

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE DESIGN AND SELECTION OF PACKAGING MATERIAL

There are a number of factors that influence decisions in respect of packaging features like size, shape, design, surface graphics, color schemes, labeling, materials etc.

1. Physical Characteristics

Packaging decisions are influenced by certain physical characteristics of the product like the physical state, weight, stability, fragility, rigidity, surface finish etc. Moreover, certain physio-chemical factors like the effect of moisture, oxygen, light, flame, bacteria, fungi, chemical action etc., on the product are very important factors to consider while making packaging decisions.

2. Economy

While packaging is very important in marketing, it is costly too. Indeed, there are a number of cases where the cost of packing is more than the cost of the content. The rising cost of packaging has become a matter of serious concern. Every effort should therefore, be made to reduce the packaging costs as much as possible without impairing the packaging requirements.

3. Convenience

Packaging should also necessarily possess the quality of convenience from the point of view of consumers, distributors and producer. Hence, apart from the functional needs, a good package should possess certain features like ease to open and close, ease to dispense, ease to dispose of, ease to recycle, ease to identify, ease to handle, convenience to pack, convenience to stack, convenience to display etc.

4. Protection

Packaging of the product is done to protect it from damage during shipping and handling, and to lessen the decaying in case the product is exposed to foul air or other harmful factors by accident.

5. Design & Structure

Good packaging design and proper structure can add value to a product. For instance, the benefits can be obtained from the structure of a package that enhances the function of the product while the design gives the product an appealing look.

6. Appearance

Package design should be attractive enough to capture customers' attention as they are shopping or just glancing through a catalogue or your website. This is particularly important for customers who are not very familiar with the product. Designs that are unique and stand out are more likely to stay in the mind of a shopper.

7. Acceptance

Package designs are not just to attract the end user, they also have to be accepted and liked by distributors who are going to sell the product. For instance, a retailer may not be interested in your package if it does not conform to the requirements they have, for storing the products and displaying them on the shelves.

8. Re-designing

Developing an entirely new package for your product can be expensive. But it is also important to be part of the trend, since your product should appeal to your consumers. If you feel that your product packaging requires an update, then consider re-designing the package.

9. Retailing Characteristics

The nature of retail outlets is a very important consideration packaging decision. For instance as pointed out earlier, in some of the foreign markets as a result of the spread of supermarkets and discount houses, a large number of products are sold on a self-service basis. The package has, therefore, to perform many of the sales tasks and hence it must attract attention, describe the products features, give the consumer confidence and make a favorable overall impression.

10. Environmental factors

Packaging decisions are also influenced by certain environmental factors like weather and climate factors. The impact of such factors in the place where the product originates, while the

product is in transit and while in the market etc., should be considered. The package should be capable of withstanding the stresses and hazards of handling and transportation, stacking, storing etc., under diverse conditions.

11. Disposability

Attention should also be paid to the aspects relating to the disposal of the packaging. One of the qualities required for good package is that it could be easily disposed of or recycled. In some of the developing countries like India many packaging materials easily find some other use or are recycled. But the situation is different in other countries. Indeed, the disposal of packaging materials is causing environmental problems in a number of countries Reusable packages the risk of misusing it for selling bogus products.

12. Mode of transport

This may influence your packaging. For example, bulk ocean shipments of liquids, grain and ores don't need any packaging. And goods transported by air generally need less protective packaging than those sent by ship.