

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT

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**PACKAGING DESIGN AS NEW INNOVATIVE PROMOTIONAL TOOL**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The purpose of the study was to examine the consumer perception on different design elements of a Dairy package and to provide essential information for the companies about the consumer attraction and importance of design attributes from the consumer point of view. The theoretical framework was based on the secondary data (articles and books) and included core concepts of packaging, packaging design, consumer behavior, consumer perception, and consumer attraction. The mixed method was selected for acquiring and analyzing the research results. Quantitative data was collected from 30 questionnaire responses and was analyzed with the computer program. The results of the study revealed the importance of packaging design in consumer buying behavior. By examining the consumer perception, it was found out that packaging design elements such as graphics, color, and product information play a key role in decision making and ensure consumer's attention. Based on the findings, it was defined that successful Dairy packaging design could be created by the cooperation between the consumer and the company.*

**KEYWORDS**

Design, Packaging, Tatrapack

**INTRODUCTION**

Consumer market grows rapidly every year and the number of competitors among different types of products and goods increases steadily. To stand out against competitors, every company tries to invent something new and to get the competitive advantage for providing the product to the end customer. One of the marketing tools that has become popular and important is **packaging** and **packaging design** which allows companies to be different from each other and to have more priorities among competitors. This has become a reason why nowadays there is a big variety of design packages on the supermarkets' shelves.

Packaging and packaging design have become significant factors in the marketing of diverse "consumer goods" and have a main role in communicating product benefits to the customer. Czinkota & Ronkainen (2007) deem that product packaging is connected to other variables in the marketing mix (Rundh 2009, p. 988). Cateora & Ghauri (2000) say that these variables are within the control of the company and they help to adapt to the changes in the business environment (Rundh 2009, p. 988). According to Packaging Federation (2004 a,b), these changes occur in different areas: new technology, materials development, logistics requirements, environmental issues, consumer preferences; all are the key factors for making decisions on marketing strategy (Rundh 2009, p. 988).

Consumer preferences and consumer buying behavior are the major issues that should be taken into account when designing a new package. In spite of factors such as new technology or material development, consumer's choices and desires are the important elements that drive the marketing process. Consumers are the key actors in planning and implementing packages. Hereby, the key issue for packaging design is to understand the consumer (Stewart 2004). There are many studies that are done in the area of packaging. Nevertheless, Holmes and Paswan in the article "Consumer reaction to new package design" (2012, pp. 109 -110) deem that a little is known about the impact of the consumer's experience with the package on the evaluation of the product itself. Concerning the previous researches, it can be seen that not a lot of studies are about the package design perception and direct customer experience with the package. Schoormans & Robben (1997); Rettie & Brewer (2000) deem that package design is one of the most significant parts of product strategy. It is estimated that approximately 70 percent of all purchase decisions of goods are made at the point of purchase. Therefore, the package itself is the only marketing communication the consumer may receive while evaluating the product. (Holmes & Paswan 2012, p.109.) Schoormans & Robben (1997); Rettie & Brewer (2000) deem that package design is one of the most significant parts of product strategy. It is estimated that approximately 70 percent of all purchase decisions of goods are made at the point of purchase. Therefore, the package itself is the only marketing communication the consumer may receive while evaluating the product. (Holmes & Paswan 2012, p.109.) According to the fact that the package and the consumer are strongly related to each other, two areas of business are described from the point of packaging in this study: marketing and consumer behavior. These two fields both affect and develop each other what helps companies to make right decision about their marketing strategies.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To examine the consumer perception on different design elements of a Dairy package.
- To provide essential information for the companies about the consumer attraction.
- Find the importance of design attributes from the consumer point of view.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In marketing literature, packaging is a part of the product and the brand. A product's package represents its characteristics and communicates the product information. For consumers, the product and the package are one and the same when they see it on the supermarket shelves. During the purchasing decision, the package assists the consumer by creating the overall product perception which helps the evaluation and the making of the right choice. Furthermore, the package is the product until the actual product is consumed and the package is recycled.

The package design adds value to the package and to the product respectively. Design elements such as colors, font, text, and graphics have an important role in package appearance. Pictures on the package in form of attractive situations (mountains, beaches, luxury houses and cars) can assist in triggering lifestyle aspirations (Rundh 2009, p. 999). At the point of purchase, the primary role of the package and packaging design is to catch the consumers' attention and to stand out among the competition in the store or at the supermarket.

Successful package design and packaging itself is the result of the involvement and the work put forth by marketers, designers, and customers. Hence, packaging is a major instrument in modern marketing activities for consumer goods. Prone (1993) deems that the package can attract the customers' attention, communicate company's name and image, differentiate the brand from competitors, and enhance the product's functionality (Garber & Burke & Jones 2000, p. 5). Therefore, the package itself acts as a decisive communication tool and provides consumers with product-related information during the buying decision process.

