



ISSN 2278 – 0211 (Online)

The Effects of Packaging Design on the Marketability of 'Made in Ghana' Products

Dr. Bartholomew Johnson Sebbeh

Senior Lecturer, Department of Graphic Design Technology,
Takoradi Technical University, Takoradi, Ghana

Abstract:

The marketing ability of Made-in-Ghana products is often on the low side as compared to similar products that are imported. This, due to poor packaging design, does not enhance the product's visual appeal when displayed on the shelf. In view of this, the study delved into finding the causes of the poor performance of the Made-in-Ghana products in both the local Ghanaian and international markets and outlined the possibility of improving the quality of the packaging of Made-in-Ghana products. The study adopted qualitative research using the descriptive method to explain the phenomenon in their natural setting. Surveys and interviews were employed as tools to collect information on the buying behaviour of consumers, especially at marketplaces, retail shops, supermarkets, and shopping malls. The study revealed that consumers are mostly attracted to colourful and well-designed packages in terms of their structural designs, which are the physical forms of the package, and the graphic design comprising the colourful outlook of the package and its labelling. The respondents emphasized that even though most Ghanaian products are good in terms of quality, they are not motivated by the nature of their packaging, which is characterized by improper use of packaging materials, colour, fonts, and print quality.

Keywords: Brand, graphic design, made-in-Ghana, package design, packaging, visual appeal

1. Introduction

The act of packaging has been with mankind since the time of primitive men. However, it was not a conscious activity. This was because foods were consumed in their raw states either on the spot or sometimes carried to their abodes or caves in their bare hands. It is also probably because society had not developed to the extent that there was no competition regarding the manufacture and sale of products, let alone promoting the products. Even though primitive men cared less about packaging, they unconsciously used leaves to wrap food and stored the leftovers in gourds and pots to protect them from spoilage and contamination. Packaging is essential for everybody because it affects the lives of individuals in several ways. Most of the consumables, including food, cosmetics, drinks, and medicines, come out in packs, so a number of them can be moved from one point to another.

Packaging is simply described as the container or wrapper for any food or beverage product. How one presents and packages food or beverage products can contribute significantly to the success of one's business. In this regard, package designers and their clients should not think of packaging as making containers to hold and transport products alone. However, they should also consider it an important marketing tool. This is because the effectiveness of packaging is measured by its ability to sell the product without the presence of the producer. Its attractive looks alone can catch the consumer's attention and possibly cause or force people to buy impulsively. This is how it describes the actual product and makes the product easily accessible. The power of how well the packaging is designed and branded gives instant recognition to the product on the shelf.

Producers of various products must keep them in the warehouse and later distribute them to the wholesalers, retailers, and finally to the consuming public. This is supported by He (2014), who declared that the distribution of products, such as foods and cosmetics, involves packing into trucks and delivering them to their respective stores. It is also clear that people's lifestyles have changed in this era of technology and modernization. Therefore, many packaging methods are adopted by producers and companies to match up to the expectations of their consumers by engaging professional designers such as graphic structural designers. Although consumers are mostly attracted to the product by its package and its appearance without any judgement of the quality of the product, most Ghanaian producers seem to be oblivious of the package's role as an essential marketing tool. Most of the packages and the labels of the 'Made in Ghana' products are not attractive enough to catch the consumer's attention as compared to the packages of foreign packages of similar products.

2. Methodology

The study is purely qualitative in nature in which the descriptive method was used to explain the phenomenon in

their natural setting. Surveys and interviews were employed as tools to collect information on the buying behavior of consumers, especially in market places such as the Kwesimintim-Takoradi, Dunkwa Dwakeseim, Suame - Kumasi, Market Circle-Takoradi, Kwadaso Market in Kumasi, Kaneshie and many others. Observations were also made in retail shops, supermarkets, and malls in Kumasi, Accra, Sekondi, and Takoradi, among others, to know the buyers' attitudes to the products that were made in Ghana as compared to the imported ones that came from abroad. The study revealed that Consumers are mostly attracted to colourful and well-designed packages in terms of their structural designs, which are the physical form of the package and the graphic design comprising the colourful outlook of the package and its labelling. The respondents reiterated that even though the quality of the product should be of greater importance in the selection of what they are buying, they are not sure the poor packages contain anything better. This is so because the labels of most of the 'Ghana Made' products are very poor and do not offer any hope. Above all, they attribute quality to well-designed packaged products irrespective of the cost.

