

Cosmetics, Personal & Home Care

Considering coding technology during package design

The challenge

Package design helps define your brands in the marketplace and a well-designed package can make the difference between a market leader and a discontinued product. While significant work goes into package design, a misplaced, distorted, or messy code on your package could be the first view a customer sees, preventing a purchase and potentially damaging your brand. Unattractive codes are difficult for customers to read, and diminish the desired pristine look of a well-designed package. Considering coding technology during package design can reduce the risk of an ugly code, and enhance your package.

The Videojet advantage

Videojet offers a wide range of coding technologies to achieve optimal codes on your package. We partner with our customers to evaluate and test packaging in our internal sample labs before recommending the ideal coding solution for your package and brand. Videojet advanced coding technologies include:

Continuous Ink Jet (CIJ) non-contact printing with specialized inks for most substrates

Thermal Ink Jet (TIJ) ink-based printing on paper and porous substrates

Laser marking systems for permanent codes on many different package types

Thermal Transfer Overprinting (TTO) ribbon-based technology for flexible films

Don't let a bad code ruin a great package. Optimize your code to match your package design.

A package is an essential marketing tool in the cosmetics, personal and home care markets. Packaging is often the primary method for communicating brand image to consumers who are drawn to products with the most iconic or eye-catching packaging designs. Many cosmetics, personal and home care companies spend considerable time and money developing and implementing their packaging vision.

However, manufacturing and in-store circumstances can prevent the consumer from viewing the ideal package design concept. Misplaced, distorted, or unattractive lot, batch or expiration codes can turn off consumers to your product and ruin an outstanding package design. Protect your packaging investment and brand image by considering coding technology during the package design process. Understanding the different coding technologies available for package marking enables you to leverage the manufacturing process instead of fighting against it.

Consider the following questions when beginning your package design process.

1. What material will your package be made out of?

Package substrate type is mostly driven by product form, features and use. The type of package material however, also directly impacts code quality and durability. The look and durability of a code is a function of the coding technology used to apply it, and package type is the most important factor in determining which coding technology is optimal for your package substrate. For example, certain types of plastics can create coding challenges due to poor ink adhesion or lack of contrast.

To help ensure an optimal code, evaluate different variable coding technology capabilities on your desired substrate. If a particular type of packaging material is required for your product, consider adding a special area in which a particular coding technology will work. For example, cartons can often include small areas in which a difficult-to-code overlay or varnish is removed so that ink-based coding solutions will adhere better to the surface. These are often called "knock-out" boxes and can also be created on labels or areas of highly patterned surfaces. Similar print windows, where a segment of the package or label color is changed, can be created on almost any package type to increase code quality.

The color of the packaging material can also impact code quality. For example, if a cleaning product requires HDPE plastic, but a high-contrast code is also required for easy customer legibility, consider using lighter plastic colors to achieve highest code contrast. Another option is to include special additives to packaging at the converter to ensure variable coding technologies are optimized. For example, Datalase™ is a product that can be added to packaging or labels which enables a laser beam to place a dark, clear mark on the package surface, creating a pre-printed code look.

2. What content is included on the product package?

The content on the outside of a package is important to inform consumers and adhere to regulatory requirements. However, packaging content can be difficult to keep up-to-date and accurate. Considering what content is printed on your package and what technology is used to print it can help optimize your package. Often, almost all of the content in a package design is printed at the package converter, not at the product manufacturing site. This reduces manufacturing flexibility, creates additional inventory management costs, and leaves room for potential packaging errors such as mislabeled products.

If your product changes frequently, you have many scents or colors, or if you offer seasonal package designs, consider pre-printing less information and use variable coding solutions during product manufacturing for package customization.

Advanced coding technology can often print much of the same pre-printed information in-line at the manufacturing site. Leveraging variable printing enables you to print icons, bar codes, text and other information directly on to your package during manufacturing, which can reduce pre-printed packaging inventory and the complexities of having many different package types. It also gives you the flexibility to easily customize products with seasonal, promotional or regional-specific information with the touch of a button and with almost no additional costs.

3. How do you interact with your customers post purchase?

Interacting with your customers post product purchase can increase brand loyalty, ensure product authenticity, and provide invaluable marketing data. However, the logistics of customer interactions can be difficult. Variable coding enables unique codes on each package. This product unit identification when combined with mobile or on-line applications and websites can start a customer conversation and can help encourage brand interaction through promotional games, scannable bar codes and registration numbers. For example, unique codes can be added to shampoo or detergents which when entered on-line provide loyalty points. These types of programs engage customers and can provide rich purchasing and consumer data.



Illegible and misplaced code

Pristine code with Datalase in window

The bottom line

Packaging is paramount to your brand image and customer purchasing decision.

However, designing a great package can be difficult and often requires significant time and financial investments. Don't let a bad code ruin a great package design.

Considering variable coding technology during package design can enable you to leverage the manufacturing process.

Videojet can help you leverage variable coding technology during your package design process. Our experienced sales team will partner with you to discuss the trade-offs of different coding technologies and provide you with code samples on your prospective packaging types so you can be confident in your decision. With a wide range of advanced coding technologies and over 640 application-unique fluids and supplies, Videojet has a coding solution for your new packaging.

Call **800 843 3610**
or visit **www.videojet.com**
or email **info@videojet.com**

Videojet Technologies Inc. 1500 Mittel Blvd.
Wood Dale IL 60191 / USA

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