successful packaging design; it serves to bridge the design's past with its future. When a brand's goal is a revolutionary packaging design, consumer research is critical for understanding brand equities and design opportunities.

Touchpoints in Packaging Design

Touchpoint is a marketing term that, in packaging design, refers to an element that consumers come to identify as integral to a specific brand. A touchpoint is the aspect of packaging design that visually "touches" the consumer's mental image of a brand. What makes an element a touchpoint illustration, photograph, typographic design, or pattern is often tied to how long it has been associated with a brand. It is the iconic aspect to many successful packaging designs and is quite literally the touch point when the consumer reaches for the package (figs. 2.15 and 2.16).

BRAND LOYALTY

The notion of brand has everything to do with trust. Trust is earned after consumers have a good experience with the products that fall under a brand name. A favorable experience likely leads to a repeat purchase, the consumer assuming that his or her next experience will be favorable as well. Brands thrive when they continue to live up to their promise to consumers; the consumer then continues to make repeat purchases, developing a preference for the brand.

This preference establishes brand loyalty—the producers' ultimate goal. When consumers are devoted to a particular brand, they will take the time to seek it out and may even pay a higher price for it. Integrity and consistency are integral components of brand loyalty. Loyal consumers have an emotional connection to their brands. Some loyal consumers believe in their brands in an almost fanatical way (fig. 2.17).

Fig. 2.17
Dove brand identity.
Consumers' favorable perception of the Dove brand enabled the brand to extend its product offerings, with the likelihood of a strong foundation of loyal consumers.

BRAND POSITIONING AND REPOSITIONING

Brand positioning involves the differentiating factors of a consumer product: uniqueness, distinctiveness, value perception (including cost), personality, and competitiveness. Its placement in the competitive marketplace and an understanding of how the consumer identifies with a brand help shape a brand's positioning.

Brand repositioning occurs when a company redefines a product's marketing strategy to compete more effectively and set the brand apart. In a repositioning, the visual brand equities of the current packaging design are assessed, design strategies and competitive opportunities are defined, and the packaging then goes through a redesign process. New strategic directions for an existing packaging design emerge from this process. The goal of repositioning is to elevate the status of the brand, rival the competition, and gain market share—without losing brand equity.

The following are questions that begin the repositioning process:

- Are there strengths in the current packaging design?

- Does the consumer perceive visual identifiers or cues on the current packaging design?

- Does the packaging design have "ownable" qualities that enable the brand to stand apart from the competition?

- Does the packaging design differentiate the product from the competition's effectively?

If the first three questions can be answered affirmatively, the packaging design has brand equities or visual elements that must be given careful consideration in the repositioning process (fig. 2.18 and 2.19).

BRAND EXTENSION

A brand extension is the addition of a set of products aligned with the same core values as other

Fig. 2.18
Tums, prior packaging design.

Fig. 2.19
Tums, repositioned packaging design.
Design firm: ANTHEM!
Client: Tums/GSK

Fig. 2.20
CVS Just the Basics,
group shot.
Design firm: ANTHEM!
Client: Just the Basics/CVS

products in the brand. The introduction of new products in the same brand category or the divergence of a brand into a totally different category are both brand extensions. An extension can introduce different varieties, flavors, ingredients, styles, sizes, and forms. In some cases, it can involve a new packaging design structure or evolutionary or revolutionary changes to the brand's identity.

Existing brand equities and marketing objectives must be considered if a brand extension into new product lines is to be successful. The consistent use of existing design elements maintains the consumer's perception of the brand promise. Brand extensions often cross over to analogous categories (e.g., snack food to beverage, haircare to personal care). A brand extension offers consumers a greater variety of choices from the same manufacturer (figs. 2.20 through 2.25).

Fig. 2.21
CVS Just the Basics diapers.

2.22

2.23

2.24

Fig. 2.22
SweetSpot wash.
Design firm: Creed
Client: SweetSpot Labs

Fig. 2.23
SweetSpot wipettes.

Fig. 2.24
SweetSpot box and singles.

Fig. 2.25
SweetSpot product set.

2.25

The product choice within a brand extension can strengthen the manufacturer's brand in a variety of ways:

- When a product-line extension is positioned side by side on the shelf, the brand is strengthened by its shelf presence. The visual repetition of many products in a row creates a "brand block"—a three-dimensional "billboard" on the competitive shelf space.

- A brand of products presented in a group gives the consumer the sense that the marketer has invested in the quality and reliability of its products.

- If a consumer is satisfied with a brand and has choices within the categories in which the brand is positioned, he or she will be more loyal. Brand equity is built through the consumer's long-term investment.

Proprietary Features

If they are distinctive, typographic style, graphic imagery, structure, and color are all proprietary or "ownable" elements of a packaging design. Proprietary attributes can be protected legally by trademark, patent, or registration with the government. Over time, these unique and ownable characteristics become synonymous with the brand (fig. 2.26).

Fig. 2.26
Absolut Vodka
proprietary packaging
design.
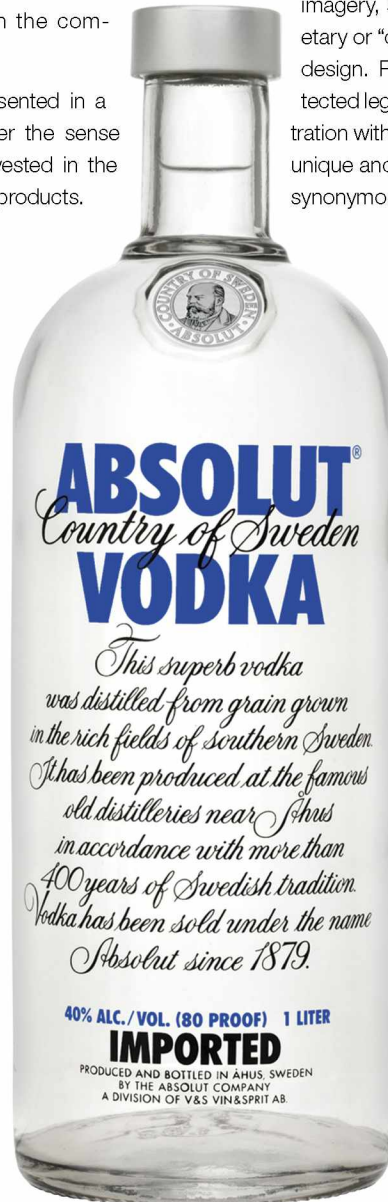
Fundamental Principles of Two-Dimensional Design

The principles of two-dimensional design are the foundation of packaging design. These design principles relate to the use of elements such as line, shape, color, and texture. They are both general, such as composition, or discipline-specific, and serve as guidelines that then shape visual communication. These principles aid the ability to maneuver through a design process.

VISUAL PROBLEM SOLVING

Visual problem solving is at the core of packaging design. Whether introducing a new product or improving the appearance of an existing product, creative skills—from conceptualizing and rendering to three-dimensional design, design analysis, and technical problem solving—are the ways a design problem is resolved to meet a desired goal. In the multivariate puzzle of packaging design, the goal is not simply to create designs that are purely visually appealing, since packaging designs that are solely aesthetically pleasing do not necessarily achieve marketable results. Instead, a defined methodology must be used to creatively accomplish a strategic objective.

Layout

Two-dimensional design begins with an understanding of a layout: the purposeful arrangement of design elements to form the visual communication. The first step in creating a layout is to understand how design elements relate to one another and how these relationships impact the overall visual communication.

The key objective of a layout is to visually organize the communication elements in a stimulating, thought-provoking, and engaging manner. Some layouts follow a grid (a framework that provides a fixed system for the layout), while the visual hierarchy of the design elements in varying positions guides others.

Basic design principles, listed below, are customized to meet the objectives of each design assignment. Color, typography, imagery, and format are applied within a design layout to create the right sense of balance, tension, proportion, and appeal. This is how design elements form the communicative attributes of the packaging design. Applying design principles to packaging layout can significantly enhance the understanding of what makes one comunicate effectively while another appears unresolved.

Balance Balance is the convergence of a design's elements to create an integrated whole. Visual balance can be effected by both symmetry and asymmetry.

Contrast Contrast comes about when elements are placed in a way that emphasizes their differences. The use of different weights, sizes, scales, colors, values, and positive and negative space can all create contrast.

Tension Tension is the balance of opposing elements. It can stimulate visual interest by giving one element more emphasis than others.

Positive and Negative Space Positive and negative also refer to the oppositional relationship of certain design elements in a composition. An object or element constitutes the positive, and the space or environment in which the element exists is the negative.

Value Value is a color's lightness or darkness. The use of contrasting values can subtly guide the viewer's attention to a specific part of the layout.

Weight Weight refers to the size, shape, and color of a visual element in relation to other elements.

Position Position is the placement of elements in relation to one another. Position creates a focal point that, in turn, guides the viewer's eye.

Alignment Alignment is the arrangement of visual elements in logical groupings that make the layout easy to look at and support the flow of information.

Texture A two-dimensional composition can communicate texture through the use of flat graphic patterns, or illustration and photography used in the background. Texture can give a composition depth or simulate physical qualities such as smooth, coarse, or grainy.

Hierarchy Hierarchy is created by organizing visual elements by order of importance. Size, weight, value, position, alignment, and scale can all communicate the relative dominance of various elements. Although hierarchy tends to imply a top-down structure, there are many factors in visual communication that affect the order in which a viewer reads the text on a product's packaging

The primary display panels (PDPs) shown in figures 2.27 through 2.33 illustrate different design principles on various chocolate brands' packaging.
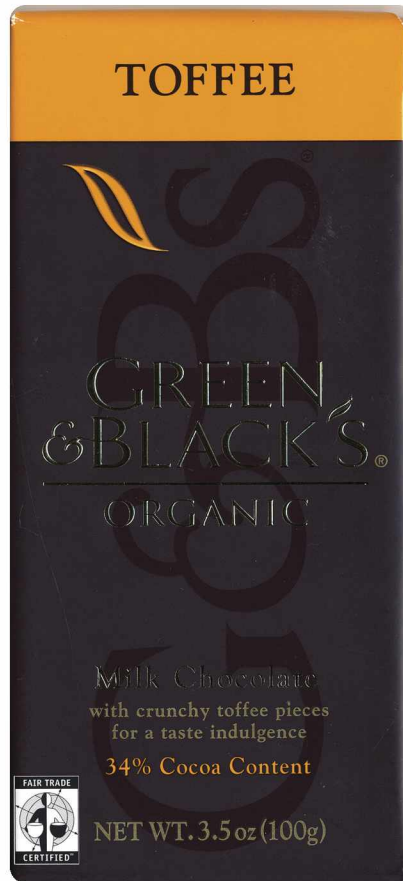
Fig. 2.27
Green & Black's.

