

Package Label Redesign: Spices Case-Study

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Abstract

The requirements towards new packaging and consumer expectations with food packages are systematically growing. Packaging is an essential element in modern trade in goods, which guarantees preserving the quality of food products, but simultaneously is an influential communicator in a dynamic market environment where consumers often only make their final purchasing decision when they are inside a retail setting. 100% Titular is a company that operates in Trade of Food Products and needs to change its spice package label. A case-based learning method was applied with students of Design and Marketing of New Products from the Marketing undergraduate degree of Leiria Polytechnique to develop the new package label.

Keywords: packaging; marketing communication; redesign; label; case-based learning

1. INTRODUCTION

Packaging plays a key role by protecting packed products against external conditions, affecting the quality and health safety of food products, making transportation, storage, and dispensing of products easier (Barska, 2017). It is also an essential element in marketing communication in relation to the customer. A package must communicate the content of the product and how it can be used, together with other necessary information. Proper labelling includes information about the content and other premium data (Wyrwa, 2012).

The choice of materials is an important issue for engineers and designers to balance the main functions of the packages (functional and communicational). Besides, we are assisting a new conscious from consumers towards environment issues. Being green and behaving in an environmentally friendly way is thus today more a necessity than a lifestyle Culiberg & Elgaaied-Gambier (2015). Manufacturers should adapt the industry to the current requirements and changes and should be seeking for new solutions by creating innovative biodegradable packaging materials or using renewable raw materials. However, packaging made of conventional materials such as plastics, paper, glass, and metal can also meet the requirements of sustainable packaging (Culiberg & Elgaaied-Gambier,2015).

In strategic marketing goals, packaging and innovation can be aligned because it can be a key for differentiation. Sometimes a moderate alteration in the package design may be the best solution for drawing attention and generating a favourable judgement of a package (Schoormans and Robben, 1997). This can be achieved by using the aesthetic and functional components of a package. Aesthetic considerations relate to a package's shape and size, material, colour, text and graphics (Rundh, 2012).

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Case-based Learning is a methodology that engages students in discussion of specific situations, typically real-world examples. This method is learner-centred and involves intense interaction between the participants (Queen's University Centre for Teaching and Learning, 2023).

100% Titular specified some requirements to develop the case and the professors added two more requirements at their responsibility.

Students achieved the goals proposed by the company and it was a grateful experience for them undergoing a real case study inside the academia.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. MARKETING COMMUNICATION AND PACKAGING

In today's competitive food retailing environment, consumers are exposed to thousands of messages on packages and merchandising (Nancarrow, Wright & Brace, 1998). Therefore, at the Point-of-Purchase (PoP), products on shop shelves compete to attract favourable attention and selection (Tonder & Mulder, 2015). In this sense, packaging is a purposeful and powerful vehicle at the PoP and becomes an important means of marketing communication utilized to communicate persuasive information at the PoP. For that reason, packaging is sometimes referred to as the 'silent salesman' that makes the final sales pitch, seals the commitment, and gets itself placed in the shopping trolley (Rettie and Brewer, 2000, Olaleye, 2017). In the words of Court, Elzinga, Mulder and Vetvik (2009), the package is an influential communicator in a dynamic market environment where consumers often only make their final purchasing decision when they are inside a retail setting.

In addition, Ksenia (2013) and Naidoo (2003) refer that approximately 70–73 per cent of purchasing decisions are made at the PoP, and with the increase of self-service at the point-of-sale. Boon, et. Al. (2010) refers that Front-of-Package (FoP) labels improve consumer understanding and perceptions, and concise information about the nutrient profile of a food product influences purchase intentions (Khandpur et al, 2018). With this

evidence, we can conclude that the role of packaging as a communication tool is becoming more important (Kotler & Keller, 2015).

Luca (2006) states in her study that packaging presents elements with essentially informative and communicative power as well: words, images, colours, shapes, etc, which communicate to the consumer in various ways and places, both before and after the shopping experience. The study of Underwood & Klein (2002) states that package picture also has a strong and positive effect on attitudes toward the package itself.

The following table articulated tools with which packaging that inform and communicate (Luca, 2006).

Table 1 - Aspects of packaging that inform and communicate.

Type of Elements	Main Characteristics	Attributes: First level	Attributes: Second level
Package	Shape	Size	
		Manageability	
		Storageability	
		Cleanability	
		Reusability	
		Dimensional Impression	
		Service	
	Materials	Portions	
		Durability	
		Recyclability	
Labelling	Textual Elements	Names	Company Name
			Product Line
			Name of Market Sector
			Product Name
			Name of Variant
	Information		Instruction and Suggested Uses
			Ingredients
			Nutritional Information
			Preview of Contents
			History/Product Description

Type of Elements	Main Characteristics	Attributes: First level	Attributes: Second level
			Service Information
		Recall and Repetition	New Products
			Advertising Slogans
			Testimonials
			Extension of Line
			Special Offers
		Information Required by Law	Alpha-Numeric Codes
			Production and Expiration Dates
			Weights and Measures
			Plant and Producer
	Specific Sectorial Information		
	Iconic Elements	Lettering	Logos
			Functional Text
			Persuasive Text
		Background	Uniform Colour
			Decorative Pattern
			Transparent
		Images	Product Representations
Secondary Images			
Informative and Graphic Images			

Source: Luca (2006)

In the specific case of food, the package also concerns for food safety. Some packaging materials such as certain types of plastic, polyethene's, and styrofoam can release toxins when they are heated or during the deterioration process and can be dangerous to consumers. Packaging materials which are irradiated (along with food) can transfer unsafe non-food substances into the food. Food packaging makes use of a variety of substances, including dyes for printing colourful labels, and glues and adhesives for keeping packaging closed. To protect consumers effectively, the relevant authority individually certifies each of these food packaging materials subjecting them to rigorous testing protocols (Gupta & Dudeja, 2016).

2.2. PACKAGING AND MARKETING STRATEGY

In marketing concepts, the packaging functions can be grouped into two categories such as 1) logistical, functional, or technical; and the 2) marketing and communication. The first packaging function protects the product during its movement through distribution channels, from production to disposal and the conservation and safe product (Mohamed, et al, 2021); the second one concerns about “packaging has become a key vehicle in marketing communication and managing food brands, particularly at points of sale” (Estiri et al., 2010) and it is a tool to differentiate products from others.

In this sense, packaging design is not just crucial for branding purposes but also for the function of the package. Innovation has played a role in the design of many new packages that are re-sealable, tamperproof and more convenient to use, e.g. for take-away food. These innovations have resulted in linking packaging to marketing packages that are easy to hold, easy to open or more convenient for storage at home (Rundh, 2012).

For communication purposes, packaging is a facilitator of brand and product recognition, needs to attract and keep the customer’s attention. This can be achieved through the format of the package, its colour, size and shape. Previous research shows that a moderate alteration in the package design may be the best solution for drawing attention and generating a favourable judgement of a package (Schoormans and Robben, 1997). This can be achieved by using the aesthetic and functional components of a package. Aesthetic considerations relate to a package’s shape and size, material, colour, text and graphics (Rundh, 2012). Note, that the influence of packaging and its materials can also have an impact mostly on customer's decision of purchase (Rajkumar & Jain, 2021).

Additionally we are also observing a new awareness of consumers towards environmental issues and we know that after the packaging are used, they are waste and can have a significant impact on the environment (Kozik, 2020).

Sustainability is the key word of the day and regarding sustainable packaging, the best criteria to define it are categorized in eight considerations according to Sustainable Packaging Coalition (2011): i) Beneficial, safe & healthy for individuals and communities throughout its life cycle; ii) Meets market criteria for performance and cost; iii) Is sourced, manufactured, transported, and recycled using renewable energy; iv) Optimizes the use of renewable or recycled source materials; v) Is manufactured using clean production technologies and best practices; vi) Is made from materials healthy throughout the life cycle; vii) Is physically designed to optimize materials and energy; and finally, viii) Is effectively recovered and utilized in biological and/or industrial closed loop cycles (Sustainable Packaging Coalition, 2011).

Packages made of environmentally friendly materials, that are space saving (which subsequently reduces transporting costs and carbon emissions), or that include eco-conscious information may be perceived as more sustainable (Lee et al., 2020).

With this new behaviour and knowledge that the package design is also crucial to a brand’s success (Shimp and Andrews (2014), manufacturers should adapt the industry to the current requirements and changes and should seek for new solutions by creating innovative biodegradable packaging materials or using renewable raw materials. However, packaging made of conventional materials such as plastic, paper, glass, and metal can also meet the requirements of sustainable packaging. Sometimes it is enough just to analyse their life cycle and improve certain areas related to their production, use or disposal, which can at times be both time and labour-intensive, but not impossible (Kozik, 2020, Sustainable Packaging Coalition (2019).

3. METHODOLOGY

A case-based learning methodology was applied. This method is learner-centred with intense interaction between participants as they build their knowledge and work together as a group to examine the case. The instructor's role is that of a facilitator while the students collaboratively analyse and address problems and resolve questions that have no single right answer (Queen’s University Centre for Teaching and Learning, 2023).

The case was developed inside of the Design and Marketing of New Products discipline by the students from the Marketing undergraduate degree of Leiria Polytechnique and supervised by the professors. The main goal is to answer a specific marketing communicational case from the food market.

The company is in Aruil, created in 2008 and works as Trade of Food Products. The main clients are Auchan, Aldi, El Corte Inglés, ELeclerc, Spar, Suporcel, Pomar da Rosa, Mini Preço and Pingo Doce.

The marketing communicational problem of the company is to redesign their spices packages labels. The old one is illustrated in figure 1. The main instructions given are aligned with 100% Titular' new communication strategy. And they are:

- 1) Change the design of spice package label and align with the new package of cherry tomato (figure 2).
- 2) Label with specific dimensions required by the client (figure 3).
- 3) Label should communicate in first level the brand.
- 4) Label should communicate in second level, the product (name and image).
- 5) Uniformization of packages label of all line of spices and condiments.

The professors also added two new instructions: 1) choose sustainable materials and 2) design the exhibitor to show the products in the retail shops.



Figure 1 - Old Package (Source: 100% Titular).



Figure 2 - Actual Package for cherry tomato with new communication strategy (Source: 100% Titular).

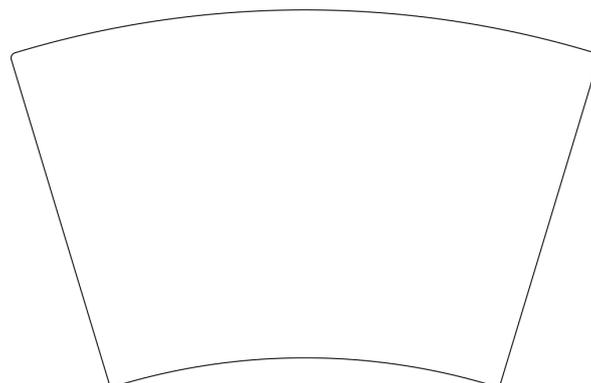


Figure 3 – Cherry tomato cutting shape (Source: 100% Titular).

4. RESULTS

The students worked for two months (March and April of 2022) to design a new package label (figure 4), according to the requirements of the client and the sustainability issues. The brand identity was guaranteed, and the logo emphasised it. The white space was covered, and other changes that were made the package more attractive to the consumer.

According to the students, the inspiration for the new label, with a classic design came from the “old times, when the seeds of the plants were saved in paper to the next harvest”. In terms of sustainability, the material used is kraft instead of plastic.

About the colours, the CMYK system was chosen. Each label has five colours: light green for brand logo, dark green for slogan or tagline, black for name of the product or other text, colour spot – space for graphics and texts about the product and dark brown for the sketches in the wallpaper (Figure 5).



Figure 4 – New package label cutting shape (Source: Own elaboration).



Figure 5 – Package design: before and after (Source: Own elaboration).

The graphics (texts and images) shows a classical and artisanal visual, following the inspiration referred. Relatively to typography it was chosen the letter Nexa Rust Sans Black to write the name of the product because of its characteristic allowing to be read at a bigger distance. Each spice was associated to a specific colour to identify the product, uniformizing the design (figure 6).



Figure 6 – Line of new proposed labels for spices packages (Source: Own elaboration).

The cap was suggested being produced in paper. Its design is related with the same layout package label in terms of colours, graphics, and texts, that belongs identify the product (figure 7).



Figure 7 – Line of new proposed caps for spices packages (Source: Own elaboration).

The exhibitor created for the retail shop proposed is illustrated in figure 8. The simulation of the display and the communication goes against the classic inspiration of the new packaging for the product.



Figure 8 – Exhibitor create for the retail shop (Source: Own elaboration).

5. DISCUSSION

Packaging has become a tool for fulfilling several marketing purposes and one of these tools is for communication purposes such as facilitating brand and product recognition (Rudh, 2012). The study of Lee, Gao & Brown (2010 p. 490) conclude that “*package designs not only need to inform the customers about the product, but also provoke feelings and communicate emotions. An effective packaging looks attractive, identifies the brand or product, impresses with its creativity, and is just nice to have on the shelf.*” Alongside, the brand should undoubtedly be aligned with sustainable packaging (Georgakoudis E.D., Tipi, N.S. & Bamford, C.G., 2018)..

With these considerations, students created a new package considering the several requirements imposed by the client and the professors. Students agreed that brand needs a new package and image, as Schoormans and Robben (1997) argued, sometimes an alteration in the package design may be the best solution for drawing attention and generating a favourable judgement of a package.

The shape of the new package is aligned with the tomato cherry package according with the first requirement (communication strategy guideline’ from 100% Titular). The second requirement is also accomplished: the cutting shape is conformable as brand demands.

For the third and fourth requirements and taking into the choice of materials, the new package proposed, (illustrated in figure 5) is aligned with the communication required. With textual elements and using the colour spot, the brand name is evidenced in first level, and in second level the name of the product with the

graphics. The new package follows the statement of Khandpur et al (2018), creating a label with a good understanding and concise information to the consumer.

The visual path of package label follows to slogan “100% do sabor, sempre”¹. Next, a lower-sized black spot with the text stands out “*agora numa embalagem com menos plástico*”². This appeal refers to sustainability as referred by Sustainable Packaging Coalition (2011).

The last requirement by the client also was fulfilled. All packages' labels of spices and condiments was uniformized, consistent with the marketing communication as well as the caps. This uniformization taking in account the colours, shapes, graphics, and layouts, that they are the elements essentials to information and communication as Luca (2006) stated.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Packaging is an essential element in marketing communication and is a facilitator of brand and product recognition and it's also a focus of material waste nowadays. So, the first objective was to respond to environmental issue. These results of the new package shows that the shape (triangular cutting shape) and material (kraft) answers to several considerations according to Sustainable Packaging Coalition (2011). However, the iconic elements of package label (Luca, 2006) could be improved in terms of background attributes (colour and pattern). Each package proposal as five colours but could be reduced to four or even three colours in total. The more colours a product has, the less sustainable it becomes.

As we said, one function of packaging function is the logistical, functional, or technical. The new proposal has the same package shape and size in comparison to the package of cherry tomato, optimising both the production and logistics of the company. Also, the new proposed package can protect the packed products against external conditions is assured.

The third consideration concerns to the response to the company's challenge: redesign the spices package labels. The new line of proposed labels for the spice packages are aligned with the main consideration given for 100% Titular company. The new proposed package was influenced in both shape and dimensions of the cherry tomato package. The first level label communicates the brand, and the second level label the product name. The different spices have different colours, to identify and distinguish the product and group them into a product line. Furthermore, the exhibitor created for the retail shop should be rethought, as its decoration (pattern background) could overshadow the communication of the packaging label itself to the consumer.

Overall, this study allowed a better understanding of the relationship between the industry and academy, and how knowledge and experience can be applied and united in common interests: the 100% Titular gains a range of innovative ideas for new packaging labels, the students understand how the real world, the market, works.

Finally, the students of the case-based learning study appreciated this challenge and recommended to their professors that it should be continued in the coming years.

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¹ 100% of the taste, always

² Now, with a package with lower plastic

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