

THE ART OF PACKAGE DESIGN

The Art of Package Design captures the ever-evolving art of packaging design and its reflection of the times. Examining in 3 main sections, namely **Live Your Life**, **Improve Your Life** and **Taste Your Life**, the book celebrates the hottest packaging designs around the world!



SANDU

THE ART OF PACKAGE DESIGN

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Maxell Headphones Packaging
iFourum - The Gift of Art
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 Abstractio
 DBC - Death by Chocolate

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PREFACE

Sylvain Allard

Professor of packaging design
UQAM

THE ART OF PACKAGE DESIGN

Packaging lies at the convergence of many human activities. Above all, we find it at the intersection of art, communication and commerce. Initially conceived to enable protection and transportation of goods, it quickly became the ultimate emblem of consumption. It is omnipresent. It is all around us. It punctuates every moment of our lives from the mundane to the most intimate. It guides almost all of our purchases. Indeed, it is so common that we often take it for granted without noticing the important role it plays in our lives. Packaging is for consumption as the car is for transportation, and like the latter, it is one of the key elements that led to self-service purchasing and the emergence of today's supermarkets. In less than a century it has assumed all the roles traditionally assigned to the seller. It has become the inescapable interface between products and users.

The art of package design lies also at the confluence of industrial design and graphic design. The package creates a tangible relationship with the user and establishes a dialogue based on envy, desire and possession. But for this experience to occur, the package must first seduce and convince.

Packaging is therefore a matter of seduction between a product and a consumer. The story begins on the shelf where, crammed between other comparable products, the packaging will stand out or not, depending on its ability to attract attention. If all concurrent products sing the same song, it must sing louder, or sing another song altogether. Otherwise it will not trigger in the consumer that irresistible urge to take, to touch, to manipulate and to buy.

To be appealing, packaging must combine two conflicting principles: distinction and belonging. At the very least, the product must comply with the graphic codes associated with its category, but paradoxically it must also be sufficiently distinct to stand out. This is a subtle and nuanced task for which there is no single recipe.

If an outpouring of information on packaging marked the late 20th century, the 2000s are marked by a realism and scepticism. Drastic changes in perceptions of the economy and the environment coupled with increases in the means of communication have created better-informed consumers who have a more critical relationship to consumption.

The abundance of claims, some measurable and some not, as well as the accompanying graphic cacophony, has tended to give way to values of truth, transparency and sustainability. Increasingly educated consumers are looking for authenticity in their consumer choices. The package must now establish a dialogue based on trust and respect for the user rather than pretentiousness and vanity.

Creating a package is foremost the ability to tell a story - a story in which the user takes the leading role. The story is sometimes nostalgic, sometimes humorous, and sometimes sexy but always attractive. To thrive, it must be distinctive, exclusive and original. The story must be credible enough that the consumer can adhere and proceed to purchase. In the narration of this story, the package is the center stage and creativity is the key to seduction. There is no magic recipe, as what works for one product may be a failure for another.

Packaging is a communication medium with its own codes. It is more than the vehicle for a brand. It establishes a dialogue with consumers through an array of signs. By its form, its materiality, its images, its colors, its typography, its claims and ingredients, the packaging has only a few fractions of a second to draw the attention of consumers and just as little time to make a

promise that will take hold or not. Packaging speaks on behalf of a brand - it is often the first voice, proposing, affirming, declaring and engaging with the consumer.

But the consumer experience with the product and its packaging does not stop after being selected and purchased by the consumer. The packaging should accompany the product for each stage of its life, including its eventual demise and disposal.

Solving a design problem begins with an analysis of the needs of specific group of customers. For example, legibility, which may seem like an obvious criterion to us, is of much greater and critical importance in the case of a product intended for an older client.

However enticing packaging may be, it can only ensure the first sale, afterwards it is up to the product to take over and deliver on the promise. Customer loyalty will be inversely proportional to the gap between the promise and the actual experience with the product.

Whether solid, liquid or gaseous, the product must be packaged in a suitable container that provides a volume, a measure or a quantity. This conditioning is determined by many criteria closely related to distribution and marketing, but does it take account of the user?

To design a package is to determine a single portion of a given product. But how can we measure a thirst, a hunger, or an amount that is just enough? These choices have a direct influence on the user's experience. In this way, packaging plays an important role in determining the lifestyles of consumers because implicitly it endorses the purchase and so begins a ritual. The analytical framework of good packaging design will take into account its entire life cycle, from production to distribution, through its use and on to the end of its life. In this sense, empathy is perhaps one of the key attributes of the packaging designer. Empathy suggests an ability to step into the shoes of the producer and the user and anticipate their needs in a constantly changing business environment.