Fig. 2.28
Divine.

Fig. 2.29
Theo Chocolate.

Fig. 2.30
Antidote.

Fig. 2.31
Whole Foods.

Fig. 2.32
Chocolove.

Fig. 2.33
Equal Exchange.

2.27

2.28
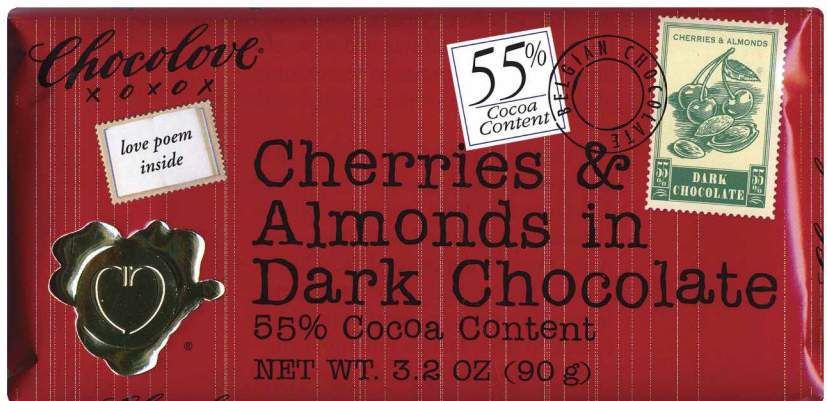
2.32
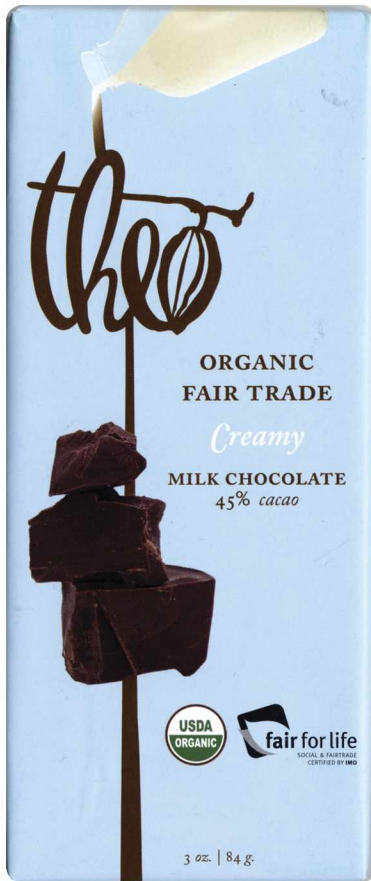
2.29
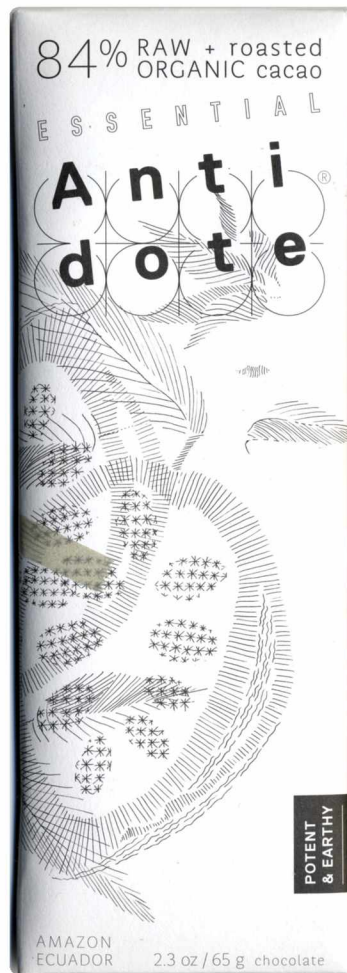
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2.31

2.33

Packaging Design Objectives

The marketer provides detailed information outlining the goals of a packaging design project. Packaging design objectives are then framed by the marketing strategy, with a focus on discovering a unique and distinctive space for the brand to live in and own.

Design objectives articulate the product's positioning, define the design assignment, create the foundation for the visual expression, and frame the creative strategy. The how-to process is often dictated by whether the objective is to develop a new product or products, extend an existing brand(s) into new product lines, or reposition brands, products, or services.

DIFFERENTIATION AT RETAIL is different from that in advertising, because the competitive brands are immediately next to one another on the shelf—and because the shopper is often spending less than ten seconds comparing products and making a decision. Given these realities, it does not pay to be subtle. Differentiation must be immediate and intuitive. Ideally, it should be visual, via the look and feel of the package itself. As a rule of thumb, if people have to actively read the label to find your brand's point-of-difference (vs. the package in her other hand), you are probably in trouble. If she has to read the back label, you have lost the overwhelmingly majority of shoppers in any category.

Scott Young, "Breaking Through the Clutter," available online at:
http://www.prsresearch.com/prs-insights/article/breaking-through-the-clutter

Answers to questions such as the following can serve in defining the packaging design objectives:

- Who is the consumer?

- What environment will the product compete in?

- What price point will the product be set at?

- What are the production costs?

- What is the time frame from design concept to market?

- What distribution methods are planned?

Whether the packaging design is for a new or existing product, the primary objective of any packaging design assignment is promoting sales. The design must immediately and clearly communicate the brand (brand promise) and the nature of the product (product attributes).

Packaging design objectives specific to a particular product or brand may be directed to

- feature the unique attributes of the product;

- strengthen the aesthetic appeal and the value of the product;

- maintain uniformity within the brand's family of products;

- strengthen the differentiation between product varieties and lines;

- develop distinctive packaging forms that are category-appropriate; or

- use new materials and develop innovative structures to reduce costs, be more sustainable, or increase functionality.

DESIGN STRATEGY

The design strategy is a plan or series of plans to meet these goals and is built upon clear objectives. A successful design strategy leverages the brand's personality or point of view with its positioning, with the goal of connecting with the target audience. Creating a map that identifies a brand's internal and external values along with consumer and retail realities is one means of establishing a design strategy or a varied range of strategies.

One strategy, for example, may be to present the brand's point of difference (since consumers comparison shop). Another strategy may be to focus on nostalgia, simplicity, authenticity, or the environment.

SHOPABILITY

The ease with which a consumer is able to find a product is referred to as "shopability," which is directly impacted by the retail environment. Visual attractiveness—the ability to draw consumers in and capture their attention—is its key component. Design objectives with a focus on a brand's merchandising aspects build the foundation of a strong packaging design on shelf.

There are numerous variables that affect how and why packaging design attracts consumers in the retail environment. Environmental psychologists have studied how a store's "mood" can enhance or inhibit consumer shopping. The consumer's shopping style, including the time he or she spends browsing in a store, changes from store to store and even from one aisle to another. Consumers engage at differing levels depending on the product category and the retail environment.[1] Shoppers may spend a different amount of time making a purchasing decision in the grocery category (e.g., two seconds) than they do in the cosmetics category (e.g., two minutes). Changes in store design also impact consumer involvement. Successful packaging designs—whether in the grocery or household categories—effectively enhance how engaged consumers are with a product.

Researchers spend countless hours analyzing the multitude of variables that influence the success of a packaging design. From a purely design perspective (ignoring other marketing variables such as price, retail channel, demographics, and brand loyalty), there are certain elements that best capture consumer attention and break through the visual clutter on shelf (fig. 2.34).

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1 Paco Underhill, *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*, rev. ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009).

Fig. 2.34
Antacid retail realities.

Factors that enable a packaging design to break through a visually cluttered environment include the following:

- Category appropriateness
- Customization
- Consumer experience
- Functionality
- Aesthetic appeal
- Consumer appeal
- Innovation
- Proprietary features

The top four attention grabbers on a packaging design are color, physical structure or shape, symbols and numbers, and typography.

RESEARCH

Packaging design uses many tools to solve complex marketing problems. Research is one such tool and is used throughout the design process. A comprehensive design methodology begins with research, which then leads to brainstorming, exploration, and creative development. Research also ensures that a packaging design can be optimized or enhanced to best sell a product.

A critical component in the design process, research provides an understanding of consumer insights, synthesizes conceptual development, and uncovers findings that aid in the refinement of the final design solution. Research can also impede creativity when not used appropriately, when results are used too literally, or when statistics or scorecards alone drive the design decision-making processes.

Research should not be used to rationalize an outcome or to measure what consumers say. (What a consumer reveals in a focus group and how he or she behaves when shopping are not always the same.) Discovering the opportunities for a brand or product, determining how to achieve the market-ing objectives, and establishing the strengths of the final design are all informed by research.

Demographic and Ethnographic Research

Many factors influence consumers' purchasing decisions. Ways of understanding a target market include quantitative demographics (age, gender, locale/region, income level, education) and qualitative data (lifestyle, aspirations, desires, emotional connections). Demographic and ethnographic research is often conducted in home, on-site (in store), and in focus groups.

Eye tracking, interviewing, observing, role-playing, and developing scenarios are all ways to understand human behavior. Interpreting social and cultural variations, along with cultural preferences and distinctions, can guide how visual and verbal elements communicate on a packaging design.

Design Research

Conducting deep and specific design research on each phase of the design process focuses a design strategy. Such research may include gathering insights from consumers, understanding the background and history of the product or brand, exploring the retail environment, uncovering materials and structural opportunities, and learning more about the brand from the client. As design strategies evolve, it is useful to conduct more specific design research to identify opportunities for enhancing the design. Collecting visual swipes—magazine or newspaper clippings, screen captures from Internet sites, color swatches, textures, patterns, type treatments, images, inspirational ephemera, and reference materials—helps to visually formulate, construct, and support a design strategy.

Do not look to existing packaging designs for ideas: it is too easy to be overly influenced and either mimic or plagiarize. Finding a unique strategy, design style, or marketing direction can be challenging when an idea is influenced by another designer's effectively developed solution.

Instead, look to other sources of design inspiration: architecture, sculpture, fine art, graphic design, jewelry design, industrial design, or fashion design, or to history for past design styles that can inspire new ideas. Identifying broad, common design styles can build a sturdy platform from which to develop a design strategy.

