

Impact of Packaging in Self Service Marketing

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Abstract - *The functional and service utilities of packaging have been discussed in many management forums. But the impact of Packaging in marketing of products particularly in the self servicing markets like departmental stores and super markets needs a careful investigation and a more focused attention in the current business environment. Product packaging not only protects the product during transit from the manufacturer to the retailer, but it also prevents damage while the product sits on retail shelves. How a product is packaged may be what attracts the consumer to take a look on the product as it sits on store shelves. For this reason, many companies conduct extensive research on color schemes, designs and types of product packaging that is the most appealing to its intended consumer. Many product manufacturers may think that the product and its performance is more important than what the packaging looks like, but the product packaging can play a role in the success or failure of the sales of the product. This study will highlight the impact and role of packaging in attracting and retaining customers particularly in the environments of super markets which is self service marketing. The Product as it is packaged and exhibited in the shelves of orderly malls and markets has to attract the customer. From this perspective packaging is very critical for the success of such products. This paper will explore the theme more elaborately.*

Keywords - *Packaging utility, impact in self servicing supermarkets and stores, packaging as a marketing tool, attracting consumers and creating environment through packaging.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The role of packaging is becoming quite significant with the increased importance placed on self-service marketing. In a typical supermarket a shopper passes about 600 items per minute, the only way to get some consumers to notice the product is through displays, shelf hangers, tear-off coupon blocks, other point-of-purchase devices, and last but not least, effective packages. Considering the importance placed on the packaging, a great deal of time is spent on motivational research, color testing, psychological manipulation, and so forth, in order to ascertain how the majority of consumers will react to a new package. Based on the results of this research, past experience, and the current and anticipated decisions of competitors, the marketer will initially determine the primary role of the package relative to the product.

Packaging is concerned with designing and producing appropriate packages for the product. The significance of packaging has increased these days because of its role in protecting the product on its way to the display shelves in super markets and sometimes even afterwards during the life time and usage of the product. Packaging helps in

identification of the product, brand particularly with the increasing trend in self servicing like vending machines and since the products are well sealed it helps in maintaining quality and handling. Packaging helps and aids the following marketing functions:

1. Collecting information on Consumer preferences
2. To know of the relative position with other competing products
3. Enhances the perceived value to a customer by protecting from deterioration, spilling, spoilage, or evaporation during transit from manufacturer to the display shelf.
4. It enhances convenience of usage by cleanliness and use without disturbance.
5. Brand identification and Product handling in stores.
6. The displayed Product performs a communication function by its unique identification features, sales promotion through labeling, and general advertising and promotion.
7. Through unique identification it facilitates differentiation, and during repositioning strategy it helps by its unique design.
8. Promotes and triggers impulse buying if packaging is attractive.
9. Through attractive packaging price barriers can be overcome.
10. Through well designed selling messages can be imprinted which can promote sale of product.



Figure 1: Visual Therapy in Packaging

The packaging and labels can be used by marketers to encourage potential buyers to purchase the product.

Package graphic design and physical design have been important and constantly evolving phenomenon for several decades. Marketing communications and graphic design are applied to the surface of the package and (in many cases) the point of sale display. Packages can have features that add convenience in distribution, handling, stacking, display, sale, opening, re-closing, use, dispensing, reuse, recycling, and ease of disposal. These are customer friendly features.

II. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The enormous growth of self service marketing outlets and the expansion in the marketing role played by them along with packaging developments has encouraged this study. Whereas the functional and convenience utilities of packaging have been brought out by many publications and research studies, there is a need to highlight and emphasize the marketing role of packaging. This study will exclusively focus on this aspect as it is important in the present day context where most of the products are displayed, promoted and sold through convenience stores, departmental stores and super markets. The specific objectives will include:

1. Identification of the role played by Packaging.
2. Dynamic changes in this role from “Protection to Promotion”
3. How packaging is used by modern product companies to market their products.
4. Developments and Future trends in use of Packaging as a ‘marketing mix’.
5. A futuristic view of developments and suggestions for marketers.