2.1. Definitions of Packaging

Packaging is a process of enclosing or encasing goods and products in packages to ensure that goods and products get to the ultimate user, who is the consumer, safely. Harms, Kroon, and Weigel (1993) refer to packaging as any container that holds the product and set examples of things such as cans, boxes, bottles, tubes, crates, and plastic films. The package is mostly designed and made simultaneously as the products are placed in them to end the assembly line and finally stored. Packaging can be said to be an attribute that is not related to the product, but it is one of the five elements of the brand that comes with the name, the logo and/or graphic symbols, the personality, and the slogans (Keller, 2008). It is a vital component of export success. Products must be preserved and protected to reach their destination in perfect condition. Packaging also needs to position, differentiate and sell the product, using materials that comply with regulations (International Trade Centre, 2015).

Very often, people intertwine packaging and package the description of packaging. As such, the two terminologies are used interchangeably. However, a package is a product made of any material of any nature to be used or meant for the containment, protection, handling, delivery, and preservation of goods from the producer to the user or consumer. A package is, therefore, the physical container or wrapping for a product (Farese, Grady, & Woloszyk, 2009). It can also be said to be the wrapping material around a consumer item that serves to contain, identify, describe, protect, display, promote and otherwise make the product marketable and keep it clean. This includes things such as cans, boxes, bottles, tubes, crates, and plastic films. The package is mostly designed and made simultaneously as the products are placed in them to end the assembly line and finally stored. Therefore, a Package can be said to be any container that holds the product. What needs to be understood is that the package should not always be seen as the physical container designed to hold and transport products only but also to be thought of as a marketing tool. It is appropriate to state that packaging is the wrapping of material around a consumer item that serves to contain, identify, describe, protect, display, promote, and otherwise make the product marketable and keep it clean.

Product packaging, however, refers to any container in which the product is offered for sale and on which label information is conveyed (Kerin, Hartley, & Rudelius, 2015). Product packaging design is the construction of the exterior of a product which includes the choice of material and form, including graphics, colours, and fonts that are used on wrappers, boxes, cans, bottles, or any kind of container. Forbes (2022) describes packaging design as the process of designing product packaging to securely contain, identify and deliver a product. He further explains, 'Whether it is a food box from McDonald's, Apple's iPhone packaging, the box that your new fridge comes in, or even tea bags, just about every product in a store has packaging. Most of it is good, some of it bad. Graphic designers, packaging engineers, or just about anyone can design packaging, regardless of their skills or expertise. The objectives of packaging are to ensure that the product is delivered safely to its final destination and to communicate its sales message and all other necessary information about it to purchasers and those involved in the distribution.'

2.2. Functions of Packaging

Protection as a key component of the packaging must be ensured at all times in the product packaging process. A package must protect its contents during storage, transport, and usage. It must also protect the user from the contents, especially with products, for example, weedicides, medicines, detergents, and other chemicals, and should also protect its content from being tampered with. The primary function of packaging is:

- To protect the product against potential damage while transporting, storing, selling, and exploiting a product, and
- To ensure convenience during the performance of these activities (Gonzalez et al., 2007; Wells et al., 2007)

The foregoing suggests that packaging must be able to withstand robust physical handling during distribution so that the goods are received by consumers in a very safe and good condition without blemishes as they leave the factory. Since some consumers tend to touch products before they finally make a purchase, Sogn-Grundvag & Ostli (2009) caution that there is the need to treat product packaging as a tool for protecting consumers from contamination as consumers are allowed to touch products without restraint and without any need to avoid smudging their hands. For that matter, it is prudent to use packaging with a window to allow consumers to evaluate a product by its appearance and, at the same time, reduce the uncertainty consumers have regarding the quality and branding of the product and its labelling.

Package designers and producers should ensure that the product is protected against attacks from heat, humidity, air, and bumps that may cause the product to suffer during transportation. The package must be designed to keep the product in perfect condition until it reaches the end user. Food packaging can check product deterioration by providing, helping retain the beneficial effects of processing, extending shelf life, and maintaining or increasing the quality and safety of food. In this case, packaging offers protection against major external influences such as chemical, biological, and

physical. The package's ability to protect foods from chemicals reduces compositional changes that are caused by environmental influences such as exposure to gases (typically oxygen), moisture (gain or loss), or light (visible, infrared, or ultraviolet). So many different packaging materials provide barriers to chemicals. Glass and metals provide almost a complete barrier to chemicals and other environmental agents, as some glass or metal packages have closure devices added to facilitate filling and emptying.