Researching typographic styles, brand identities, color palettes, graphic imagery, materials, textures, structures, and production techniques is part of the design process. Research is not simply typing out a word in multiple font styles; outstanding examples of typography sourced from digital and print resources can be inspirational.

Effective design strategies are created from extensive research. Inexperienced designers often perceive broad design research as time consuming and cut corners to move through it quickly. The design process is weakened when not enough time is devoted to research and sourcing inspiring ideas that will help create strong and motivating design strategies.

Retail Research

In-store, on-shelf, and online research includes the analysis of divergent and analogous consumer categories in diverse retail environments. Identifying product lines, examining structures and materials, and seeking design opportunities and challenges can all facilitate gaining knowledge about the marketplace. Understanding how consumers shop various categories and how products are shelved, merchandised, and marked for sale—all impact a packaging design's success in meeting its strategic marketing goals. Retail research should be conducted at every phase of the design process. Without comprehending the retail environment, even meeting all of the measurable aspects of a packaging design still may not translate into a consumer purchase.

Retail research may include measuring

- shelf presence;
- online legibility and readability;

- communication hierarchy;
- shopability;
- competition;
- visibility; and
- expectations, including brand satisfaction, brand loyalty, and its opposite—brand bigotry.

> T IS ESTIMATED that between 73 and 85 percent of purchase decisions are made at the point of sale and that packaging design plays a key role, because it is often the only factor that differentiates two products. The packaging is what separates a product from its competitor.
>
> Vickie Van Hurley, Ph.D., Package Design, Meijer; available at http://www.thedieline.com/blog/2010/8/3/social-packaging-design-building-strong-shelf-impact-and-bet.html

Trends Research

Trends research is used in a multitude of ways to inform the packaging design process. It is used to pitch design strategies to clients, to inform the design process, to add value and credibility to creative platforms.

Trends are currents of change that have an impact on consumer behavior. Macro trends based on cultural, social, political, and economic issues have a significant effect on a large scale. Micro trends tend to have short-term impact on a smaller scale and be more defined or specific. Understanding and utilizing trends are paramount in developing successful packaging designs that can effectively compete in an overcrowded marketplace.

Sample Macro Trends Research Topics

- Beauty (cosmetics, fragrance, personal care)
- Consumer behavior
- Fashion design
- General design

- Global art and cultures
- Home products
- Sustainability and the environment
- Technology products

Sample Micro Trends Research Topics

- Baby boomers
- College life

- Color
- Convenience and portability
- Culture
- Dietary concerns
- Entertainment
- Environment
- Fashion and accessories
- Gen X, Gen Y, Millennials
- Health, wellness, and fitness
- Innovation
- Materials and structure
- Men
- Natural
- Teens and youth
- Urban and suburban life
- Technology
- Women

PACKAGING DESIGN EFFECTIVENESS

Ideally, a packaging design is evaluated regularly to ensure that it meets ever-changing marketing demands. It is difficult to apply standardized metrics, rubrics, or other quantitative measurement tools to accurately determine the value of a specific packaging design, although marketers review sales figures, collect and analyze data from consumer research, and conduct extensive comparative analyses. These tools, and the guidance of research professionals, can help determine the effectiveness of the packaging design in meeting marketing objectives and competing in the retail arena. Ultimately, keying the financial success or failure of a product solely to its packaging design is unwise.

Fig. 2.35
Williams-Sonoma shelf set.

Many variables affect consumers' buying behavior and decision making (fig. 2.35). Marketers, product developers, product manufacturers, packaging materials manufacturers, packaging engineers, and packaging designers all play a role in how successfully the packaging design meets the marketing objectives of a consumer brand (fig 2.36).

Fig. 2.36
Factors that influence the success of a packaging design.

3 Elements of the Packaging Design

The Primary Display Panel

The primary display panel, also known as the principal display panel or PDP, is the area on the packaging design reserved for the brand identity and all of the primary communication elements. Whatever the overall structure of the packaging design, this area is considered the front. Its size and shape is important, since the PDP holds great responsibility for communicating the brand's marketing strategy. In a competitive retail environment, the front of the packaging design needs to capture attention.

Understanding the relative importance of the communication elements helps in apportioning their distribution on the packaging design. The primary elements consist of essential information required by the marketer or the regulatory authority or determined by an assessment of the marketers' most important communication objectives. Secondary elements comprise all supplementary aspects, such as product descriptors or "romance copy" (engaging phrases that serve to create an emotional connection).

The size, position, and relationship of the elements are guided by basic design principles, together with a hierarchical system that considers the overall marketing and visual communication strategy. The hierarchy of information is successful when the design facilitates reading what is most important first, then what is next in importance, and so on (fig. 3.1).

Primary and secondary elements on a PDP may include the brand identity, product name or descriptor, product variety, romance copy, and net weight. The design of the elements on a PDP may employ any or all of the tools and options available: typography, color, imagery (such as illustrations, photographs, symbols, graphic devices, and icons), size, shape, and structure.

Checklist for a Well-Designed PDP

☐ Communicates the marketing/brand strategy and message immediately, effectively, and clearly

☐ Presents information hierarchically and is easy to read

☐ Suggests the function, usage, and purpose visually

☐ Differentiates the product from the competition and in relation to any other varieties

☐ Represents itself appropriately and competitively in the category

☐ Reflects the value perception of quality at a fair market price

☐ Performs durably and is able to withstand shelf life and product use

Typography

The word *typography* derives from the Greek roots *typos* ("impression") and *graphein* ("to write"). Typography is the use of letterforms to visually communicate a verbal language. Since letterforms are shaped by the culture that gave rise to them, their use for typographic means is part of a culture's visual language.

Legibility (the degree to which individual characters can be recognized and understood), readability (the ease with which text can be read and understood), reading time (how long it takes someone to read the text), size, shape, and style are all characteristics of typography that affect communication. Both the mechanics of reading (for example, from left to right or vice versa) and an individual's perception have a significant effect on the communication of typography.

Typography is the primary medium for the communication of a product's name, its function, and other vital information about it to a broad consumer audience, and thus the typography of a packaging design becomes one of the most significant elements of the visual expression of the product. The common mantra "you can't design without type" is especially appropriate to packaging design. (fig. 3.2)

Fig. 3.2
hr line of gourmet food products.
Design firm: united*
Client: hr

TYPOGRAPHIC TERMINOLOGY

The term *typography* originally referred to the style or appearance of printed matter and the process of printing from type. Independent, movable, and reusable pieces of metal with raised letterforms on top were called foundry type. Each piece was cast into the precise size and contained the raised image of a single letter, number, or other character. The block of metal that carried the raised image was the body. The raised image that was inked for printing was the face, from which the term *typeface* originates.

The term *font* is often used interchangeably with *typeface*, although it had a different meaning before the digitization of typography. *Font* was traditionally defined as a complete character set of a single size and style of a particular typeface (e.g., nine-point Bodoni roman). In the early days of typesetting, movable type was stored in wooden trays, or type cases, that were arranged in a standard way before the craftsman (the compositor) who assembled the characters into a line of type: the upper case contained capital letters, and the lower case

contained small letters—the origin of the terms *uppercase* and *lowercase*.

Style refers to the weight, slant, and other characteristics of a typeface. Roman, italic, and bold are all examples of type style. *Character* is the typographic term for an individual letter.

Font management and organization software, as well as search engines that allow for the input of descriptions such as "warm," "cold," "feminine," "bold," and "light," can generate an extensive list of fonts that work well with a particular design, enabling designers to maneuver through the thousands of available typestyles. While software tools ease the sorting of typographic styles, designers should be careful not to let technology make design decisions.

Categories of Type

Type categories help designers recognize similarities and distinguishable characteristics of groups of typestyles. These categories enable designers to make appropriate selections for text, headings, and other copy. There are thousands of digital typefaces available; an understanding of type categories and their design attributes will aid in the typographic selection process.

Old Style fonts include Times Roman, Bembo, Palatino, Goudy, Baskerville, Garamond, and Janson. They

- resemble the hand lettering of scribes;
- are graceful in appearance;
- have a low contrast (i.e., the thick and thin strokes are similar);
- have slanted serifs on some lowercase letters;
- have serifs that are bracketed (a curved transition between the stroke and the serif);
- have a main stroke that is curved, not sharp; and
- are a good choice for a lengthy body of text.

Modern Serif fonts include Bodoni, Times, Fenice, and Madrone. They have

- highly contrasting thick and thin strokes;
- vertically stressed thick strokes; and
- serifs that are horizontal, unbracketed, and meet the stroke with a sharp angle.

Slab Serif, Egyptian, or **Square Serif** fonts include Clarendon, New Century Schoolbook, Memphis, Rockwell, and Aachen. They have

- little or no contrast between the thick and thin strokes,
- vertical lines that are stressed, and
- serifs that are thick horizontal slabs.

Sans Serif fonts include Avant Garde, Gill Sans, Franklin Gothic, Frutiger, Helvetica, and Futura. They have

- no serifs,
- tall x-heights (the height of the lowercase letters in relation to the lowercase letter x),
- no contrast or vertical stresses, and
- no difference in stroke either vertical or horizontal stroke weight.

Script fonts include Zapf Chancery and Edwardian Decorative. They resemble handwriting or calligraphy and have large capital letters that are often used as drop caps—the initial letter in a paragraph that drops down a number of lines into the text.

Decorative fonts have expressive styles that are not necessarily designed for readability. Trendy, ornamental, or overly stylized fonts should be used cautiously. The discriminating designer makes typographic choices in keeping with the broad visual communication strategy of the assignment.

Kerning, Tracking, and Leading

Kerning is the adjustment of the space between letters or other characters to make them appear visually unified. Tracking is the adjustment of the space between words. And leading is the vertical space between lines of text.

Kerning is especially important in packaging design because letters are often used at large point sizes, exaggerating the interletter spacing. Compare the white space between the right edge of several letters and the left edge of the characters following it. There may be more space on one side of a character and less on the other. Adjusting the gaps between adjacent characters establishes visual harmony.

Similarly, the "color" of a block of text—how dark or light it appears—can be altered by narrowing or widening the space between words. The interline spacing affects both the color and the legibility of text (fig. 3.3).