Initial approach and thinking was there would be need to go to market through a survey and identify factors influencing trends in packaging and marketing. But the enormous amount of literature available was a great encouraging factor as the literature survey progressed and most of the literature could be accessed through previously published literature (Please see the detailed list of references), a thorough desk research and study was initiated to obtain the required data for analysis and Conclusion. The results are there to see for the readers.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Frequently companies are prone to view their product packaging as an afterthought. So much time, money, and care go into the meticulous creation and perfection of their products, but if it’s not packaged properly, all those efforts will go to waste. Leading brands understand the importance of packaging not only in keeping their goods safe, fresh, and protected, but also as an essential part of their branding and marketing efforts. Your packaging is

the signature you leave everywhere, and it has the ability to attract today’s customers much better than outdated sales and advertising tactics. Packaging originally was considered only as the technology of enclosing or protecting products for distribution, storage, sale, and use. Packaging can be described as a coordinated system of preparing goods for transport, warehousing, logistics, sale, and end use, can also be used to refer to the process of designing, evaluating, and producing packages.

Packaging is to be considered as the gold star of your marketing mix – it can dictate how well your strategy is working, and it involves each one of the product mix attributes like 4Ps of Product, Price, Place and Promotion. *Packaging is what shows off your product in the best light, displays the price and value of the product, communicates the product’s benefits to consumers, and it what physically appears in your various distribution points.* Your product may be the very best on the market, but its packaging needs to be the main tool that represents this. It’s the first thing people see, and it has the ability to catch or divert their attention within seconds. Your packaging should never be considered an afterthought or just a random part of the marketing mix. It should be viewed as a key place of focus, as it incorporates all other elements of your sales and marketing strategies. Packaging is what maintains the freshness and quality of your product while using vibrant designs to tell your brand’s story. It is the place where government regulated information, like nutritional facts and allergy warnings, is located, therefore keeping consumers safe and illustrating your brand’s commitment to transparency and providing products that are beneficial to their lives.



Figure 2: Packaging ‘gold star of the marketing mix’

Today’s marketers are using packaging to reach consumers who are no longer swayed by classic advertising and sales

practices – signs and commercials can easily be ignored, but your product simply cannot. If people are looking for a specific item, your packaging is really what's going to sell it to them in any given retail location through flexible packaging, especially, communicating values, missions, and the qualities that make the products so outstanding.

Packaging is the technology of enclosing or protecting products for distribution, storage, sale, and use. Packaging by its extended definition refers to the process of designing, evaluating, and producing packages. Packaging can be described as a coordinated system of preparing goods for transport, warehousing, logistics, sale, and end use. Packaging contains, protects, preserves, transports, informs, and sells in many countries it is fully integrated into government, business, institutional, industrial, and personal use. Package labeling or labeling is any written, electronic, or graphic communication on the package or on a separate but associated label.

Product packaging has earned a great importance today. Probably, it is said that first impression is the best impression. If your product did not attract the customers first time, then you never make your product a brand in the market. The process of enclosing and distributing the product in the market, Storing the product in the warehouses and selling the products in the retail store and shopping malls and protecting it for the use of end consumers is called product packaging. The companies use Product Packaging to drive more customers as the packaged products are considered safe to use by the consumers. Each Product use some sort of packaging even it is just a tag with price on it. This article will let you know how the Product packaging is used in manufacturing, its purpose in marketing and some important types of packaging.

Form and Function are two basic elements while designing a Product Packaging. The Packaging provides a barrier to germs, air, oxygen, water vapors, moist and dust particles. Keeping a product safe is very critical while designing a Product Package. Some products have extended shelf life; some are prone to expiration, some are prone to damage, some are prone to heat, and some are atmosphere sensitive; a product package must ensure all the factors are covered that will keep the end product safe. The ultimate function of Packaging a Product is to keep the Contents fresh, clean, untouched and safe while transporting.

A product with good packaging can attract more potential customers; grab more buyers which will ultimately results in higher sales and larger market share for the manufacturer. A good package defines and demonstrates all the product attributes like, color, quality, design, price and size of the product. Labels are used to encourage more sales. The Companies are now designing product Packages to reflect the Brand Identity to the Consumers.