The closure devices sometimes contain materials that allow minimal levels of permeability. For example, plastic caps have some permeability to gases and vapours, just as the gasket materials used in caps to facilitate closure and in the metal can lids to allow sealing after filling. Plastic packaging offers a large range of barrier properties, but it is generally more permeable than glass or metal. Biological protection is achieved when the packaging provides a barrier to microorganisms such as insects, rodents, and other animals. In that way, it prevents disease and spoilage. In addition, biological barriers provided by packaging help maintain conditions to control ripening and ageing. Such barriers function through various mechanisms, including the prevention of access to the product, prevention of odour transmission, and maintenance of the internal environment of the package.

The Package provides physical protection to prevent food from mechanical damage. Such protection includes cushioning against shocks and vibrations encountered throughout the distribution chain. Packaging that is developed from paperboard and corrugated materials provides physical barriers that resist impacts, abrasions, and crushing damage. Because of that, they are widely used as shipping containers and as packaging for delicate foods such as eggs and fresh fruits. The use of appropriate physical packaging also protects consumers from various hazards. Examples include tamper-free lids and child-resistant closures that hinder access to potentially dangerous products. Currently, the dangers associated with breaking glass containers have been reduced with the substitution of plastic packaging for products ranging from shampoo to soda bottles.

Food packaging aims to contain food in a way that is cost-effective to satisfy industry requirements and consumer desires, maintain food safety, and minimize environmental impact. Products are manufactured to be used by several consumers in different or varying locations. In its raw form, it is difficult to convey them to the end users who are scattered across the country. Some of the products are intangible to such an extent that they cannot be handled.

Basically, some of the products cannot be delivered safely unless they are contained in a package to make handling easier. These products include:

- Products, such as corn flakes, kinds of toothpaste, drugs, and chemicals, perfumed spray, water, corned beef,
- Beverages such as tea, milo, Coca-Cola, beer, champagne, Malta Guinness, and other forms of alcoholic beverages, and
- all forms of powdery substances like baking powder, talcum powder, milk powder, coffee, etc.,

Products that come out in granulated form, such as rice, gari, sugar, salt, and many others, as well as food products

Therefore, it is very essential to put a certain quantity of any of such products together in various forms of containers such as boxes, cylinders, tubes, and bottles to make them portable. Thus, they can be stacked in their numbers to be conveyed without difficulty and blemish to the consumer, who is the ultimate user.

The package provides a pack volume, which makes it possible to contain a certain quantity of product at a particular point in time as efficiently as possible. To ensure the economy and optimum strength of the package, designers should keep the package size to the barest minimum to fit the product. Depending on the nature of the product, the package may have to be airtight, liquid-tight, or powder-tight to prevent the escape of the product or the ingress of contaminating materials. It must be noted that a tight package is stronger than a loose one. A tight package, with minimal space, normally withstands pressure and handles stresses better than a loosely filled one. The product itself can often contribute to the strength of the pack as a loosely filled package has to bear the stresses alone. Making packages unnecessarily large accounts for wastage in package materials and an increase in the cost of transportation. In much the same way, a loose, over-size package is deceptive and also accounts for the wastage of materials and space. In many countries, environmental and consumer protection organizations criticize packages that are bigger than needed for their contents. Recycling of packaging, which is mandatory in some countries, is usually charged according to the weight and type of the material. Minimal packaging should, therefore, minimize disposal costs. Minimizing package size should not, of course, mean reducing the package specification to a point where the safety and integrity of the product will be at risk. Designers should bear in mind that the pack size has to be kept to the minimum to save cost and optimize package strength. Smaller packages are usually cheaper to make, ship or transport, and recycle. It can be inferred from the above that packaging must meet all of these challenges and contain the product itself. This implies resistance to both internal and external corrosion, with effective properties that guarantee resistance to gas, oxygen, water, and smells.