The kerning, tracking, and leading built into digital typefaces is not always pleasing to the eye. Most graphics software (such as Adobe Illustrator or Photoshop), page layout programs (such as QuarkXPress or Adobe InDesign), and even word processing programs like Microsoft Word have the ability to adjust kerning, tracking, and leading manually, giving designers the opportunity to set their own values for the spaces between characters, words, and letters. It is the designer's responsibility to examine each letter pair, the words in a line of type, and the distance between one line and the next to resolve kerning, tracking, and leading issues. Proper letter, word, and line spacing furthers the aesthetic success of a packaging design (figs. 3.4 and 3.5).

Following are ways to determine when adjustments to kerning are necessary:

1 It is difficult to separate how words are read from how they are seen. So turn the text upside down. This allows for an objective assessment of how it looks. The positive and negative spaces between characters will now read more clearly. Examine each character in relation to adjacent ones.

2 Tape the text to a wall and stand back from it. This assessment is critical because in packaging design, the audience views the type from a distance. Spacing that is too tight or that has gaps is also more obvious when the text is viewed horizontally.

3 Squint your eyes to see forms rather than words.

4 To finalize kerning, look at the type on the computer screen and zoom in and out on each character pair. This will facilitate seeing the letter spacing much like standing back from the type tacked to the wall.

TYPOGRAPHIC PRINCIPLES FOR PACKAGING DESIGN

The typographic rules that apply to type size, use of capital letters, use of decorative typefaces, typographic alignment, line spacing, word spacing, kerning, and hyphenation in other printed mediums are not necessarily the same rules that apply in packaging design. Since typography for packaging design communicates the marketing message on a three-dimensional medium, is initially viewed from a distance, and is viewed by people of varying cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds— all in a short amount of time—typographic choices will differ from assignment to assignment.

Typography for packaging design should be

- legible from a few feet away;

- designed to the scale and shape of the three-dimensional structure;

- intelligible to a diverse audience; and

- provide a credible description of, and be informative about, the product.

Unlike other forms of communication, such as magazines and books, the typographic composition in packaging design is not formulaic and does not necessarily make use of a grid system. The typographic architecture varies for every packaging design and is determined by the package's shape and size, the product description, any category competition, the retail environment, the product's position on the shelf, and various regulatory requirements (fig. 3.6).

The following principles provide a framework for typographic decision making for packaging design:

Principle 1: Define the typographic personality. The typography should express the personality of the brand and packaging design. The visual personality is integral to how consumers perceive a design. Research, experimentation, proper type selection (font, size, and weight), and a clear visual communication strategy provide the foundation.

Principle 2: Limit typefaces. Give careful consideration to how many typefaces are needed to communicate a concept. The use of no more than three typefaces is the general rule for any

Fig. 3.6
Bob's Bitters.
Design firm: Elmwood, Leeds
Client: Bob's Bitters

packaging design PDP. Sometimes it is difficult to limit the number of typefaces because of the quantity of copy required. In such a case it is best to employ typefaces that complement each other; offer a variety of styles (such as condensed, expanded, italic, and so on) within the same family; and provide a clear, consistent and unified appearance.

Principle 3: Create typographic hierarchy. The organization of the visual information provides the framework for how that information is read from greater to lesser importance; this is how the consumer knows at a glance what to glean from a packaging design. Typographic elements are ranked in order of their importance. Using design principles such as positioning, alignment, relationship, scale, weight, contrast, and color, the typographic hierarchy is developed to meet the visual communication strategy.

Grouping related items together and spacing unrelated items farther apart creates a hierarchy. When clustered, groups of words communicate as a unit. All typography on a packaging design should be situated with a purpose, and type choice and layout should support the design concept. Typographic elements should be positioned in terms of how they relate to one another—directly, indirectly, or not at all.

Principle 4: Define the typographic positioning. Typographic positioning is the physical placement of the typography within the primary display area—the individual location of letters, words, and bodies of text in relation to other design elements.

Principle 5: Determine type alignment. Alignment defines the overall architecture of a layout. The alignment of each word or group of words on a packaging design should be carefully considered, since different alignments communicate differently. The shape of the packaging structure dictates the organization of the layout and the appropriate alignment choices.

Basic typographic alignments can be centered, flush left, flush right, or justified.

Centered copy positions each word or line of copy equidistant from the left and right sides of the primary display panel or a specific area within it.

Flush left copy is positioned with each word or line of copy aligned at the left margin. It is used most often in Western cultures, in which text is read from left to right.

Flush right copy is positioned with each word or line of copy aligned at the right margin. It can be an awkward choice when there is a significant amount of copy for consumers to read.

Justified copy stretches all words or lines of words to the same width. Letter and word spacing can become challenging with justified text.

Principle 6: Vary typographic scale. In typography, *scale* usually refers to the enlargement or reduction of the characters' point size. In typography for packaging design, it can also refer to the size relationships between typographic elements. For example, brand identities (brand names, their logos, etc.) are generally larger in scale than the product name, descriptor, and product variety. All copy on the PDP should be scaled to a size that is legible from a short distance—that between the consumer and the package on the shelf in the retail environment. Typographic scale should always be appropriate to other elements and to the overall size of the packaging. Scale also relates to emphasis; consider positioning and alignment along with scale (fig. 3.7).

Principle 7: Choose contrasting typefaces. Contrasting typefaces is one way to communicate words or lines of copy that may be equally important but semantically different. Typographic contrast—light vs. bold, italic vs. roman, serif vs. san serif—allows the designer to organize information for the consumer and add interest to the

Fig. 3.7
Yardley soap.
Design firm: Little Big Brands
Client: Lornamead, Yardley

layout. For type contrast to be effective, the two words or groups of words should look obviously and intentionally different. Contrast that is not obvious is purposeless.

Principle 8: Experiment with type. There are no hard-and-fast rules to guide the designer's typographic exploration. Experimenting with typestyles, characters, letterforms, ligatures (the designed combination of two characters as a single letterform), kerning, and layout is an important part of the design process. It enables the designer to originate a greater range of distinctive solutions. Experimentation is the part of the creative exercise that allows ideas to be visualized and take shape. The process is a critical step in the evolution of a successful final design solution (fig. 3.8).

Principle 9: Stack type or position it vertically. Stacking characters and letters on top of one another in a vertical line does not always work well in Western cultures, in which words are read horizontally. In addition, readability diminishes if ascenders (vertical letter strokes that extend above the "x" height) and descenders (portions of letters that extend below the baseline) of the letterforms do not sit on top of each other properly. And stacked characters on a packaging design can make shelf stocking confusing if the proper vertical or horizontal orientation for the product is ambiguous. However, in some instances, vertically positioned type can be an effective means of creating designs that stand out on shelf (figs. 3.9 and 3.10).

Principle 10: Discard your visual bias. Every designer perceives visuals differently. But a designer's personal preferences should never interfere with typographic experimentation. Some designers rely on their intuition; however, designers should be able to justify their design strategy and rationale for typographic solutions.

Fig. 3.8
Wheat Thins Stix, shelf closeup.

Fig. 3.10
Fekkai Advanced Essential Shea.
Design firm: Creed
Client: Fekkai

Principle 11: Make it ownable. The brand name and the product name are what the consumer connects to mentally and emotionally. Ownable typography—type that is unique to the brand—can be designed without creating an entirely new typeface by manipulating or revising the characters in an existing typeface. New letterforms, ligatures, and typestyles can be devised. The integrity of the original type design should always be carefully maintained.

Whether a single character is altered or the entire font is modified, the goal is to create a typographic solution that becomes identified with a specific product or brand. Marketers recognize that it is often the uniqueness of the type that makes for brand distinction (fig. 3.11).

Typographic design is a specialized field and should be left to typographers. The development of precisely proportioned letterforms is a time-consuming art. Type designers take great pains to create typefaces in which each character works together with the others to achieve a balanced whole. With tens of thousands of typefaces to choose from, packaging designers should avoid creating their own fonts unless a less-than-professional look is intentional. For example, a

Fig. 3.11
Znaps.
Design firm: Amore
Client: Znaps

typeface that mimics handwriting can be the defining personality of a brand. Even handwritten styles should be refined and balanced, in character, weight, and kerning.

Principle 12: Be consistent. The use of type that is consistent in personality, style, positioning, and hierarchy establishes a unified look across a brand family or line of products that creates a strong shelf presence. Consistent typography can build brand equity if the consumer comes to identify the typographic style with that particular brand.

Principle 13: Refine for typographic excellence. Refinement is the process of examining and then modifying the typography and is an essential part of the design process. A brand's logo takes a considerable amount of time to perfect. So attention must be given to every detail of the type that surrounds it, including the shape of the letterforms; kerning, tracking, leading; and ligatures—that is, the overall typographic personality. Typographic excellence has been achieved when the type has clear expressive power that makes an immediate, positive impression on the consumer and sparks a transaction (fig. 3.12).

PRIMARY TYPOGRAPHIC APPLICATIONS

Brand Identity: Brand or Product Name

It is often the brand identity that begins the visual and verbal story that brings life to the brand and its products. Together with a brand's logo, typography contributes immensely to that brand's visual image. The development of a logo is an often lengthy process critical to the packaging design's success. Since a logo most often contains some typographic element, from design strategy, to concept development, to typographic choice, to final design solution, to implementation, an extensive amount of typographic design and tweaking takes place.

Typographic considerations for the brand identity are not unlike those for other aspects of the packaging design. It is through the product's name and the brand logo, however, that the personality of the product makes its first and most lasting impression, and so the typography here is critical. Stroke weights, letter heights, kerning, spacing, ligatures, outlines, colors, and symbols should be fine-tuned every step of the

Fig. 3.12
SKYN Iceland.
Design firm: Creed
Client: SKYN

way. Similarly, the development of brand identity design follows the design process phases. Additional considerations for the brand identity include future applications, printing specifications, color combinations, and symbol or icon use with and without type. A design standards manual is one way to provide guidelines for the application of the brand identity and to establish acceptable and unacceptable uses.

In some cases, the brand name and the product name are the same. The product name is the most important typography on the packaging design. Not unlike a person's name, this is the visual that the consumer will identify with the product most—think of it as the product's "signature." Type choice, scale, positioning, layout, color, and design should all function to communicate the personality of the product (fig. 3.13).

There are hundreds of thousands of names already in use by brands throughout the world. It is critically important to conduct a thorough name search through a government patent and trademark office before a brand name is selected.

