Packaging design
Packaging design principles

Top attention grabbers
- Color
- Physical structure or shape
- Symbols and numbers
- Typography
• The attraction of design elements is based on:
  – Basic principles of design + clear marketing objectives +
    effective use of top attention grabbers
• Packaging should be
  – Culturally appropriate
  – Linguistically accurate
  – Visually logical
  – Competitively designed
Required elements

• Brand mark
• Brand name
• Product name
• Ingredient copy
• Net weight
• Nutritional info
• Expirations, hazards, directions, dosage, instructions
• Variety
• Bar code
Elements dictated by design

- Colors
- Imagery
- Characters
- Illustrations
- Graphic devices
- Photographs (non-informational)
- Symbols (non-informational)
- Icons
- Visual hierarchy
Primary display panel

- Area reserved for brand identity and the primary communication elements
- Front of the packaging
- Size and shape of PDP > display area for the most important aspect of packaging design: the visual communication of the marketing and brand strategy
- Responsibility in selling the packaging in the crowded retail environment
Primary x secondary design elements

• Primary: required by marketer, regulatory authority, and most important communication elements
• Secondary: supplementary design elements, product descriptors, romance copy
• Size, position and relationship < design principles
• Hierarchical system
  – Elements organized by importance
  – Information can be easily understood
  – Variety, assortment, and product differences are easy to distinguish
• Easy to read, guides eyes around the package
The well-designed PHP

- Communicates the marketing/brand strategy effectively
- Illustrates product information clearly
- Emphasizes information by hierarchy and is uncluttered and easy to read
- Suggests the function, usage and purpose visually
- Describes the usage and directions effectively
- Differentiates the product from competition
- Distinguishes the product on the shelf and in relation to other varieties
Typography

- Primary medium for communication
- Product’s name, function and facts
- Message on a 3D medium
- Initially viewed from a distance by people from varying cultural, social and ethnic backgrounds in a short amount of time
Typography must be

• Readable and legible from a few feet away
• Designed to the scale and shape of the 3D structure
• Understandable by a diverse audience
• Credible and informative in the communication of product into
Principles

• Define the typographic personality
• Limit typefaces
• Create typographic hierarchy
• Define the positioning of typographic elements
• Determine typeface alignment
  (Centered, flush left, flush right, justified)
• Vary scale
• Choose to contrast (light x bold, italics x roman, serif x sans serif)
• Experiment
• Stack characters only with extreme caution
• Remove your visual bias
• Make it ownable (unique)
• Be consistent
• Refinement for typographic excellence
Brand/product name

- Similar to a person’s signature
- Type choice, scale, positioning, layout, color and design should communicate the personality
Secondary copy

- Positioning and alignment depends on hierarchy of other elements
- Line breaks should keep logical words together
- Width easy to read
- Typeface complement or contrast the product name
Product descriptor

• Define the specific package content
• Product variety, flavor, features and benefits
• Highlight new product extensions
• Define differences among a line of products and differentiate from competition
• Can be trademarked
• Can equal secondary copy
• Always subordinate to product name
Romance copy

- Descriptor or sell copy
- Affectionately describes the personality
- Storytelling
- Often smaller than other type on front panel and positioned independently from the brand and product names
- Product personality and size of packaging dictate the use of romance copy
Color

- One of the most influential aspects of packaging
- Color before any other visual feature
- Personality, draws to attributes, stands apart from competition
- Signal the manufacturer (red triangle of Nabisco) and the brand (blue Dove logo)
• Culture, gender, age, ethnicity, regional locale, price
• Distinguish visual and typographic elements
• Break product categories and differentiate product varieties: ingredients, flavors or fragrances
Packaging design

- Enhanced by coordinated color schemes: contrasting, analogous, monochromatic, dominant, recessive
- Accent colors highlight flavor, ingredients, scent, draw to focal point
- When color inherently distinctive, it can be trademarked
- Color meanings and preferences change > forecasting
- Trendy colors x long-term
Imagery

- Fewer standard interpretations than color
- When used effectively > strong impression
- Look at pictures before they read text
- Illustrations, photos, icons, symbols and characters
- Simple or complex or subliminal
• Sensory experiences: flavor, scent, taste, temperature
• Directness and appropriateness in communicating brand personality and product attributes
• Appetite, lifestyle, mood, product use
• Write down strategic objectives in marketing brief > choose imagery
Imagery can be used to

- Show the product
- Depict the target customer
- Set a mood
- Provide credibility (celebrity image)
- Appeal to the appetite
Appetite appeal

- Serving suggestion
  - Educated consumer on etiquette and proper presentation
  - Distinctive on the shelf
  - Looks savory
  - Hero beauty shots or luscious illustrations of food
Instructional illustration

- How to open the packaging
- How to close or reseal
- How to use a product
- Precautionary warnings or hazards
Characters

• Support brand communication, promote product attributes, personality
• Challenging: ethnic connotations, gender, facial expressions, body type, skin color, shape, size, graphic layout, design styles
• Human, animal, illustration, photo, cartoon
• Universal appeal to kids and adults, break through cultural barriers
• Gesture of a character: confidence, strength, trust, happiness, energy, amusement…
• Charismatic, engaging, appealing
Graphic devices

- Line, shape, color, texture, type
- Organization of visual information
- Lead the eye
Symbols and icons

- Simple graphic diagrams or complex layouts
- Understand contradictory cultural meanings (cross)
Violators

- Visual device that is generally positioned on top of the packaging graphics
- Call attention or announce a special feature
- Disturb and violate the design
- Federally regulated product claims, announce size, quantity, quality, new feature
Graphic devices can include

- Color bars for product variety, color, scent, flavor, ingredients and fragrance
- Violators to communicate new products, product benefits, packaging benefits or price
- Arrows and shapes to direct the eye, add energy, or contain text
- Squares, circles, triangles and rectangles to separate body copy or enclose a brand identity
- Texture as background for aesthetics or to support photos, illustrations or symbols