

business

Pretty packages

Truth-in-labeling called big factor in design

United Press International
NEW YORK — Product packaging is based on more practical considerations than in the past, and the truth-in-labeling requirement is one of the biggest factors affecting today's design, says Charles Biondo, a New York designer.

For years, consumer activists contended that much packaging was designed as deceptive bait, aimed at seducing buyers and even deluding them. Nowadays, says Biondo, the prime concern of every packaging designer is to comply with the strict labeling information requirements.

A survey taken by Biondo's firm shows that 44 percent of package designers consider "overpackaging" to be an important issue and they feel that generic labeling will have a significant impact on the industry.

The conversion of most retail business to self-service has also affected the package design field, he said. The shape and size is determined not so much by the desire for novelty as by the need to cope with problems raised by a lack of sales people.

It's not just a matter of turning out an appealing package, Biondo said. Manufacturers are being forced into stronger competition for the con-

sumer dollar and with no sales person on hand to sell it verbally, the packaging has to do the job.

"When you have very few sales people and many of them are part-timers, packaging has to play a bigger role in marketing products," Biondo said.

But there are other and equally vital considerations.

Take size. Time was when packages tended to be oversized, making them look like they held more than they did. There was a lot of criticism of that. But a more important factor, Biondo said, was high store rents and tremendous competition for shelf space. The trend today is to reduce the size of the package to the absolute minimum.

Biondo said his firm's survey showed that despite changes in retailing, most designers think consumers still depend on packaging mainly to identify products quickly, by brand names for example.

Fifty-two percent of package designers think consumers rank product identity the most important feature in a package, 35 percent ranked "appetite appeal" highest and 33 percent chose brand recognition. Eighteen percent thought consum-

ers ranked ingredient and nutritional information important.

The survey also showed that designers currently have to depend more on orders to redesign packages for existing products than on new products.

Another important requirement for much of today's packaging is that many big manufacturers and super-

market chains are going in for recycled paperboard packages.


The recycling division of the American Paper Institute has coined the slogans "pro-environmental packaging" and "environmental shopping" to get the public to demand, or at least encourage, packaging made from recycled waste-papers.

Clive Chajet, a designer with offices in both New York and London, said competition in package design is getting much keener.

Chajet agreed with the firm's conclusion that modernizing has to be more than sales. It must interact with today's and economic systems and trends, he said.

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Orange growers have bumper crop this year

United Press International
LOS ANGELES — Oranges, good tasting and good for you, are one of the best buys in markets this year. Why?

Because farmers have had good crops. Because a record harvest is coming. That's what the head of the largest citrus cooperative in the nation says.

Russ Hanlin, president of Sunkist which, founded in 1893, also is the oldest citrus cooperative. He says most of its 6,500 members in California and Arizona have had excellent crops on this year-around commodity.

And the next crop is predicted to be even larger. A record 64.3 million cartons of navelis is expected.

Oranges were selling in March for about 10 to 12 cents each in many markets nationwide. Hanlin said growers get varying percentages of

that amount, depending on where they are, and their own costs.

"Say, they are selling at the packing house for \$5 for 40 pounds and out of that there are marketing, advertising and packing expenses."

"So after the owners pick and haul which is the better part of a dollar for 40 pounds there's about \$2.50 of that amount left."

Since growers have different expenses, the percentage of profit on the dime cost of the orange at the market left to the grower is small.

Hanlin said the grower's return on the cost at the packing house of the 40 pounds of oranges may be 35 to 40 percent before the grower's cost.

Then, he said, the cost amount of the oranges is doubled by the time it gets to the market shelves because of transportation and other factors.

"So 40 pounds would be \$10 to a consumer."

But individual markets can't or raise the price depending on supply available.

"It happens that agricultural products are a supply and demand business," Hanlin said. "Both California and Florida have had large crops of good quality fruit and this has a depressing effect on prices much to the benefit of the consumer but not to the advantage of a farmer."

While Florida, which produces most of its orange crop for concentrates, is a winter producer, California grows oranges all year, shipping navelis and valencias. Less also are a year around crop, tangerines and tangelos, offspring of tangerines and grapefruit.

This year, the winter lemon crop was smaller than normal and yellow fruit is expensive. The vest for the summer is expected excellent, however, and prices drop.

Sunkist dominates the U.S. market with 61.7 percent of production, but has only 11.5 percent of orange and tangerine production controls 60.6 percent of the California-Arizona industry, however.

Many eating oranges are imported from other countries, mainly South America and Africa. Sunkist's largest competitor is Puregold Cooperative in Southern California, the second largest coop with about 10 million cartons of oranges a year, normally.

In grapefruit, Sunkist has 50 percent of the national industry and 60 percent of California-Arizona production.

The current California-Arizona navel orange crop is the largest Sunkist has ever had and will record, thanks to heavy rain in February. Total production is estimated at 64.3 million cartons, previous record crop was 58.5 million cartons when 58.5 million cartons were vested.

A carton is 37 and one pounds. The high number of cartons this year will be partly due to large size of the oranges.

Last year, 1978-79, the crop was 42 million cartons, followed by freezes and other bad weather.

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The results of the survey will be presented to the Town Hall selection committee, which consists of three faculty members and fifteen students, that represent a cross section of campus (twelve students are non Town Hall members). The feedback from the survey and the selection committee will help Town Hall **determine student entertainment preferences** for the 1980-81 Town Hall season. If you receive one of these survey forms in the mail please fill it out completely and mail it back in promptly, so that we can begin our booking process for next year as soon as possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

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