Fig. 3.13
Brand Identities:

Znaps
Design firm: Amore

Donovan's Cellar
Design firm: united*

Mina
Design firm: Monday Collective

Via Roma
Design firm: united*

Green Way
Design firm: united*

Hiro
Design firm: Monday Collective

Secondary Copy

The positioning and alignment of secondary copy depends on the hierarchy of other, more predominant elements. It typically follows the brand name and/or the product name. If secondary copy is designed in text blocks, break the lines in such a way that words are grouped in the most legible, logical fashion. Set the line length with readability in mind as well: if a line of copy is too long, readers can lose their place and have to reread. The type choice for secondary copy can either complement or contrast with the product name.

Product Descriptor

Descriptors define the specific product or package content and include product variety, flavor, features, and benefits. Descriptors may highlight new product extensions and are therefore important to the marketing strategy. Marketers use the product descriptor to define differences among a line of products and to create visible distinctions between their product and that of the competition. A unique descriptor can be trademarked.

Sometimes the product name and descriptor, or the descriptor and the secondary copy, are the same. Descriptor copy can be handled in a variety of ways, but it is always subordinate to the product and brand names. Because it is a supporting element, the typographic style should be simple and straightforward. If the product descriptor is the means of differentiating between product varieties or flavors, the descriptor can be designed to be similar to, but different from, the typographic treatments on packages for other products in the line.

Romance Copy

Sometimes called the "sell" copy, romance copy describes the product's personality and/or attributes. Romance copy is, in effect, storytelling, and is often smaller than other type on the PDP. It is positioned separately from the brand and product names. The product's personality and the size of the packaging often dictate if and how romance copy is used (figs. 3.14 and 3.15).

Fig. 3.14
Global Organics.
Design firm: Asprey Creative
Client: Global Organics

Mandatory Copy

Numerous governing bodies throughout the world oversee the labeling of consumer products. Labeling regulations exist for food, beverages, healthcare products, over-the-counter drugs, pharmaceuticals, machinery, and many other product categories. Some include recommendations for legibility, while others mandate the kind of information that must appear.

Fig. 3.15
Thistle Hill wine, label (back panel).
Design firm: Dossier Creative
Client: Thistle Hill
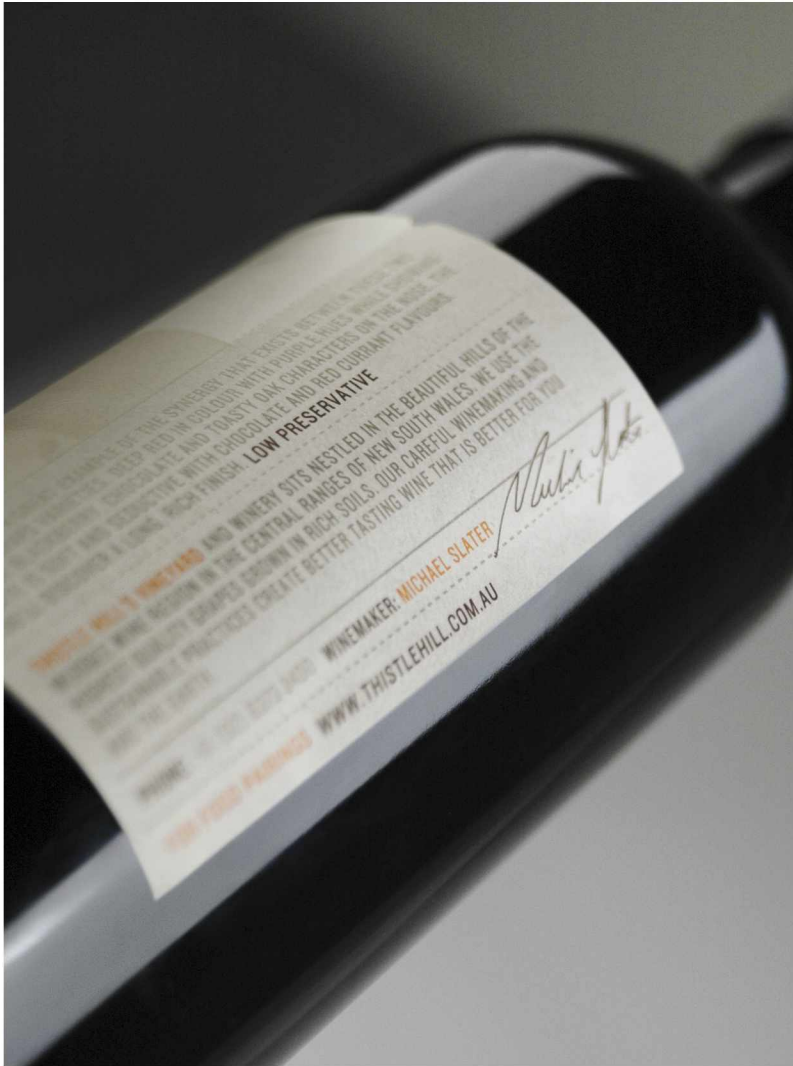
In the United States, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sets the guidelines for the size and positioning of all mandatory copy for the packaging of food, cosmetics, and drugs—any products that are ingested or used topically. Nutrition information, ingredients, weights, measures, and product count are mandatory on food packaging; the manner in which they appear is also regulated. Other regulatory agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) also mandate information and warnings on packaging.

Type specifications are provided by each regulatory agency. Before a packaging design goes into production, an attorney should approve the design of the information on any regulated products.

Nutrition Facts Any legible typestyle can be used—not just Helvetica. The heading "Nutrition Facts" must be the largest type size used on the nutrition label. Nutrition facts type must be larger than 8 point but does not need to be greater than 13 point. There is no specific thickness required for the three bars that separate the central sections of the nutrition label. The typography may be kerned as much as minus 4 percent (tighter); however, tight kerning can reduce legibility (fig. 3.16).

Weights, Measures, and Net Quantity Statements The net weight or net quantity of contents states the amount of product in a package. This copy is generally positioned in the bottom half of the primary display panel. It should be no less than 3 millimeters from the bottom (and side, if it is flush right or flush left on the PDP), with a capital letter height of the net weight text of no less than 3 millimeters. In the United States, the font size must be in compliance with the protocols outlined in the FDA Packaging and Labeling Guidelines.

The typestyle should be prominent and easy to read. The letters must not be more than three times as high as they are wide, and lettering

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container about 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 250   Calories from Fat 110

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 12g	**18%**
Saturated Fat 3g	**15%**
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	**10%**
Sodium 470mg	**20%**
Total Carbohydrate 31g	**10%**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0%**
Sugars 5g	
Proteins 5g	

Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.
  Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on
  your calorie needs:

		Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than		65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than		20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than		300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than		2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate			300g	375g
Dietary Fiber			25g	30g

must contrast sufficiently with the background to further readability. The copy should be consistent with the overall design layout. For example, if the format of the PDP's grid is centered, then the net weight should be centered as well; if the general design format is flush left, then the copy should be fitted accordingly. Sometimes, it may be preferable to stack the copy on two lines and tuck it to the right or left of the layout. The design and placement of this copy should not be random or an afterthought; it should be designed as intentionally as the rest of the visual elements (fig. 3.17).

Ingredients Copy Ingredients must be in a single, easy-to-read typeface, printed either in black or in a single color on a white or other neutral, contrasting background. The type can either be in all caps or in uppercase and lowercase letters, with leading at least one point more than the point size of the type. It must be kerned so that the letters do not touch. (For further information see fda.gov.)

Special provisions for labeling exist for small businesses, foods served in restaurants, food delivered to homes ready for immediate consumption, delicatessen-type food, bakery items, foods that provide no significant nutrition (e.g., coffee and most spices), fresh produce, and bulk foods with packages labeled "This unit is not for resale." Anyone involved with designing a consumer product package should consult the specific regulatory information provided by the appropriate governing body.

Consider the following when designing typography (figs. 3.18 through 3.21):

- Size, scale, word spacing, kerning, leading, alignment, and hierarchy

- Mixing typefaces (find complementary styles)

- How many fonts are in a type family

- How numbers, punctuation, and glyphs can add texture to a design

- How rhythm, balance, contrast, and tension are created

Typography and Technology

Technology has greatly reshaped every aspect of packaging design—including the use of typography. Professional typesetters no longer exist, so designers' expertise has had to expand to include typography. With access to tens of thousands of digital typefaces, typographic finesse can easily be lost when designers fail to pay close attention to the choice, visual communication, and arrangement of specific styles, words, and letters.

In packaging design, the need for consistent, high-quality reproduction is critical; therefore, only high-quality fonts should be used. High-caliber typefaces provide complete families and character sets that include different weights (e.g., light, regular, bold, heavy, etc.) and different styles (e.g., roman, italic, condensed, expanded, etc.). Fonts should be digitized at a high resolution, be optimized for on-screen display, and be reproducible or print well on any applicable media. The details of letters, including shapes and outlines, should never

Fig. 3.19
Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory,
detail.
Design firm: Dossier Creative
Client: Rocky Mountain Chocolate
Factory

Fig. 3.20
Rocky Mountain Chocolate
Factory Apple Pack.

be broken or disturbed, and a font's screen and print appearances should always match. Be wary of typefaces that seem to be the original classic font (Bodoni, Garamond, and Caslon); many have been copied and altered, or redesigned entirely. Such fonts may be more affordable, but they are usually of inferior quality and therefore are inappropriate for client use.

Keeping track of the range of typefaces available for consideration can be overwhelming. Generating a printed library is one way to catalogue fonts for easy access. Using font-management software is essential in creating digital design files. By relying on a core group of favorite classic typefaces—as well as on innovation, creativity, and typographic sensitivity—a designer can turn any classic typeface into an exciting and original logo for a brand or product name.

KEY POINTS ABOUT TYPOGRAPHY

- There are no straightforward answers to typographic design problems; it takes extensive experimentation to find the few appropriate and successful solutions.

- Time is money: do not waste hours and hours looking through hundreds of typefaces to find a few fonts that meet the design criteria.

- Tweak a typeface to meet packaging design criteria and create a unique, ownable, and exclusive brand identity.

- Using typography skillfully is a combination of proper type selection and design finesse, along with attention to kerning, word spacing, ligatures, type weights, alignment, positioning, scale, composition, color, contrast, and graphic treatment.

- Consider resizing the x-height—the distance between the baseline and the top of a lowercase *x* and similar characters—to create greater contrast.