Packaging has many functions in different departments. It has its most essential roles in logistics and marketing due to the fact that these two units are strongly connected to the end-users of the product. The task of the package is to sell the product by attracting attention and to allow the product to be contained, utilized, and protected (Silayoi & Speece 2004, p. 610).

Bill Stewart (2004, pp. 3 - 5) defines three prime functions of the package:

- **TO CONTAIN**

The aim of the package here is to achieve integrity. It means that the product stays in the same condition and does not change its basic form and use, due to the influence of external factors.

The task of containment is ongoing throughout the product life cycle, from production to the end user and customer. The package function 'to contain' is convenient and beneficial to the consumer as it increases consumer confidence in the contents of the package and the product.

- **TO PROTECT**

Protecting the product is a key function of packaging. The protection task is performed not only for physical factors such as transit, but also for environmental influences – moisture, gases, light, temperature, and other. Here, the package choice depends on the nature of the goods, distribution and types of hazards it will encounter. Some of the benefits this function can provide for a product are extended shelf life and freshness.

- **TO IDENTIFY**

The role of identification is to provide the consumer with information about the product. Product identification has a description of the contents and consists of product use and legally required information. To some extent, this function can have a promotion role that stimulates the desire to purchase a product and can also assist product branding.

Bloch (1995) says that the importance of product design is crucial to the success of a product. It ensures consumer attention for the product, communicates information, and it provides sensory stimulation. (Holmes et al. 2012, p. 109.) According to Berkowitz (1987), an exclusive and unique package design is a way for a new product to be noticeable among familiar packages offered by competitors. (Holmes et al. 2012, p. 109.)

Murphy (1997) indicates the importance of package design and its influences on consumer decision making process. Murphy distinguishes a two-step decision process the consumer follows during shopping for convenience-packaged products. First step is to decide to examine the product carefully after finding it on the supermarket's shelf. Here, the package design has the power to initiate consumer examination of the product. The second step includes direct experience with the product where the package becomes a "salesman". Hence, the package and packaging design are involved in the consumer selection and purchasing intent. (Holmes et al. 2012, p. 110.)

Silayoi and Speece (2007, pp. 1498 - 1500) based on the review of the relevant literature, define that there are four core packaging elements which affect a consumer's buying decision. These elements are divided into two categories: visual and informational elements. The visual elements include graphics and size/shape of packaging. Informational elements consist of product information and information about the technologies used on the package.

## VISUAL ELEMENTS

### *Graphics and color*

When creating a package design, it is important to remember that consumers evaluate packaging in different ways. Customers' attitudes towards the package depend also on the process of interconnection between person and package. Here, the level of this involvement influences on the product continuum where the product name varies from high involvement to low involvement product. The difference between them is that the first one has a more substantial effect on the consumer's lifestyle, while the second is less significant and can be habitually purchased. The decision making for high involvement products is less influenced by image issues. Grossman & Wisenblit (1999) say that the decision making for low involvement products includes the evaluation of packaging design attributes which is less important, while the graphics and color become more valuable and noticeable (Silayoi et al. 2007, p. 1498). Kupiec et al. (2001) suggest that the consumer behavior towards the low involvement products can be influenced by the development of the marketing communications which includes image building (Silayoi et al. 2007, p.1498).

### *Graphics*

Graphics include image layout, color combination, typography, and product photography. The combination of all these components communicates an image. Graphics on the package are telling detailed information about the product. It becomes a product branding or identity, followed by the information. According to Herrington & Capella (1995), when the consumers examine packages in the supermarket, the differential perception and the positioning of the graphics can be the difference between identifying and missing the product (Silayoi et al. 2007, p. 1498). However, eye-catching graphics make the product stand out on the shelf and attract the consumers. Graphics can affect through colors and printed lines on the package on which different signs and symbols are located. Holograms and combinations of various materials can encourage consumers to touch the package, thereby inspiring them to try the product (Rundh 2009, pp. 999 - 1000).

### *Color*

Cheskin (1957) says that the selection of the colors and color combinations is a necessary process for creating a good design package. Color is a key element of design due to the fact that it is usually vivid and memorable. The package color can have a significant effect on consumers' ability to recognize the product, the meaning conveyed by the package, its novelty and contrast to other brands and company's names. The package color can be modified without changing the costs, product characteristics and functionality. (Garber et al. 2000, p. 3.) Packaging applications have many color-coded messages which are associated with the particular product category (Stewart 2004, p. 7). Garber & Hyatt & Starr (2000); Koch & Koch, (2003) say that *in case of food package, color can influence product expectations and perceptions (e.g. taste)* (Kauppinen-Räsänen & Luomala 2010, p. 288). Product packages in similar colors may attract attention by means of brand or product category. Dissimilar or novel colors may attract and be preferred by those customers who like novelty. (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al. 2010, p. 291.) The right choice of colors is an important factor in creating the impression needed to influence brand and product selection (Gofman et al. 2010, p. 167).