A package serves as the face of the product it contains since it is the only visible component that the consumers see before deciding to buy. The uniqueness of the packaging gives the product a massive boost in a competitive environment. Some of the packages are designed to enhance the product image and also differentiate the product from similar products in the competitive market. Lager labels, for instance, are used to inform consumers about the recipe of the product. Information that packaging labels provide includes those that satisfy both local (such as Foods and Drugs Board) and international as well as legal requirements. The package is supposed to provide information on product identification (product name, content, etc.), nutrition value, ingredient, net weight, manufacturer's information, and expiry date (sell-by date). Consumers should be provided with information concerning instructions on brand identification such as trademarks and trade names, how to prepare and how to use the product. These are mandatory regulatory information that every package should always provide to ensure consumer safety.

Communication is one of the key roles the package performs by ensuring that essential information, as well as other messages about the product, gets to the consumer. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the package designer to make

sure that the package communicates the right message as fast and forcefully as possible. This communicative function of the packaging is primarily to inform the consumer about the product concerning the content and how long it can last on or out of the shelf. Producers and package designers should do everything possible during labelling to provide the needed information about content, ingredients, nutritional standards, and the method of preservation, as well as the usage of the product. It is also important to include warnings and precautions when necessary, especially with chemicals and other explosives. Besides ensuring that the packed product reaches the consumer in a safe and perfect condition, the package designers should equally provide information on how to handle the package during transportation of the product from the factory through wholesale to the retailer and possibly to the final consumer. The laws of packaging require that an increasing number of facts must be given and indicated, including the colourings in the food and protected brand names. The laws also oblige manufacturers to ensure that any statement made about the origin and composition of the product is a fact.

Packaging represents one of the most important vehicles for communicating the brand message directly to the target consumer, so the instructions for the use of the product should also be stated clearly. As the retail environment becomes saturated with competitors struggling for consumers' attention, packaging designers have to work harder than ever to make the package catchy to make the product package noticed out of the congestion of competitive products on the shelf. Well-designed and effective packaging can maintain its content in a very good condition through transit to the final consumer in a safe and optimum condition. The package facilitates safe handling of the product from the time of packing until it gets to the end user. For an exporter, transport and distribution charges are normally a major part of the total product cost, which adds to the price of the product without enhancing its value or quality. Therefore, the package designer's responsibility is to contribute as much as possible to keep the cost of handling to the barest minimum throughout the distribution chain.

2.3. Importance of Packaging

Packaging is an exciting industry because it matches the clever design of modern technology. It is also important because it:

- Creates jobs for many people,
- Provides a vital service to protect, preserve and display goods of all kinds, and
- Creates business on which we all depend for our economy (Watts, 1990)

The labelling of the package allows the consumer to be more assured of the product he is buying at a particular point in time. This is because the label identifies the package with the brand name and the producer. It provides several mandatory pieces of information required by law to ensure that the consumer purchases exactly what he wants. Such information makes the consumer aware of how to protect the product and how long the product can be kept on the shelf or be used. The ingredients used are spelt out to enable users who are allergic to certain substances to avoid using them for health safety.

The significance of packaging can be explained in relation to what the package does to the producer, retailer, and consumer. The design component of the package makes the product attractive and adds value to the product's appearance on the shelf. This helps producers and retailers to increase the selling price, which will hitherto have been low yet, because of the appealing nature of the product's package. Consumers are prepared to pay more for a well-packaged product. It is known that there is a category of people who attribute the quality to the packaging and pricing of the product. Therefore, effective and good packaging should lead to increased patronage of the product because of its quality and attractiveness. This helps the producers to maximize profit. Therefore, they would want to go to every length to ensure that their designers give them attractive designs that will entice buyers to go for their products instead of other similar products on the market. The package is, therefore, an important and powerful sales tool for the retailer and the customer. That is why producers may have to change their packaging and labelling to meet their retail customers' needs to get their products stocked in their stores.