Emerging Trends in Packaging involves more of Graphic designs to attract customers (See illustration in Figure 2). Today, design's role is as much about discovering and articulating what is important as it is about shape and structure. Packaging designers must now be experience designers, directing the customer through the storm to a singular experience—because experiences are what today's customers are after. Packaging designers are now in charge of directing the experience, which leads to a connection with the product and a brand.

The designs of this year focus on interchangeability. Packaging is no longer simply about packaging the object—it is about the unpacking experience and art directing. This is where the process starts for designers today: you work backward from the screen image to the unpacking moment to the design that serves it. This too explains the shift towards basic design: large text spelling simple and straightforward messages, basic shapes making patterns in primary colors. Designers realize that packages are now billboard-like advertisements to be featured in photos and shared across social platforms. Thus, the benefit of a simple clear message stated in large bold letters gets repeated with every new viewer.

The task of the designer this year was clear: how can you articulate the value of the product in simple, approachable terms and connect with the consumer through the torrent of information? The answer manifested itself in a number of ways but ultimately remained the same: focus on the essential, eliminate the rest.



Figure 3: Emerging Trends a graphic representation

In much of the best packaging of the year, there was clarity of purpose. The designers understood the purpose of the object and the thought process of their audience. In service of this, they simplified the message and stated it clearly and boldly across the face of the packaging. These designs are text-based and say what they are in no uncertain terms. They realize the value of a simple message in today's crowded world. The simplicity does not come off as lazy or incomplete but refreshing and honest. This is the manifestation of the

idea: clarify not simplify. These designs identified exactly what the customer was searching for and expressed it simply. It comes off as powerful and trustworthy. As you walk the aisles or sift through your mail—here you see one shining beacon that speaks to you in words you can understand and connect with.

Another trend manifesting itself this year is the idealization of the past—a longing for simpler times when things were cared for, made by hand, and detail-oriented. But these designs are not simply regurgitating old forms and techniques; they are modernizing them and combining them in new ways. This new take on what is old is refreshing because it selects the best parts of different periods of our history and juxtaposes them. These designers realize the increasing rareness of endangered techniques like calligraphy, letterpress, and foiling. These artisanal practices grow more and more desired each year. In the mind of the consumer, they are increasingly novel and related to greater value. But far from merely being historical, these techniques are being re-imagined in the context of mid-century layouts and applied to a 21st Century, cutting-edge materials. Don Papa is premium small batch rum from the isle of Negros Occidental, the Philippines. Stranger & Stranger recently designed the packaging for Don Papa's 10-year edition, which features the brand's namesake among local flora and fauna as it undulates around, wrapping the bottle. Combining a vintage bottle shape, a rustic cork, and ornate illustration, this product stands out for its bold old-fashioned style. This design solution understands what customers are looking for as they shop for alcohol: quality, history, and personal touch.



Figure 4: Design of Don Papa Rum Container

How packaging can help your product marketing

According to Olson and Jacoby (1972), packaging is an extrinsic element of the product and it is an attribute well

related to the product but is not a part of the physical product itself. It is said that more than 70 percent of the purchase decisions are made on the shelf and as a result if you are a marketer, you need to make the packaging of your product support your brand positioning and build a competitive advantage. Let us take a quick look at some of the important business benefits that packaging offers:

- A substantial representation of your brand and company values
- An increased impact on the point of purchase
- Opportunities for new channels of distribution
- A comparable enhancement of product delivery and experience

As a marketer you must always remember that packaging of a product is the first thing that your consumer notices and therefore it plays a vital role in differentiating your brand from the competition. You need to go lengths to create a packaging that will not just draw new customers but will convince them to buy your products as well.

Recent research into packaging has found out that packaging cues have a great impact on the way in which a product is perceived. With consumers becoming more demanding and with its functionality to communicate with consumers, the increasingly important role of packaging as a strategic tool to attract the attention of the 21st century consumers cannot be denied. Results of a recent research study regarding the role of packaging on consumer's buying behavior arrived at following conclusions:

1. Packaging could be treated as one of the most valuable tool in today's marketing

Communication, necessitating more detail analysis of its elements and impact of the elements on consumer's buying behavior.