### *Size and shape*

Packaging size and shape are also significant factors in designing the package. A consumer interacts with these two elements in order to make volume judgments, e.g. consumers perceive more elongated packages to be larger (Silayoi et al. 2007, p. 1499). Packaging sizes depend on the different involvement levels. The low involvement food products have a low price which is generated through cost savings created by reduced packaging and promotional expenses. The effect of package size has a strong influence on the purchasing choice when the quality of the product is hard to determine. Therefore, the elongated shape and appropriate size causes the consumer to think of the package as having better product volume and cost efficiency. (Silayoi et al. 2007, p. 1499.)

## INFORMATIONAL ELEMENTS

### *Product information*

Communication of information is one of the core functions of the packaging. This helps customers to make the right decisions in the purchasing process. Coulson (2000) gives an example of information significance using a food labeling case: the trend to consume healthy food has emphasized the importance of labeling, which gives the consumer the opportunity to consider alternative products and to make an informed product choice. (Silayoi et al. 2007, p. 1499.)

### *Technology image*

McNeal and Ji (2003) deem that the role of packaging in marketing communications is implemented by developments in technology (Silayoi et al. 2007, p. 1500). Here, the technology creates the packages according to trends and consumers' attitudes and behaviors. The role of technology is to meet consumers' needs and requirements. As far as the technology is a communication element, it should be presented visually and, therefore, it will catch more attention and be convenient for consumers.

### *Dairy package*

Dairy package design is a core element of the current report. Dairy is a dairy product which is always needed for consumption and cooking. It is a demanded product all over the world and it is an integral part of food. Hence, Dairy was chosen due to the reason of purchasing demand. In the market where the high competition exists, it is important to differentiate. In case of Dairy package, it is crucial to have an attractive design in order to gain consumers' attention and to stimulate purchase decisions.



There are a few companies in India which are specialized in the package design creation and the Dairy package production. In case of the current report, two companies are considered: mother dairy pvt.Ltd and Amul co-operative Ltd. Amul is a company that produces dairy products such as yoghurt, Dairy, cheese, butter and etc. Amul is the biggest Dairy manufacturer in India that has 66% of Dairy market shares. The task of Amul is not only to produce dairy products but also to present them in attractive form. The company creates the design, makes images and slogans

Mother dairy is a food packaging and processing company. It offers packaging and processing solutions for dairy, beverages, ice-cream and prepared food. The company creates and tests different types of package designs, offers new ideas about packages production. Using new technologies and equipment, it produces high-quality packages for different products. Therefore, the Dairy package design is a result of the involvement and the work put forth by these two companies, Amul & mother dairy.

The package design produced by these two companies has a modern and attractive appearance, it catches consumers' attention, stimulates purchasing desire and motivates during decision making process. The stable and easy-to-use package is made from material that involves consumers to experience and investigate the package and its design. The package guarantees the freshness and taste of the Dairy products. The combination of all these benefits makes the design and package unique and also allows it to stand out among the competition.

## ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH

Quantitative data has been collected through the online questionnaire and has been analyzed by the computer program Excel. This program has been chosen due to the fact that a small amount of people have participated in the survey. The target group of the questionnaire has included professional executives from the Delhi and Noida. The presented numbers and percentages are explained and described according to the results of the collected data. However, the obtained results could not be scientifically precise since the answers have been conducted by a small number of participants. The online questionnaire lasted one (1) week and the survey questions were sent to fifty (50) respondents. Thirty (30) persons took part in the questionnaire what was equal to 60% of the total amount of people. The questionnaire consisted of eleven (11) questions. The closed-ended, closed-ended likert, closed-ended rating scale, and closed-ended dichotomous questions were included into the questionnaire. These types of closed-ended questions assisted in getting straight forward and exact answers. Two pictures were used in the questionnaire. The respondents' perception was examined by using two images of Dairy packages with different design styles. The data were collected and analyzed according to the answers provided by the respondents who were working with these two images during the whole survey. The quantitative data analysis was used in the first research analysis.

