



SEASONAL PACKAGING:

A “How to” guide to increasing your share of the \$800 billion consumers spend annually for holidays and events



Brand**Directions**



CONSUMER HOLIDAY SPENDING OFFERS A HUGE OPPORTUNITY TO BOOST RETAIL SALES.

Estimates show it accounts for approximately 20 percent of the retail industry's annual total sales.

BOOST SALES

One great way to drive incremental sales is to design specialized packaging related to a season, holiday or event.

The winter holiday season (from Thanksgiving through New Year's) by far stands out as the highest grossing season; however, other seasons during the year also generate strong revenues.

Consumers are drawn to items they perceive as new or have a limited-time use, so it's important to accentuate these ideas in your product and its packaging.

Seasonal packaging can also increase the awareness consumers have for your product and strengthen their loyalty for your brand. As the brand owner, it gives you the opportunity to try something new and innovative, differentiating your products to stand out on the shelf and drive incremental purchases.

TOP 9 SEASONS

1. Winter Holidays:	\$ 616.1 billion
2. Back to school:	\$ 74.9 billion
3. Mother's Day:	\$ 21.2 billion
4. Valentine's Day:	\$ 18.9 billion
5. Easter:	\$ 16.4 billion
6. Super Bowl:	\$ 14.3 billion
7. Father's Day:	\$ 12.5 billion
8. Halloween:	\$ 7.4 billion
9. St. Patrick's Day:	\$ 4.6 billion

**Figures are from 2014-15*

Source: Monthly Consumer Survey

Industry leaders like Coca-Cola, M&Ms and Starbucks have been capitalizing on consumer holiday spending for decades, nearly perfecting both the idea and the process. With a good plan and a good design partner you, too, can develop a seasonal packaging design that will not only enable you to capture more of the money consumers spend during holiday seasons, but you will further develop yourself as a market leader in your product line(s).

One example of this, which BrandDirections played a significant role in creating, is the Kraft Halloween-themed Lunchables.



Non-Seasonal Lunchables Packaging

CASE STUDY:

HALLOWEEN-THEMED LUNCHABLES

These playfully spooky seasonal packaging redesigns have proven to be very successful in generating a lift in sales, including drawing interest and sales from a completely new audience. While Lunchables are geared toward busy moms looking for a quick meal option for their kids, adult Halloween enthusiasts have become a new market segment that is now buying the product each Halloween season.



The best candidates

Typically the products best suited for seasonal packaging are ones that turn quickly, allowing for easier inventory control. As the Kraft Lunchables example suggests, food products stand out as some of the best.

Other excellent product categories are:

- Beverages and alcoholic products
- Specialized household products such as soaps and body washes (which can be given as gifts)
- Household paper products such as plates, napkins and tissues.

BEGINNING THE PROCESS

Implementing your seasonal packaging campaign should begin at least nine months prior to your product and its *new* packaging hitting the shelves.

1.

Start with a plan

A well-conceived plan will ensure your project has a defined scope, budget and timeline.

Key questions to ask at this time include:

- Are we changing the product (form, flavor, color, etc.)?
- Are we changing the package structure or just the design?
- What impact will this have on our manufacturing process?
- What type of inventory control will be required?
- How much packaging is needed?
- How will the products be displayed in the store?
- Will there be an added value piece (free gift or promotion) attached to the product?
- Do we need to advertise our seasonal packaging? Create a campaign?
- Who are our key audiences (gender, age, income level, geographic location)?
- How will we counter competitors with seasonal packaging?
- How long do we want the seasonal packaging to be on the shelf?
- What is our plan to get the product off the shelf when the season is over?

With these questions answered, you are ready to proceed to the next step in the process.

2.

Choosing the right partner

When implementing your seasonal packaging program, it's essential you have a strong partnership with a packaging designer and branding expert. If you don't have these services in-house, you need to partner with a design agency that is well experienced in both general packaging and seasonal packaging. When conducting your interviews, make sure the agency can articulate and demonstrate the following:

- Sensitivity to your core brand and to maintaining and enhancing your existing brand equities.
- The ability to develop and execute impactful and consumer-relevant structural and visual designs.
- The ability to integrate packaging with brand strategy and any specific promotional opportunities.
- The ability to talk and collaborate with packaging specialists and printers to identify and implement design-to-production changes within cost and time parameters.
- A keen eye for detail and a quality control process that guarantees error-free production files. This should include fact checking, regulatory compliance and quality-control checkpoints for accurate structure, color, architecture and brand alignment.



3.

Determine a design direction

The first rule of any package redesign is to not lose the brand identity you've already created for your product. While developing seasonal messaging can be fun, you never want to do it at the expense of your existing identity. To ensure you stay on point with this, you must identify the core equity elements of your existing brand that cannot be changed, including your brand voice.

Once you have done this, the real fun can begin. Consider all of the following as you and your design team explore the heights to which your designs can soar:

- What is our seasonal message and how can we weave it into our brand story?
- How can we enhance our product's shelf appeal and the seasonal opportunity through a structural redesign of our packaging?
- Which design elements on our current packaging can we re-purpose to communicate our seasonal message?
- What new images can we use to link our product to the season?

CASE STUDY (cont.):

HALLOWEEN-THEMED LUNCHABLES

When we began the creative process for the Halloween-themed Lunchables, we were careful not to change the integrity or the identity of the brand. While we wanted to make the packaging fun and engaging, we also wanted to ensure consumers recognized the core equity elements that Kraft and Lunchables had established. The convenient size, the package construction and the Lunchables logo are all examples of this.

It was important that parents purchasing the products felt they were getting the same trusted product as always, while kids felt they were getting something fun.



Conclusion

Most CPG companies rely on special seasons and events for the majority of their sales, so the stakes of success are extremely high.

And the competition is only getting more fierce. To win at the shelf you need to take a stand, which means you need to stand out. Innovative seasonal packaging designs can do just that, giving both you and consumers exactly what you're looking for. For consumers, that's something new; something limited; something that fits with their image of the season. For you, that's a lift in sales.

But, if capturing a larger percentage of the more than \$800 billion consumers spend on retail products related to these seasonal times isn't reason enough to contemplate seasonal packaging, consider the added bonuses you just might enjoy: gaining new customers, procuring a stronger brand image and improving your customers' loyalty.

With the right plan, a strong design partner and a solid creative direction that maintains your brand's attributes, you'll be well on your way to success.

Additional Tips on Seasonal Packaging

Here are five more ideas to consider regarding your seasonal packaging:

1. Don't put an expiration date on your design (create a winter theme as opposed to a Christmas theme). This enables your product to stay current past the holiday.
2. Create point-of-purchase display stands if possible to make your product stand out.
3. Make a buying experience out of seasonal packaging. Appeal to last-minute and impulse shoppers by using fancy or personalized packaging that doesn't even need to be wrapped. You can also add value in ways that are contextual to your product. For example: adding coasters to a beverage package. If you make them creative, they may even become collectibles and become a tradition that is sought out and purchased each year.
4. Go retro: many people have a sentimental bond with products and packaging they grew up with.
5. Change your packaging based on whatever season you are in. This keeps your look fresh and distinctive.

BrandDirections

BrandDirections has been creating packaging and seasonal package design for some of the world's largest CPG companies. From that experience we have learned that packaging is more than just a way to get your product to market. It's the ultimate moment of truth when your customers make their final purchasing decision. From concept through structural design, we specialize in packaging innovations that grab consumer attention and mindshare.

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Our specialties include:

- Brand architecture/development
- Point-of-Sale design
- Virtual and physical comps
- Final art production
- Photo direction
- Color management

We invite you to learn more about our abilities and our processes.