- Always examine kerning: a computer does not have the eye of a designer and cannot perfect the spacing between letterforms.

- Proper spelling and grammar is critical to communication: use spell-check, read the copy to yourself both silently and aloud, and examine every word for errors.

Fig. 3.21
Hiro.
Typography as the "hero."
Design firm: Monday Collective
Client: Hiro

Color

Philosophers, scientists, researchers, and educators have all studied the complexities of seeing color. Noted biologist Nicholas Humphrey believes that the ability to see color (such as the glowing red of an ember) evolved to meet human beings' survival needs.[1] In packaging design, survival on shelf is very much tied to the use of color.

The human eye sees color before the brain recognizes imagery in the form of shapes, symbols, words, or other visual elements. Seeing color is a complex process. Objects, shapes, and images are recorded in our brains via light. Absorbed through the retina, light sends a signal to the brain. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) estimates that the human eye can distinguish more than ten million different colors. The colors that the eye perceives are really different wavelengths of projected or reflected light.

Projected light determines how bright an object appears; it is what gives colors their value. Reflected light is responsible for how we see surface color. An object does not emit any light of its own: light is either absorbed by or reflected off of its surface. Painted and printed matter creates color by reflecting light off of substances such as pigment, ink, dye, and toner.

Sunlight is the standard by which colors are measured. Since the color of daylight changes with the time of day and conditions of the atmosphere, "natural" light is as ephemeral as color itself. Color is constantly changing because the qualities of light are constantly changing.

COLOR TERMINOLOGY

Understanding color terminology helps to communicate effectively about color. The variety of a color is called its hue. The terms *color* and *hue* are often used interchangeably, but hue often refers to the degree in which colors are described as similar or different from one another. The color spectrum is the image formed when light is spread out according to its wavelength by being refracted through a prism. On a color spectrum, colors are considered to be similar to one or a combination of two of the following hues: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. Black, gray, and white are considered neutrals. A tint is a pure color mixed with white; a shade is a pure color mixed with black. Saturation is the purity or intensity of a color. The amount of pigment in a color, defined by the strength or vividness of its hue, is saturation. The lightness or darkness of a color is its value (fig. 3.22).

Fig. 3.22
Color wheel.
A traditional color wheel is divided into three primary colors and three secondary colors. Colors opposite each other on the color wheel are complementary.
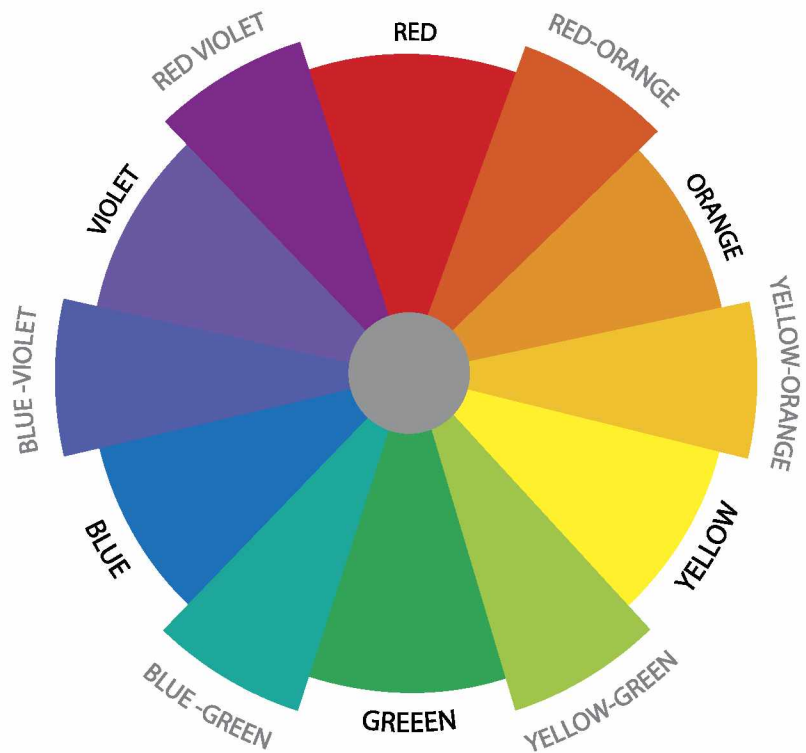
1. See Tom Porter and Byron Mikellides, eds., *Colour for Architecture*, (London: Studio Vista, 1976), 95–98.

COLOR ASSOCIATIONS

Because people associate certain colors with certain emotions or feelings, color can be used to communicate various messages. Such psychological associations are what determine an individual's perception of an object or its surroundings. People within similar environments generally share the same color associations; however, an individual's reactions to color are affected by things like his or her cultural background and shared social interpretations. General color connotations change over time; but for consumers from similar cultural and geographic backgrounds, the fundamental associations remain constant.

In packaging design, red is commonly used as an attention-grabber. A warm-spectrum color, red can communicate heat, love, fire, passion, excitement, aggression, warning, and energy. The color red can physically speed up heart rate and raise blood pressure. Red can symbolize the intensity of flavor (barbecue, spicy, hot) or the fruitiness of strawberry, raspberry, apple, or cherry. In China, however, red symbolizes luck, prosperity, and happiness, and is worn by brides.

Similar to red, orange is frequently associated with the warmth of the sun, energy, exuberance, enthusiasm, adventurousness, cheerfulness, and contentment. Orange can communicate a strong and vibrant brand in one category, and a zesty, spicy, or fruity flavor in another.

Yellow can symbolize life, sun, warmth, idealism, energy, and playfulness. Yellow is a positive color and is used to suggest hope ("Tie a yellow ribbon round the ole oak tree…") but can also communicate hazard or danger. Yellow is eye-stimulating—in fact, it is the most energizing color in the spectrum. When used in moderation, it is the ultimate attention-grabber. In the food products category, yellow is often used to communicate lemon or butter flavor, sunlight, wholesomeness, and freshness. In household products, yellow communicates both effectiveness and caution. In some cultures, yellow has the negative connotation of cowardice and deceit.

Green can symbolize tranquility, life, youth, and freshness and is also used to signify that something has been grown or produced organically or sustainably. Green commonly communicates recycling, renewal, nature, and the environment. Green can also connote action, good luck, wealth, and money. Thought to be the easiest color on the eyes, green has a calming effect, and it is used in many product categories to convey relaxation and peacefulness. On the other hand, green can represent jealousy (hence the expression "green with envy"). Green means "go" in many cultures. When used on food packaging, green can represent mint, apple, and lime, as well as sourness. In recent years, consumer preference for green has increased due to trends in decorating and fashion. In the competitive marketing mix, green is used to signal the health benefit of a product and to suggest sustainability or concern for the environment.

Blue can symbolize authority, dignity, loyalty, truth, and wisdom, but can also represent depression, sadness, and solitude. Blue can communicate confidence, strength, conservatism, trust, stability, and security. It can create a peaceful, relaxing feeling (sky blue) or have a sobering effect ("having the blues"). The range of colors within the blue family can shift an association from productivity and strength to calmness and relaxation. Blue is highly regarded by both genders in Western cultures, while it is commonly used to signify the male gender in America. In China blue is associated with immortality. It can be used to counter or complement the color red.

Historically, purple pigment was difficult to acquire through natural sources. In fact, the word *purple* comes from the latin word *purpura*, the word for the dye that was extracted from sea snails. It was therefore rare and expensive, and used primarily by the wealthy, nobility or high priests. Purple came to symbolize sophistication, royalty, luxury, prosperity, wisdom, spirituality, sensuality, mystery, passion, and bravery (as in the Purple Heart). In its deepest hue, purple can

bring about a sense of peace but also denote depression and darkness. For healing and health-related products, purple can signify mind, body, and spirit, and for products in the food category purple can indicate fruit flavors, such as grape and blueberry. In packaging design for youth-oriented products, purple can be fresh, exotic, fun, and bold. On the color wheel, it falls in between two primary colors: the conservative color blue and the provocative color red.

Black can symbolize sturdiness, reliability, constancy, and wisdom, and it indicates power. In the fashion world, black is bold, hip, serious, upscale, elegant, sophisticated, and luxurious, and is perceived as classic. Black, in the product design category, can communicate seriousness and reliability. The use of the color black in packaging design can enhance other colors and make them pop. Black can create a perception of depth and express strength and clarity. In Western cultures, black is the color of despair and mourning, and can be associated with evil (as in black magic).

White communicates purity, freshness, innocence, cleanliness, efficaciousness, truthfulness, and contemporariness. It can connote snow or coldness. White reflects light and makes the colors around it stand out. Until recently, white was the predominant color for medical and pharmaceutical products because it implies efficaciousness, and its association with purity made it a top choice in the dairy category. With increased concern for creating shelf and market impact, the use of white as a category color has diminished. In luxury packaging, white can be rich and classic, but it can also be generic and nondescript. In Western cultures, white represents purity and is the color that brides wear; however, in traditional Chinese culture it represents mourning.

COLOR AS A DISTINGUISHING FEATURE

Color is one of the most influential aspects of packaging design. Consumers are more likely to identify the color of a package or product before any

other visual feature. Color distinguishes a product's personality, draws attention to its attributes, and enables it to stand apart from those of its competitors within a chaotic retail environment. Purchasing decisions are often made because of it.

Color can be used to signal the manufacturer (the red triangle of Nabisco) and the brand (the blue logo of Dove). Color can indicate culture, gender, age, ethnicity, regional locale, and price, or distinguish visual and typographic elements. Used in appropriate ways, it can differentiate product categories as well as varieties—ingredients, flavors, or fragrances—within a product line. As a marketing tool, color is a subliminally persuasive force. It can capture the attention, relax or irritate the eyes, and contribute to the success of a product, a service, or an interior space. In packaging design, the right colors can create market success (figs. 3.23 and 3.24).

Over the years, packaging colors began to define consumer product categories. In the personal care, health, and beauty categories, soft colors, including pinks, purples, cool blues, greens, and the neutral shades of black, gray, tan, and cream, have been commonplace. The pasta aisle in the supermarket has been dominated by blue boxes and red labels for sauce jars and cans. In the cereal category, designs have used primary colors to appeal to young shoppers

Fig. 3.23
Help remedies.
Design: Help Remedies
Client: Help Remedies

Fig. 3.24
Help remedies display.

attracted to bold colors and shapes. Red, blue, and white have been used in the dairy section.