Strongly branded and well-designed packaging can help in the instant recognition of the product. Effective packaging helps sell the product without the producer being there. The packaging helps sell the product:

- By the way it looks (by attracting attention),
- By describing the actual product, and
- By making the product easily accessible

Producers put food safety procedures in place and inspect them at all levels of the supply chain. Packaging offers a way of ensuring food safety to meet people's expectations for packages that are intact by way of their sealing and guarantees the freshness of the product in the package. In the food packaging production line, material handling, shipping, and storage are the most important factors that have to be considered to ensure food safety. In all of these processes, mechanisms are put in place to check that all those who are exposed to food are equipped with adequate knowledge of personal hygiene. They must adopt washing and sanitization of equipment, utensils, and surfaces where foods are processed and packaged. Such people are expected to understand the consequences of any malpractice that compromises the product's safety. To achieve food safety, periodical training programmes are organized by companies for their employees. The training aims at developing certain work culture peculiar to the company's food packaging standards to avoid the risks of contamination that packaging seeks to protect. Compliance with international food safety standards and regulations also helps to identify hazards and control points and provide another level of protection. In some instances, the institutionalization of regular microbiological tests and clear policies strengthen vigilance and help eliminate diseases that easily transfer onto food by physical contact if food were to be sold without packaging.

Good packaging protects a product well, makes it noticeable on the shelf, conveys a brand or corporate image, gives information, and so on. More and more products can be packaged to appeal directly to the customer. Packaging can change the market for a particular product and manufacturer. This is so because no matter how the quality of a product might be, poor packaging of such product may put people off and would not encourage them to buy because the product's packaging often does not boost its appearance on the market shelf. Packages that are not designed cleverly and carefully are not able to compete favourably on the international market. Therefore, a well-designed product packaging can take the product into a completely new market. In Ghana, most of the food and other products are not properly packaged to meet international packaging standards. This, therefore, does not make the products a preferred choice among similar products on the market since their point of sale attraction is not comparable to other foreign products. However, the quality of the product may be better.

As part of the product development process, structural package designers try different materials, shapes, and sizes to assess how they will meet the consumer's needs. Consumers are on the go and therefore require portable, convenient, lightweight, and ready-to-eat foods that are packaged to meet their satisfaction. Packaging is of great importance to both sellers and buyers of products because it can:

- Prevent spoiling, breakage, tampering, or theft,
- Enhance convenience in use or storage, and
- Make products easier to identify

A significant improvement in packaging can even create a 'new' product by expanding its use and its potential markets. Though the packaging is expensive, it gives the product a competitive advantage over other similar products found on the shelf. This advantage includes communication benefits, functional benefits, and perceptual benefits. The main benefit of packaging is the label information it conveys to the consumer, such as directions on how, where, and when to use the product and the source and composition of the product. This is needed to satisfy the legal requirements of product disclosure.

In recent times, the labelling system of packaged foods provides a uniform format for nutritional and dietary information. For this reason, most packaged foods contain informative recipes to promote the usage of the product. All these form the communication benefit of packaging. The functional benefits of packaging are seen in the package's role of providing storage, convenience, protection, or ensuring product quality. A typical example of a functional benefit is the stackable food containers, which food and beverage providers have developed by using lightweight materials for the product packaging, making it possible and easy to stack products on the shelves and in refrigerators. Consumer protection is another essential function of packaging. This includes the development of tamper-resistance containers, which are manifested in companies using safety seals or pop-tops that reveal the previous opening. It must be noted that despite all these, no package is 100% tamper resistant.

There is also the labelling of 'open dating', which states the product's expected shelf life to ensure consumer protection. The functional features such as square boxes and cylindrical packages can also affect product quality. A comparison of chips packed in a cylindrical container like that of Pringles and those that are bagged in flex-bag as found on the Ghanaian markets indicate that peoples' preference is on the cylindrical package, which adds value to the Pringles chips, which offers uniform chips, minimizes breakages and offer the consumer value for money than those packaged in flex-bags.

The perception created in the minds of consumers about a product is what constitutes the perceptual benefit of packaging and labelling. The shape of the package and label, colour, and graphics (as shown in the images above) distinguish one brand of product from the other, convey the positioning and subsequently build brand equity.

2.4. Purposes of Packaging

During transportation, handling, and distribution network/chain, the package helps to retain the products in their original state to prevent:

- Liquid products such as drinks, washing soaps, etc. from spilling,
- Fragile products like ceramic bowls from breakages,
- Foods from contamination due to heat, humidity, light, and other external factors

Products for sale and consumption vary in form and nature. Some of them, especially food products, are perishable and have to be packaged in such a way that they remain in good condition when the consumer gets them. Its taste, texture, fluidity, colour, crispiness, and freshness should remain intact and not change until its shelf life expires. Some products are fragile and need to be kept and handled with utmost care throughout the distribution chain. