



# BRAND RANCH

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*Sleek packaging includes a black cap that doubles as a half-shot measure from 3 VODKA.*



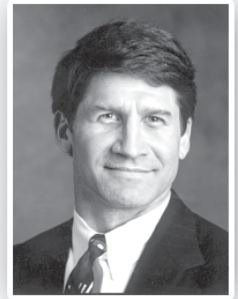
*Wishbone's new Salad Spritzers have a custom spray nozzle that gives users more control over calorie consumption.*



*A textured, easy to grip bottle with colorful shrink sleeve label will not get lost on the shelf.*

Dear Readers:

Thank you for your feedback and inquiries on last month's issue, which covered the strategic importance of superior customer service as a key way to differentiate your brand. This month I will focus on yet another key area being used by category leaders as a way to set their brands apart at the point-of-sale: distinctive packaging.



Because it is becoming more and more important to stand out on an increasingly cluttered shelf, successful brands are paying greater attention to engaging consumer senses in all aspects of their marketing and branding efforts. In this issue we will touch on some of the methods currently being used to excite the buyer's imagination and create the kind of memorable experience that will etch the brand in consumer's minds.

Consider some of the features at work in the branding and packaging of certain category leaders:

- Coke – green swirl bottle
- Absolut Vodka – bottle shape and texture became the message
- Harley-Davidson – V-twin engine and the sound of the pipes
- Heineken – green bottle, and can in the shape of a keg
- Target's Pharmacy Pill Bottle – color coding and safety packaging

Packaging can take many different forms in building a unique impression of your brand. In fact we see that shape, material (recyclable), color, size, and delivery can all play an important role in branding.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Be well,

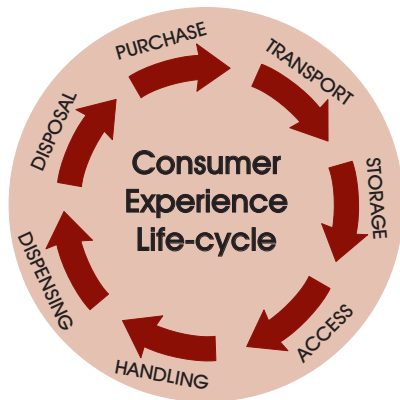
Michael Blanck  
President



# BRAND PACKAGING

In days past, packaging was simply used as a means to hold and deliver a product to its consumers. It was very utilitarian, and viewed strictly as a cost factor when considering options. In today's overcrowded markets, market leaders are looking for packaging to do much more than just hold the product. Now, packaging is used to add value and differentiate a brand from its competition.

The new approach to package development takes into account the total "consumer experience life-cycle" to help companies think innovatively. This innovation process addresses seven packaging way points:



The first thing to determine is how your customers interact with the product; ethnography research can help uncover some of the unique ways in which consumers handle and use your items. Once you understand this, then you can begin to consider new innovations to make your product even more useful or easily handled, and therefore more valuable to your consumer. Let's look at each of these different areas and see how market leaders have made innovation part of the value equation for their consumers.

## PURCHASE

More and more consumer buying decisions are being made in-store at the point of truth or at the display. Therefore, to make an impression on consumers you must stand out from the crowd. A number of options

are currently available—however, the key test of any option is whether it reinforces your brand message, and whether it adds value in a way that will help your product meet or exceed the customer's expectation. Some successful brand innovations are:

**Coke** – A newly designed plastic bottle with easy-to-grip shape and easy-open twist top has been welcomed by consumers. In addition, Coke just announced that they will be building a *PET* – plastics recycling plant in South Carolina to become more environmentally friendly and save on plastic raw materials.



**McCormick Spice Grinders** – The inclusion of a grinder in their spice containers not only adds uniqueness and value but also increases the perception of quality and freshness. The new design allows for grinding at the time of use and keeps the remaining spice beads fresher longer.

**Kleenex** – Once considered a commodity product, Kleenex is now differentiating its brand with decorative new patterns and shapes. Convenience packaging also allows consumers to keep the product handy for quick pulls, thus increasing consumer usage.



## TRANSPORT

Packaging that makes a product easy to transport and carry can give consumers an added incentive to buy that product. Consider how the following brands improved their packaging to make it more user-friendly.



**Coors** – The Plastic Bottle Cooler Box is a coated paper-board, all-in-one carrier

that readily accepts ice, eliminating the need for a cooler. Plastic bottles eliminate the danger of broken glass.

**Pringles Potato Chips** – The cylinder-shaped container for potato chips prevents chips from being crushed in transport, storage, and handling. This innovation by P&G developed an entirely new category in the snack foods area.

**Clorox Sticks** – Once a home laundry option only, it's now possible to remove a stain even while traveling, saving good clothing and sparing embarrassment.

## STORAGE

Once they get it home, where does the consumer store your product? If they stash it away in a drawer, cabinet, or pantry, is it out-of-sight out-of-mind? To make sure your brand is ever present in the consumer's mind, find ways to ensure it is kept within easy access and reach. This is often accomplished by putting the product in a decorative storage container.

**Coke** – Refrigerator storage sleeves not only make carrying easier, they can be put directly into the refrigerator where they serve as a gravity-fed dispenser. This results in great brand identity and storage convenience for the consumer; a win/win for all parties.