The job of drawing attention to the packaging design has been aided by developments in ink technology. Neon colors, holographic overlays, and other innovative printing techniques are all inventive ways to use color as an attention-getter.

Brand-Building with Color

The proliferation of consumer brands over the decade has more or less dissolved the association of certain colors with certain product categories. Brands that once had as few as ten products in their family may now have as many as a few thousand. With this explosion comes the need for color to help differentiate product varieties and to distinguish brands from their competitors. What's more, the marketing of the same consumer products on different continents necessitates that a brand's colors transmit the brand's image consistently to a diverse consumer audience.

Similar to fashion and interior design, packaging design is enhanced by coordinated color schemes. Schemes that are complementary or contrasting, analogous or monochromatic, dominant or recessive can all help distinguish products. Accent colors can highlight flavor, ingredients, scent, or other product varieties and draw attention to a focal point on the packaging design (fig. 3.25).

Countless consumer products are recognized by the color of their packaging design, and those colors then become a significant facet of the product's personality or brand image. When the color is distinctive and consumers come to identify it with the brand, it becomes part of the overall "trade dress" of the packaging. Color, size, shape, graphic configuration, and other nonfunctional components of a design can all be trademarked. Doing so can then prevent competitors from infringing on a product's trade dress. Since packaging designs are widely identified by their colors, "ownership" of a color can thus permanently distinguish a product (figs. 3.26 through 3.29).

Fig. 3.25
Brand-building and color in the hair-care category.

Fig. 3.26
Connoisseur Gourmet Ice Cream.
Design firm: Asprey Creative
Client: Global Organics

Fig. 3.27
Fekkai Advanced shampoos.
Design firm: Creed
Client: Fekkai

Fig. 3.28
Tonic Health Shots.
Design firm: Little Big Brands
Client:PurBlu Brands

Fig. 3.29
Casoya Soy Enlightenment.
Design firm: Creed
Client: Casoya

COLOR HAS A DIRECT IMPACT on each brand's "shelf impact," including its visibility and shopability. In terms of visibility…studies have consistently shown that "brand blocking" (through the consistent use of color) improves shelf impact. This applies to both visibility (the likelihood of being actively considered) and speed of noting (the likelihood of visually preempting competition at the shelf).

Contrary to popular belief, no single color is inherently "more visible" at retail than any other color. That's because visibility is a function of color contrast. For example, Tylenol's bright red packaging should break through clutter if positioned next to Advil's blue, but it might well blend right in and become recessive if positioned next to Motrin's bright orange (or store-brand packaging that copies its color scheme). In other words, the "right" color for shelf impact is situational.

To make things even more complicated, the color consistency that enhances a brand's shelf visibility can detract from its variety differentiation and shopability. Without question, people do shop by color (e.g., "I look for the yellow bag"), and color-coding is the most effective way to differentiate flavors or varieties. (See fig. 3.30.)

Scott Young, "Breaking through the Clutter,"
Package Design, July-August 2005, 58–61.

Fig. 3.30
Color in the freezer section.

COLOR FORECASTING AND TRENDS

Color meanings and preferences change according to cultural trends and are forecasted like the weather. The fashion apparel and accessories, home products, and automotive products industries are trendsetters and followers of color forecasting.

Color trends derive from myriad social, political, economic, technological, and cultural influences in societies across the globe. Since color is a key determinant in consumer sales, color forecasting can be crucial to identifying specific colors for their ability to influence salability in the consumer product industries. The Color Association of the United States, the Color Marketing Group, and the Pantone Color Institute are among the leading forecasting entities.

Pantone is the world's predominant authority on color. Its founder, Lawrence Herbert, developed a color-management system to specify, match, communicate, and produce accurate color. Pantone provides color formula guides, systems, and charts for designers around the globe. The Pantone Matching System is a standardized color communication scheme that depicts thousands of precisely printed colors alongside formulas for mixing them. Used by designers and printers, the system ensures consistency, allowing color to be specified and matched exactly.

In the packaging design of consumer goods, color trend awareness is important for ensuring that a design's color is fashionable. It is wise, however, to consider trendy colors from fashion or other product design areas carefully because they may be short-lived, lasting only a season or two. The response to the color of a packaging design is affected by factors that vary from other design disciplines. The application and coordination of colors within a brand or product line should meet specific marketing objectives. Fashion and other global color trends can be used as guidelines for packaging color choice. However, not only does consumer behavior differ from one retail environment to another, but the packag-

ing design's and product's shelf life differ greatly from the duration of a fashion item. Consumer products are required to stand a longer test of time. An understanding of color, color theory, human perception of color, and consumer behavior should guide appropriate color choice.

CHALLENGES IN COLOR MATCHING

Negotiating the difference between the colors on a computer screen and the colors that then print on a color printer is always a challenge. Not only do colors vary between computer screens, but they also vary for different materials, substrates, and objects. Every colored object and printed surface absorbs and reflects light, whereas computer screens transmit light. The colors on a computer screen and the colors on printed objects have different properties, and the same color is perceived differently. Computer screens, like televisions, create color by combining red, blue and green (or RGB) light. Printers approximate that color by using a different set of "primary" colors: cyan, magenta, yellow, and black, known as CMYK color. Because of this difference, the color on a computer screen will never be exactly the same color generated by even the highest-quality printer. Nonetheless, manufacturers of computer monitors and printers continuously work to ensure color accuracy and consistency between devices.

Since a desktop printer will not print color precisely the same way as a high-end professional printer, printouts must be compared to color swatches. Creating a test page for the assigned Pantone colors will reveal how they reproduce on a specific printer.

The color on a design concept that has been presented and approved by the client is exactly what the client expects to see in the final produced packaging design. Despite constantly evolving technologies, processes, and materials in packaging design, the consistent use, application, and production of matching colors continues to be a significant challenge. Constant color

adjustment is therefore a critical part of the design process; it is essential that colors be uniform and consistent from initial concept to final printed packaging design.

An understanding of how a packaging design's color is impacted by the retail environments in which the product will be seen is also essential. The color of a packaging design will, for example, be affected by a store's interior lighting. Ceiling height, aisle lighting, the quality of light (dim, bright, or dark), and the use of fluorescent, incandescent, or colored lights all affect the consumer's perception of color. Packaging designs should be evaluated in their retail environment to ensure color accuracy.

KEY POINTS ABOUT COLOR

- Consider that color will communicate the design's personality.

- Apply colors across product lines in a coordinated color scheme and across the packaging structures, materials, and substrates of a brand.

- Match color from the computer to the specified color for the final printed material.

Imagery

When used appropriately, imagery can create visual excitement, memorable experiences, and recognizable touchpoints. Fashionable, chic, stylish, inspirational, personable, or unexpected, imagery can capture consumer interest. Consumers look at pictures before they read text.

EFFECTIVE USES OF IMAGERY

Illustrations, photographs, icons, symbols, and characters can be executed in a multitude of styles that each create a rich visual language and provide visual stimuli. Simple imagery enables the viewer to recognize a concept quickly; complex or subliminal imagery requires more than a moment or two for its meaning to be fully taken in. Consider the varying sensory experiences that different visuals communicate: flavor, scent, taste, temperature (including the sensation of a spicy food). All can be conveyed visually in packaging design.

Illustration and photography can be used to communicate the product "hero." The hero on a packaging design can become the distinctive feature of the PDP, be the focal point in the hierarchy of design elements, and personify the brand.

Imagery should always communicate the brand personality and product attributes directly and appropriately. The communication of appetite appeal (on food packaging), the connotation of lifestyle, the suggestion of mood, and instruction about product use are all ways imagery shapes a packaging design's personality.

A creative marketing brief (a document that descriptively explains the company's expectations regarding the project goals and outcomes) can create a picture of what the client ultimately wants to achieve. The client's strategic objectives are essential in providing the foundation for the creative exploration of imagery. This direction is crucial in helping to focus on imagery that effectively supports a conceptual strategy. Images should be researched extensively and refined by narrowing down appropriate illustrative and photographic styles. This process should take into account different ways of cropping, rendering, and coloring an image and is an important step toward making certain that each image chosen not only matches the product's personality but also communicates across a diverse consumer market (figs. 3.31 through 3.36).

THE WELL-KNOWN food photographer Aaron Rezny, known for the photography on the packaging of brands such as Duncan Hines, Kellogg's and Nabisco, points out that when photographing food, it is important to show freshness, detail, and a delicious texture in order to create shelf impact. "In packaging design," says Rezny, "what differentiates good photography from bad is having a point of view."
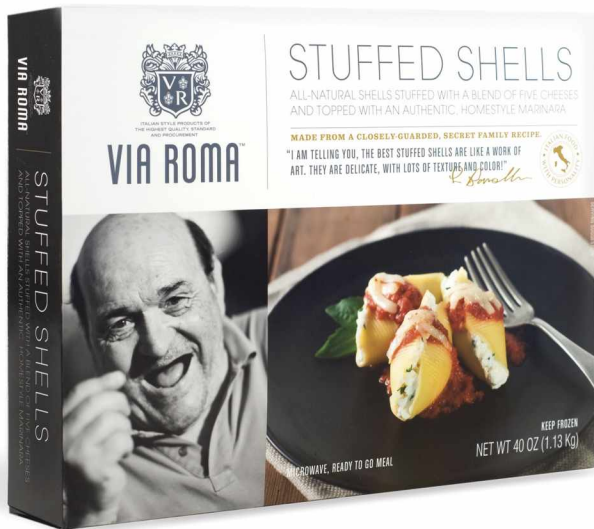
3.31

Fig. 3.31 through 3.36
Via Roma, various products.

Design firm: united*
Photographer: William Heuberger
Client: A&P

3.32

STUFFED SHELLS
ALL-NATURAL SHELLS STUFFED WITH A BLEND OF FIVE CHEESES AND TOPPED WITH AN AUTHENTIC, HOMESTYLE MARINARA

MADE FROM A CLOSELY-GUARDED, SECRET FAMILY RECIPE.
"I AM TELLING YOU, THE BEST STUFFED SHELLS ARE LIKE A WORK OF ART. THEY ARE DELICATE, WITH LOTS OF TEXTURE AND COLOR!"

