

THE ROLE OF PACKAGING IN SALES PROMOTION

Today, when all markets are full of different goods, it is impossible not to pay attention to the packaging of these goods. After all, going to the store, you will not see a product without packaging.

The **aim** of our survey is to understand the impact of packaging on demand.

The aim is realized in the following tasks:

- what the packaging is for;
- consider and analyze the packaging of bottles of water;
- identify shortcomings and offer solutions to packaging problems.

First of all, we would like to understand what packaging is.

Different writers and experts have defined packaging in different ways as follows:

According to Prof. Ph. Kotler, “Packaging is the activity of designing and producing the container or wrapper for products” [1].

According to D. J. Schwartch, “The package that contains protects and identifies the basic products” [3].

According to Prof. W. J. Stanton, “The packing may be defined as all the activities involved in designing and producing the container or wrapper for a product” [3].

What functions does the packaging perform? How does it affect the product attractiveness?

Let us take a closer look at its functions and learn more about how external design increases internal sales.

1. **Protective function.** The main role of packaging is to protect the product during storage and transportation from damage and contamination. Identical product in different packaging has different appeal to the buyer. The task of experts is to choose a package that meet the needs of the buyer at a certain price tag and available technologies. The most effective solution will not always be the most expensive or the cheapest [4].

2. **Ergonomic function.** This function provides ease of use. The ideal design should be clear to the consumer, simple and easy to use without detailed instructions. These requirements also include practicality: ease of transportation, tactile sensations, ease of opening or closing, convenience of storage in a closet or refrigerator, protection from children, availability of instructions [5].

3. **Information and communication function.** Packaging must provide the buyer with certain required information about the product in accordance with the requirements and standards. The texts and images on the packaging inform about the positioning and values of brand, storage conditions, the method of production of goods, methods of opening or closing and much more [5].

4. **Advertising function.** Packaging can be the best advertising of the product, located not only in the places of sale, but also where it is stored and used. Through packaging it is easy to convey any informational or motivational messages to consumer, such as discounts, promotions, updates, sweepstakes. In addition, if advertising messages are interesting and attractive, are created competently, they increase sales [4].

5. **Ecological function.** This function has recently become increasingly important. In the best case, the packaging should not be harmful to the environment, the materials from which it is made should be suitable for reuse or disposal [4].

6. **Aesthetic function.** Packaging, made aesthetically, has a perfect shape, harmonious, beautiful in graphic and compositional solution, in other words, pleasant to look at. In the conditions of modern, oversaturated market consumer feels constant information pressure from advertising, and directly bright packaging, which he sees in the store, is the final argument in favor of the purchase of a product [4].

Thus, the product "correct" packaging has a great impact on its sales. Well-designed packaging has some value in terms of its convenience – in the eyes of buyers and in terms of product promotion – in the eyes of the manufacturer.

Should the packaging be just comfortable? Or should it also be attractive?

We interviewed students of the Institute of business BSU and found out that 81 % of respondents choose the product not only because of the convenient and safe packaging, but also because of the attractive appearance.

To confirm these results, we decided to conduct a survey where we intend to find out on the basis of what criteria students used to choose non-carbonated drinking water.

The survey included 6 questions such as: «What kind of water do you buy most often?», «What can you recommend to improve "ДопОпс" packaging?», «Do you like "ДопОпс" packaging?», «If not, why?», «What do you pay attention when you buy a product?», «Did you know the water "ДопОпс" before the survey?».

The results showed the leaders in the sales of drinking water are the following brands: "Bon Aqua" – 36 %, "КСТАТИ" – 21 %, "Славная" – 18 %, "DARIDA" – 18 %, and others – 7 %. There is no big difference in price, it varies from 0,98 to 1,20 rubles.

But which of the necessary packaging functions are present in the leaders? All products of the above brands are in bottles of flexible plastic, which doesn't cause inconvenience during use. The shape of the bottles is chosen so that the consumer can comfortably hold the bottle in his hands both during walking and during doing sports.

The bottles have caps that do not leak, so the protective function can also be counted. In addition, the bottles have all the necessary information. For example, all of the etiquette focuses on the adjective "non-carbonated", which significantly reduces the search time for water with the desired dose of gases.