In recent years, consumer trends have been particularly marked by a general concern for environmental issues. While packaging formats are increasing and diversifying at a rapid pace, users are now more informed and concerned about the ecological consequences of this over consumptive world. Can we sustain accelerated growth without regard to the planet's resources?

Although the environmental effects of packaging account for a small percentage of the total global impacts of industry, packaging represents, nevertheless, a most visible and therefore culpable target for the general public.

Historically, the package has always been dependent on technological developments. The discovery of new materials and production methods has always had a direct impact on packaging. To address widespread environmental concerns, the industry has, over several years, developed efficient recycled materials, bio-plastics and production methods that continue to improve.

However, given the complexity of the environmental problem, we are far from claiming victory because new technologies continue to have environmental impacts of their own and in the worst cases the problem is merely shifted downstream or upstream in the production process. There is really no

universally applicable answer to the environmental problem, but rather there are solutions tailored to specific contexts.

To have a real impact on the environment, the manufacturer must make a life cycle analysis of the product and its packaging and measure effectively the best solutions to reduce the impact on the environment. Surprisingly, the best solutions will sometimes run against prevailing wisdom. Plastic, for example, which is often perceived as an environmentally negative material, will in some cases prove the opposite because of its ability to reduce the carbon footprint through weight and transportation factors.

The goal here is relatively simple but difficult to achieve: do more with less. Optimization and reduction remain the two key levers for a sustainable approach. A good analysis of the material, its potential and its limitations can result in a significant and positive economic and ecological impact. This is because less material often means less processing and therefore less transportation, which leads to reduced costs.

But what would be the perfect package? The answer is perhaps to be found in nature. Think of the apple peel. It's a packaged product that uses the very minimum of material and energy. Here the packaging is so integrated with the product that it doesn't have to be removed to experience the product. The apple skin offers protection against dirt throughout transport and it, additionally, informs the consumer of the fruit's freshness. The material used is not harmful to the environment and is biodegradable. It has a simple name and comes in bright beautiful colors. If you can meet all of these criteria, only then will you be on your way to making a perfect package.

Packaging is a fantastic showcase for our society's values. *The Art of Package Design* offers a portrait of today's creativity applied to packaging design in the era of globalization. Published works are characterized by research and innovation as applied to material selection, function, graphic communications and eco-design.

Here, packages transcend their mere function as containers and engage in an inseparable relationship with form, message and product. The packages change, unfold, transform and sometimes extend themselves into a second life.

The projects presented in this book push the boundaries of our usual codes of association and explore new avenues of communication that are simple, direct and entertaining. Sure they talk about the product itself, but most of all they put the user at the heart of the process in an integrated and interactive experience.

If realism is settling into the industry, then research and innovation alone will push the limits of the medium. The real material of the projects you see in this book is unquestionably raw creativity. It is expressed in all aspects of the projects: the shape of goods, the details of mechanisms, the selection of materials and the simple yet effective means of communication. The packages are presented as playful objects that interact with users with a sustainable, responsible and environmental approach.

From this search for innovation and optimization of materials comes a new aesthetic. Respect for materials and optimized use of their potential are the common denominators of these selected works, which revise our conventions and offer a fresh perspective for the discipline.

Packaging today is more than
a conventional product cover.
It sends additional messages,
and even becomes a part of
the product. In this section,
the most creative packages
for electronic products,
housewares, luxury products,
and other daily commodities
will show you how packaging
helps you LIVE YOUR LIFE.

LIVE YOUR LIFE

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Ribbonesia

Designer/ Ryo Ueda
Design Agency/ COMMUNE
Creative Director/ Toru Yoshikawa
Art Director/ Ryo Ueda
Artist/ Baku Maeda
Photographer/ Kei Furuse
Printing Director/ Manami Sato & Atsuhiko Kondo
Client/ Baku Maeda

COMMUNE designed the brand logo, promotional kit, and website for Ribbonesia. The featured motif in the logo, is of course, a ribbon. The brand's logo was designed as the heraldic emblem of the fictional world Ribbonesia. The most challenging aspect of the design was not losing the strong impact of the design during the process of envisioning the imaginary Ribbonesia world. Ultimately, the designers settled on a more neutral logo, to increase the logo's versatility.





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