VIA ROMA
ITALIAN STYLE PRODUCTS OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY, STANDARD AND PROCUREMENT

MICROWAVE, READY TO GO MEAL
KEEP FROZEN
NET WT 40 OZ (1.13 Kg)

3.33

SPINACH RAVIOLI
AN ALL-NATURAL SPINACH AND CHEESE FILLED RAVIOLI IN AN AUTHENTIC, HOMESTYLE MARINARA SAUCE

RATED "THE BEST RAVIOLI" BY THE ZAGAT SURVEY, NYC
"I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT MY MAMMA USED TO COOK WITH SPINACH ALMOST EVERY MEAL. YOU'D THINK MY FACE WOULD TAKE ON A GREENISH HUE AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!"

VIA ROMA
ITALIAN STYLE PRODUCTS OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY, STANDARD AND PROCUREMENT

MICROWAVE OR CONVENTIONAL OVEN
KEEP FROZEN
NET WT 12 OZ (340g)

3.34

VIA ROMA
ORECCHIETTE
AUTHENTIC IMPORTED ITALIAN DURUM WHEAT SEMOLINA PASTA

EXCLUSIVELY FROM THE TUSCAN REGION OF ITALY

3.35

LADY FINGERS

VANILLA WAFERS
ITALIAN WAFERS BAKED TO MAINTAIN FLAVOR AND A DELICATE PROFILE

VIA ROMA

VANILLA WAFERS
ITALIAN WAFERS BAKED TO MAINTAIN FLAVOR AND A DELICATE PROFILE

3.36

Illustration and Photography

There are hundreds of illustration styles, executed in different mediums, from simple line drawings to elaborate paintings. Illustrations can be created using cut paper, can be sketched or painted traditionally, or rendered on the computer. Different styles convey different attributes about a brand's personality and communicate that information differently. There are hundreds of photographic styles as well. Photographic images can be in black-and-white, in one color, duotones, tinted, screened, or in full color. When combined with words, images expand the meaning and interpretation of a packaging design. Photographs can be combined with illustrations to create unique personalities. Considerations for product depiction include the perspective or angle of the lens, lighting and styling, and how the image is cropped and positioned (figs. 3.37 through 3.46).
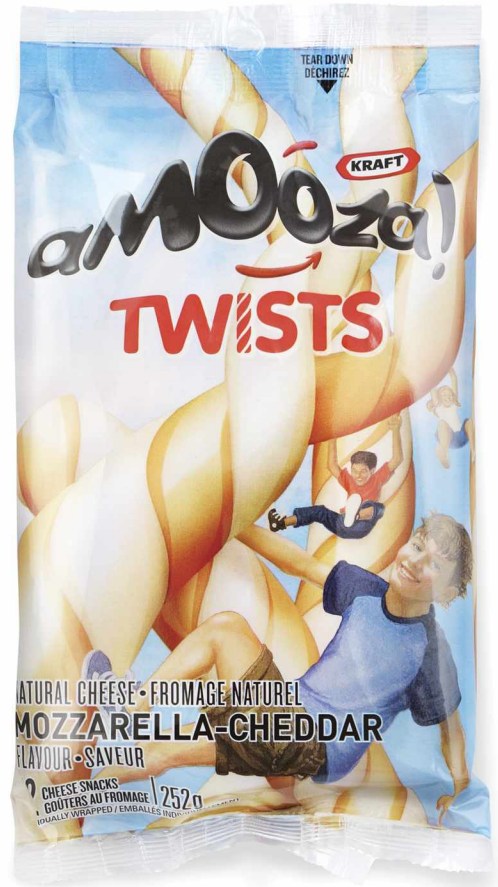

Fig. 3.37
AMooza Twists.
Design firm: Dossier Creative
Client: AMooza Twist

Fig. 3.38
AMooza Twists,
inner packs.

Fig. 3.39
Hercut.
Design firm: Creed
Client: Hercut

Fig. 3.40
Old Milwaukee beer can girl.
Design firm: Dossier Creative
Client: Old Milwaukee

Fig. 3.41
Pro Bar Simply Real.
An example of appetite-appeal
illustration.
Design firm: Moxie Sozo

Fig. 3.42
Sensis Condoms.
Design firm: Spring Design Partners
Client: Sensis

Fig. 3.43
Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory.
Design firm: Dossier Creative
Client: Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory

Fig. 3.44
Green Way Organic Green Peas.
Design firm: united*
Client: A&P

Fig. 3.45
Green Way Organic crackers.

Fig. 3.46
Green Way Organic, group shot.

Imagery in a Global Economy

The communication and perception of visual imagery differs between cultures and ethnic groups, and even regionally. Images do not necessarily have universal interpretations. In packaging design, imagery is affected by the interplay between the visual communication strategy and the consumer audiences' interpretation. Culturally specific imagery can enhance the communication of consumer values and a brand's personality or, if used inappropriately, can isolate and even offend. The successful packaging design takes account of sociology, anthropology, and history. Research into cultural and social norms, values, and visual cues, along with a thorough analysis and the refinement of image choices, helps the design meet its communication objectives.

In American culture, for example, the use of a red checkered plaid pattern on jam, jelly, or preserves jars is a well understood visual cue that communicates tradition, heritage, and hand-crafted quality. The image refers to the traditional practice, in home canning, of using a kitchen cloth to cover a jar's wax seal.

Globalization has provided consumers with access to products from far-distant places. There is often an expectation that a design will be able to perform in a global environment. The implications if it cannot or does not do so appropriately

Fig. 3.47
Debbie and Andrew's sausages.
Design firm: Elmwood, Leeds
Client: Debbie and Andrew's

Fig. 3.48
Debbie and Andrew's subsidiary brand, Ellie and Roddy's.

are significant. The imagery on packaging designs should never isolate or negatively stereotype social groups. Through proper imagery choice, the communication of cultural values or regional personalities that reflect a product's origins can cross borders successfully (figs. 3.47 and 3.48).

Appetite Appeal

Appetite-appeal illustration or photography can present the serving suggestion (the prepared product styled with the appropriate serving utensils and other props), the ingredients, a beauty shot of the hero, or luscious imagery that grabs consumers' attention and entices them. This type of imagery distinguishes a product by ap-

pealing to the consumers' senses, looking savory, and figuratively whetting their appetites (figs. 3.49 and 3.50).

Cropping and Scaling Images

Imagery should be designed to fit within the layout—the layout should not be designed around the imagery. Cropping and scaling an image can provide endless ways to incorporate it into a design. Positioning a frame or mask over the image allows the designer to examine it independent of its context. This can help identify what aspects of the image serve the design's overall communication objectives. Those parts of an image that do not add impact to the de-

Fig. 3.49

Duncan Hines cake mixes.
Design firm: Zack Group
Client: Pinnacle Foods Corp.

Fig. 3.50
Duncan Hines brownie mixes.

Fig. 3.51
Honeydrop bee icon.
Design firm: Monday Collective
Client: Hiro

Fig. 3.52
Honeydrop teas.

sign concept should be eliminated. The visual communication should be clear and direct.

Imagery can be used in packaging designs to

- show the product or hero;
- depict the target consumer;
- set a mood, tone, or locale;
- provide credibility;
- appeal to the appetite;
- create texture or pattern;
- express flavor, scent, usage, décor, and/or fashion; and
- personify the brand.

Symbols and Icons

Symbols and icons are powerful tools for visual communication. From bold marks to enigmatic graphics, such elements can represent concrete or abstract concepts. In packaging design, these graphic elements can become so iconic that consumers seek them out and identify with them more than with the brand name itself (figs. 3.51 through 3.55).

Fig. 3.53
Mina icon.
Design firm: Monday Collective
Client: Mina

Figs. 3.54 and 3.55
Mina Harissa.
Design firm: Monday Collective
Client: Mina

Characters

Characters can support brand communication and promote product attributes; they can even become the embodiment of the brand's personality. The possible qualities, traits, and features of these characters are infinite, and creating just the right one to communicate the brand's personality can be daunting.

Ethnic connotations, gender, facial expressions, body type, skin color, shape, size, graphic layout, and design styles—whether expressed photographically or illustratively—all affect the communication. A character can take the form of a human or that of an animal, be depicted illustratively or photographically, or have a cartoonish style with no human likeness. Characters can appeal to children and adults alike and can break through cultural barriers. The gesture of a character can communicate attributes such as confidence, strength, trust, happiness, energy, and amusement.

Characters should be charismatic, engaging, and appealing. The depiction of these qualities can captivate consumers, stimulate sales, and promote brand identification. Brand confidence and loyalty can be tied to the image of a character if consumers trust and relate to the look of the brand's personality. When there is a strong consumer connection to a character, it alone can symbolize the brand without other supporting visual elements, and can become a cultural icon—a brand unto itself (figs. 3.56 and 3.57).

Fig. 3.56
Band-Aid Mickey Mouse adhesive bandages.

Fig. 3.57
Warburtons SnackARoo and Chippidy DooDaa snacks.
Design firm: ANTHEM!
Client: Warburton
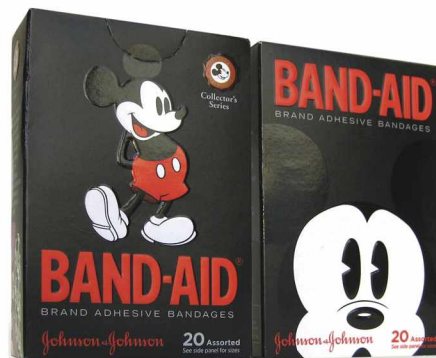
Graphic Devices

Basic design elements such as line, shape, color, texture, and typography provide endless design possibilities. The creation of specific graphic devices can aid in the organization of visual information on a packaging design. Graphic elements can guide the consumer through the packaging design by leading the eye through the hierarchy of information. Graphic devices can be used alone or in combination with other devices. When well designed, such devices can clarify the layout's organization and make communication more immediate (fig. 3.58).

Graphic devices on packaging designs can include

- color bars representing product variety, color, scent, flavor, ingredients, or fragrance;

- violators (see below) to communicate new products, product benefits, packaging benefits, or price;

- arrows and shapes to direct the eye, add energy, or contain text;

- squares, circles, triangles, and rectangles to separate a body of copy or enclose a brand identity; and

- texture as background for aesthetics or to support photos, illustrations, or symbols.

Violators

Violator is the term used for a visual device typically positioned on top of packaging graphics and used to call attention to or announce a special feature of the product or package. These devices purposefully disturb—or "violate"—the de-

Fig. 3.58
Crave Soft Treats.
Design firm: ANTHEM!
Client: Mars Petcare