2. Appropriate and vivid picture or packaging color, which gives them a happy feeling and instructions on easy handle/open/dose/dispose, package shape. All these elements contribute to catch consumer's attention and interest. Besides each element's single function, we think that a good combination of these elements may lead the product more eye-catching and attractive.

3. Analyzing the importance of its separate elements for consumer's choice reveals the impact of packaging and its elements on consumer's purchase decision. The main packaging elements have been identified as: graphic, color, size, form, and material of packaging, and innovative wrapper design, while giving product information, producer, Country-of-origin.

4. It has also revealed that elements of packaging are the most important for consumer's purchase decision. For a major part of consumers' attraction was a size of package and material are the main visual elements, whereas, product information is also the main elements when purchasing milk and washing powder.
5. Analyzing the impact of package elements on consumers purchase decisions, visual elements of package have relatively stronger influence on consumer's purchasing. Packaging has gradually exhibited its important role in a way to serve consumers by providing information on its different functionality with ease and communicated with consumers, clearly. There is no doubt about increasingly important role of packaging as a strategic tool to attract consumers' attention and their perception on the product quality.
6. New product manufacturers mostly use the labels in their products basically to describe when made it, where it was made, how it was made, what it contains and how to use it etc. The information given in the label properly guides the consumers for proper usage to get full value while promoting the product in the market.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

The role of Packaging has changed over a period time from product covering and protection to one of an attraction tool of marketers. Today, Packaging is one of the prominent Ps of Marketing, i.e. in addition to Product, Price, Promotion and Place. More and more customers today are attracted by packaging quality, utility and the message by the manufacturers. If the message is 'catchy' the customers get glued to it. So, the role of packaging is no more stagnant, but it is evolving into a more dynamic role as the environmental changes make impact on customers and their life styles.

Today the time starved and young youthful customers find easy to locate products in the super market shelves. They carefully read the label, the manufacturing and expiry date and the constituent proportions if it is a health or medicinal product. So, the role has dynamically changed for the 'packaging' from containing, protecting and a convenient carrier to one of marketing promotion aid.

Packaging can also differentiate one brand of product from another brand. Because the product packaging contains company names, logos and the color scheme of the company, it helps consumers to identify the product as it sits among the competition's products on store shelves. Packaging may also contain ingredients and nutritional information about the product. This information can help

to sell the product because it allows potential customers to obtain the necessary information they need to make a purchase decision. Information contained on a package may propel the reader to buy the product without ever having to speak to a store clerk.

Product packaging always acts as an important medium in the marketing mix in various aspects like promotion campaigns, establishing brand identity, reflecting the impact of all other product groups, defining its character and a lot more. There are in fact many ways in which you can use packaging to add value. Recently, packaging has evolved to great heights and has developed way beyond its original function of product protection. With the role of packaging in the marketing mix gaining momentum, research in this area becomes extremely important. The importance of packaging can be judged in the way it has been defined from time to time from being functionally focused to having a holistic and more extensive role in defining its own nature in the marketing of the product.

Packaging can help sell the product because it provides space for sharing information about the product, such as nutritional information, usage or directions. In essence, the packaging can help to paint a picture of how the product benefits the customer. When developing a product in a new market, it is important to conduct market research, such as focus groups, to determine what is appealing to the new market. Once a consumer starts buying the product, packaging helps him to quickly identify the product when shopping. When introducing a product in a new market, packaging can help to gain the attention of a prospect. For example, vibrant colors and designs of packaging may prompt a new customer to stop and look at the product because of the bright colors or because the design is one she has never seen before.



Figure 5: From bottles to pouches and cups to cans, these commercialized packages all have a design story to tell

V. RECOMMENDATION

For new entrants to market or for companies introducing new products in a market or trying to expand to new markets, packaging can help improve their product

positioning and pricing strategies. It is highly recommended to the marketing and business to pay proper attention for good packaging. Poor packaging could be one of the causes of product failure in the market. It is necessary to set the packaging standard and to implement strategy accordingly for better protection and promotion of a product.

The cultural difference does have an impact on companies' initiatives to design the product package, for instance, the choices of packaging colors are quite different between the West and Far East. Companies operating in international environment have to consider cultural differences when they design the product package for different markets of the World.

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