

Candy and confectionery

Don't let a bad code ruin a great package design

The challenge

Package design helps define your brands in the marketplace. Misplaced, distorted, or messy codes on your package 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 unattractive code, and enhance your package.

The Videojet advantage

Videojet offers a wide range of coding technologies. 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 ink ideal for most materials

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

Laser marking systems for permanent codes on many different package types

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

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

Packaging is an essential marketing tool in the candy and confectionery markets. It is often the primary method for communicating brand image to consumers who are drawn to products with the most iconic or eye-catching designs. Many candy and confectionery companies spend considerable time and money developing and implementing their vision.

However, misplaced, distorted, or messy 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 during the package design process. Understanding the different coding technologies available 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 most likely 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 or wax adhesion.

To help ensure an optimal code, evaluate different 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, cardboard boxes 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 composition of the packing material can also impact final code quality. For example, when packaging gummies, using a higher quality film should be considered to help reduce the impact of some of the ingredients permeating through the film and attacking the printed image from the bottom. This can result in poor adhesion weeks after the printed packages are shipped to customers. Having a film with a pre-printed box in the area where the code is to appear can also work as an effective barrier to prevent the ingredients from permeating the film.

2. What content is needed 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. Almost all of the content in a package design is printed at the package (not at the product) manufacturing site. This reduces manufacturing flexibility, creates additional inventory management costs, and leaves room for potential packaging error such as mislabeled products.

Products can change frequently, for example, you may have many flavors and shapes, or if you package for different clients, consider pre-printing less information and using 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 single color icons, bar codes, text and other information directly onto 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.

3. What content is included on the product package?

Interacting with your customers post product purchase can increase brand loyalty, and provide invaluable marketing data. 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 help encourage brand interaction. For example, unique codes can be added inside a chocolate box which when entered on-line provides access to a raffle or points to an on-line game. These types of programs engage customers and can provide rich purchasing and consumer data.



Illegible waxjet code



Pristine TTO code



Illegible and misplaced code



Pristine CIJ 2D code

The Bottom Line

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

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.

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