TECHNICAL GUIDE

PACKAGING

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Second Edition

FESPA
profit for purpose

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do different types of packaging need different types of design?

Design that is specific to a certain type of product can optimise the product characteristics. Specialised design also improves presentation and opportunities for value added embellishments.

2. Can I personalise a package using conventional printing processes?

Your only option with analogue printing is to print labels that are then added to the package after it's printed. This adds work and cost, so for personalisation direct digital output is generally preferable.

3. What regulations apply, if I am printing food and beverage packaging?

This depends on local rules and the type of food and beverages. BRCGS food safety certification confirms high standards of hygiene and that materials, including low migration inks, are safe.

4. How do I ensure that colour appearance is the same on all of a client's packages and labels, even if they are printed on different materials?

Make sure you have a robust colour management system in place. Profile all machine, substrate and ink combinations and implement controlled colour management processes at every step in the workflow, including at the client's desktop.

5. How do I make my packaging print design more sustainable?

ISO 14001 for environmental management systems provides a company wide sustainability framework. Use FSC and PEFC chain of custody certified materials and ISO 16759 for calculating the carbon footprint of printed matter. Carbon footprint calculations provide benchmark carbon footprints for print jobs and help you improve processes to reduce overall environmental impact.

6. How do I provide proofs?

You can provide on screen proofs of the package content, ideally in 3D. You can also produce prototypes and pre-production samples using the actual print data, but make sure you control colour appearance.

7. Can predesigned packaging print be sold via the web?

You can set up a web-to-print system for packaging, providing templates for customers to use. The benefit of this is that you can control file submission and make the site as simple or as complex as you like.

8. Does packaging for electronics have special design requirements?

It depends on the electronics. The packaging for an MP3 player doesn't have to be as robust as for a flatscreen television or a computer. Protection from impact, water, heat and static should ideally be part of the package design.

9. Do I need a dedicated design department?

There are many companies specialised in label and packaging design, and this is a growing discipline within the design community. Having your own inhouse service is an asset for you and for customers, but production volume determines whether this is necessary or not.

10. What skills should packaging designers have?

They should have superb Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator skills and be Mac savvy. Ideally they should also be comfortable with Adobe InDesign and with PDF creation. If they have good experience with Esko's suite of Studio plugins, so much the better. If you print using multiple print methods, such as flexo and digital, designers need to understand their specific limitations.

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