As for the environment, all brands didn't show good results. None of the bottles can be used twice, especially for hot drinks. Since heat accelerates the chemical processes of release of harmful substances into the liquid, which we drink. It is considered to be rather unhealthy.

As it turned out the most important criterion for the choice of drinking water is label. First of all, students of 1–3 courses pay attention to the attractiveness of the label, and then to the quality of water. 3 out of 4 brands choose blue as their primary color and were not mistaken. According to the survey, 94 % of students associate water with the blue color, which, in their opinion, symbolizes the purity and quality of water. Water "КСТАИ" is available in bottles with labels of different colors: blue, turquoise and pink. As an experiment, we specifically took 9 bottles with a blue label, and one bottle of the brand "КСТАИ" with a pink label. As a result, water "КСТАИ" took the 6th position in popularity. Why not last? Here there is another marketing loophole. On the bottles of water "КСТАИ" with a pink label you can find this words "for children". And as you know, for children food is special, without additives, without sugar. Such products are associated with high quality, so that's why they are in demand. It can be concluded that the demand is justified by the high quality of packaging, as of the 6 functions of these brands have not passed only 1.

And the last place took "ДопОпс".

The shape of the bottle and the plastic from which the bottle is made, is consistent with the functions. But still, the water "ДопОпс" 1–3 year students noted as the most unpopular. In addition, 81 % of students hadn't known of its existence before the survey.

73 % of students noted that the packaging of the water is very similar to the packaging of vinegar, so being in the store with a sense of thirst, many would not even look in it direction. What's wrong with the package?

First of all, it really looks like vinegar. On the products with water, as we wrote above you can find blue color. On the package "ДопОпс" most of the label is red, which is very often used on labels with vinegar. Students noted that the packaging looks unattractive because of the variety of colors on the package: white, blue, red and gold. "Marketers are clearly overdone", wrote the students.

Another note to the label. There is not a single word on it about what kind of water it is: carbonated or not. Many people don't drink carbonated water, so they would not dare to buy this water, since they don't know what kind of water it is.

Also, 30 % of students were confused that the water is called "ДопОпс" as a chain of stores. This is a good undermined the reputation of water, as it is involuntarily associated with students as not clean drinking water.

And finally, like all previous brands, "ДопОпс" uses for the manufacture of bottles of such plastic, which can be used only once.

In the end, the brand "ДопОпс" followed only 2 functions out of 6, which resulted in low demand.

Suggestions for packaging improvements

In order to successfully sell a product, it is not necessary to invest a lot of money in the development and production of packaging – the whole question is, for what product packaging is necessary and for what consumer this product is designed.

First of all we would like to recommend to the manufacturer of the "ДопОпс" to conduct a market research to find out: attractiveness (likes/dislikes) of packaging, the nature of the logo, colors and shades of labels, packing form, the nature of the image (picture or photograph), contents and texts on labels etc. Then comparing the results of tests for different creative solutions, they can make a reasoned conclusion about which image is closest to consumers.

For example, the manufacturer of the "ДопОпс" can consider the option of labels in darker colors. In practice, a dark label usually means an expensive product. Or radically change the packaging from a plastic bottle to a tin bottle.

A thorough study of buyers, as well as consideration of the above recommendations can help the company "ДопОпс" more prepared approach to the issue of packaging. This will help to increase sales of water and further expand the market.

Conclusion

The main purpose of any packaging is to preserve quality of the goods for the consumer, to prevent possible damage and loss during transportation, storage and sale.

Along with the preservation of the product packaging also acts as a means of advertising. Colorful design and original form of packaging attract the attention of buyers to the goods, encourage them to purchase products.

The advertising value of the package is especially great because the buyer often sees it directly at the place of sale of the goods, that is where you can immediately make a purchase. Often the packaging continues its advertising impact on the street, in transport, at the buyer's home.

Information about the method of its manufacture is usually placed on the packaging of a food product, composition (recipe), quality, timing and storage mode. Color photos and drawings serve as a visual illustration of what dishes can be prepared from this product, how to decorate them when serving.

Good-quality packaging, decorated with great artistic taste, is a symbol of high quality products for the buyer, that characterizes the culture of production and thus acts as an advertisement not only the product but also the company that produced it.

References

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