**Target Prescription Bottles** –

These are childproof yet also easy to open for older adults, and in addition are color-coded to encourage easy recognition and ensure patients take the right medicine. Over 20 percent of drug poisonings and overdoses are caused by mistaking prescriptions intended for another member of the household. This innovation provides real benefit to consumers.





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**Folger's Coffee** – The resealable plastic tub saves the company money in freight because of lower shipping weights, and also makes handling the container easier and more convenient for the consumer. Another win/win option.

*\*The cereal and snack foods categories could really benefit consumers and differentiate themselves by offering resealable plastic bags.*

## ACCESS

Manufacturers have only three ways to grow a brand: sell more units to more customers, sell more units to the same customers, or add new product/brand offerings. One clear way to increase sales is to make the brand accessible and convenient. Several category leaders have done just that:

**Ivory Hand Soap** – The product is delivered in a decorative dispenser that sits conveniently on top of a counter near the faucets.



**Domino Sugar**  
Colorful containers are attractive enough for the counter and

resealable for easy access and closure.

**Breyers Ice Cream** – Easy open-and close tubs keep ice crystals from forming and allow easy access for all ages.

## HANDLING

You must know and understand who actually uses your product and how. Too many manufacturers give a project to an engineer and never think about the end user. When no customer information is provided in the project scoping or creative brief, the engineer might create a product packaged without the consumer in mind. That's when we get packaging that is over-designed and packages that Godzilla couldn't open. This situation costs the manufacturer and consumer money and

frustration. Some projects, however, are thought all the way through to the consumer. Like:

**Bull Frog** – A spray top makes this two-in-one sun block and bug repellent easy to hold and apply.



**OXO** – Rubber grips and non-stick surfaces built into an attractive and ergonomic kitchen utensil blend design and solution into one neat product.

## DISPENSING

This is a matter of making normal consumer use easy and convenient.

For example:



**Hellmann's Mayonnaise** – An upside-down package design keeps the product positioned for easy squeezing and application.

**Gatorade** – The no-spill top on the sports drink makes it very usable even in challenging situations.

**Clorox** – A non-spill, drainable spout makes dispensing this bleaching agent easy and safe.

## DISPOSAL

The environmental implications of packaging is a hot subject right now in many communities. Manufacturers should be held accountable for the impact of their packaging, and take steps to make packaging reusable or recyclable.

Some positive recent changes:

- McDonald's is now using recycled, grease-resistant cardboard instead of Styrofoam clam shells to package food.
- Coke is building a plant to recycle 100 percent of their PET plastic containers.

*\* Manufacturers should reduce the amount of packaging in their designs as well as consider using recycled materials. This will increase the demand for recycled*

*products (paper, plastic, glass, etc.) and make it more economical for communities to offer full-line recycling services to residents.*

**Some other areas that you might want to consider when looking at or designing new packaging:**

- **Graphics** – Graphic design and colors should match your brand identity elements (V8 – Infusion has a great look supporting the brand positioning).
- **Handling** – Handles, easy-grip strips for kids, and container shape all make the product easier, safer, and more convenient to handle.
- **Application devices** – Choose the right delivery for your product: spray, roll-on, mist, free-flowing, portion control, wide mouth, spill proof, etc.
- **Shape** – Think Coke, Pringles, Absolut Vodka, Evian, Dannon Yogurt, Altoids, etc. (Liquor manufacturers and perfume companies do a great job using shape and color to differentiate their brands).
- **Materials** – Glass, plastic, and recycled paper can all play a role in differentiation. (Think of Coors or even Crown Royal and its flannel bag).

Don't look at packaging as a mere cost consideration when developing your product or brand. View packaging as a way to help differentiate your brand from the competition, and provide added value to your consumer. And remember, the only real way to understand the value equation is to study how consumers actually use the product in the real world.

## PACKAGING IS THE FIRST IMPRESSION

you make on prospective consumers and creates a lasting perception they will carry in their memories.

**Make it different, make it have impact.**

# THE FASTEST GROWING MEDIUM? SHOPPER MARKETING

(OUTPACING EVEN THE INTERNET)

According to a recent survey by Deloitte Consulting the growth of shopper marketing is outpacing even the spending and growth of internet marketing/sales activities.

**Shopper marketing is growing by 21% while Internet advertising is rising 15% annually.**

The general – broad (current) definition of what constitutes shopper marketing is:

*“All marketing stimuli designed to engage the shopper, build brand equity and lead him/her to make a purchase while he/she is in “shopper mode.”*

Some of the tools being considered part of this trend are: in-store TV, floor decals, shelf ads, product ringers/ribbons, aisle displays, store/cart signage, in-store demonstrations, themed end-aisle displays, and special packaging.

While this is still a new category for manufacturers and retailers to clearly define, it is certainly paying off – some statistics say that over 80% of all retail decisions are made at the point of touch or impact (at the shelf). Even if only a portion of this percentage is true, you can't overlook the impact that your brand has at this critical decision making point for your consumers.

To be a market or category leader you must seriously consider this trend when setting your budgets for the coming year.