According to the Dairy package (2), graphics and images were the most noticeable design elements. Twenty three (23) persons marked it as the first thing that caught their attention; it is equal to 76,7% of the participants. Product information was caught first by 13,3% of the respondents, which means four (4) persons. Shape of the package was noticed first by two (2) persons which represents 6,7% of the respondents. Only one (1) person paid attention to the color of the package, meaning 3,3%.The data shows that the two Dairy package designs have different results. Package (1) attracted with color, whereas package (2) with graphics and images. Product information was noticed more on package (1). The shape of the package was the first thing that caught the attention of the observers on package (2). Color was noticed by one (1) person on the package (2), whereas the shape of the package attracted one (1) participant to the package (1).Comparing the two packages with dissimilar design styles, it can be seen that they provided different results. Package (1) was recognized as a Dairy product by image more often, whereas package (2) by name of the product. Colors on the package helped to identify the package (2). Ten (10) respondents answered that the design of the package (2) is excellent. Good design was given for the package design (1) by twenty two (22) participants and for the package design (2) by six (6) persons. Seven (7) respondents evaluated the package design (1) as fair, whereas the package design (2) had nine (9) voices for fair design. One (1) person answered that the package design (1) was poor, whereas ten (10) people perceived the package design (2) as a poor design. Question number ten (10) in the questionnaire was presented in a form of matrix. There were four (4) statements with which the respondent agreed or disagreed. The questions were about package design, its attributes and importance.

First statement was about "Dairy package design is telling you about product quality". Here, only one (1) respondent strongly disagreed. Six (6) people answered "disagree" and the same amount of participants had neutral opinion about the design and product quality. The number of respondents who agreed with the statement was fifteen (15) and the number of those who strongly agreed was two (2).Second statement was telling that "Size and shape of Dairy package are important for you". Here, one (1) respondent strongly disagreed with the statement. Four (4) persons answered that they disagree and twelve (12) participants had neutral opinion about the size and the shape importance. Eleven (11) people agreed with the statements and two (2) strongly agreed. Third statement presented following: "Dairy package material and ease of use are essential for you". One (1) person strongly disagreed with the statement and one (1) chose option "disagree". Five (5) respondents had neutral opinion, whereas fifteen (15) agreed that "the package material and ease of use are important". The answer "strongly agree" was provided by eight (8) persons.

Fourth statement was about "Dairy package design is valuable for you". Here, the answer "strongly disagree" was not used by respondents. Six (6) persons disagreed with the statement and eight (8) had neutral opinion about the design value. Fifteen (15) people agreed and only one (1) strongly agreed with the statement.

According to the results, all statements had positive answers. The most significant numbers can be seen in: first statement "Dairy package design is telling you about product quality" - fifteen (15) respondents agreed; second statement "Size and shape of Dairy package are important for you" – eleven (11) people agreed; third statement "Dairy package material and ease of use are essential for you" – fifteen (15) persons agreed; and fourth statement "Dairy package design is valuable for you" – fifteen (15) participants agreed. However, statement number one (1) and four (4) had rather big amount of respondents who gave their opinion as "disagree" and "neutral". Statement number three (3) had eight (8) "strongly agree" answers. Statement number two (2) had twelve (12) "neutral" answers. The Dairy package design is very important for decision making process. During the purchasing, the package helps the consumer to evaluate the product. The design of the package communicates the information about the product quality. Its material and ease of use can assist consumer in choosing the particular Dairy product. The size and shape of the Dairy package are essential elements of packaging design which drive the consumer attention and influence the purchasing decision. The overall product perception is created by the package design having the high value for the consumer. The packaging design elements have different impacts on the consumer. Some of them catch the consumer attention; some of them stay ignored. However, the findings show that different designs attract with different elements. The Dairy package designs used in the questionnaire provide the evidence that design elements such as graphics and image, color, product information, and shape of the package play different roles.

The consumer perception and attraction varies a lot. People perceive and evaluate package and its design in different ways: where one likes the image and color, another would not even pay attention to it. The results show that two Dairy package designs are perceived differently and attraction elements are evaluated according to the particular Dairy package design. The product recognition is also an element of the perception. Two Dairy packages are recognized as a Dairy product by different elements: one by image and another by the name. The research findings show that packaging elements such as graphics, color, and product information are seen important by most of the participants. Here, the graphics and color are among the most noticeable design elements. The product quality judgment is done by the packaging design. The size and shape as well as the package material and ease of use are the factors which are telling about the package convenience. In general, visual elements of the package design influence the choice of the product and have an impact on consumer attraction. The design preferences strongly depend on the target group and can vary from country to country.

The consumer perception and attraction are the key factors for creating a good design of the package. The usage of packaging design elements as market segmentation can provide useful information to marketers about maximizing the package's impact in selling the food products. The package and packaging design are the components that provide an advantage for the products in a competitive environment.

The consumer choices and design characteristics of the package are the key elements of the marketing strategies. The cooperation between consumers and companies provides package design which attracts the potential customers and obtains successful results for the company. The packaging and the consumer are two variables which should be always considered in the company's strategies.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The present study has several delimitations. It focuses only on the consumer perception and the Dairy package designs. Accordingly, further research could investigate more detailed the package design elements and their influence on consumer buying behavior. For instance, how certain colors or fronts are perceived by the consumers or specific target groups. Furthermore, future studies could focus on other product packages' designs and could examine the design elements which drive the purchasing decisions. Another research could explore how different design elements vary from country and culture.

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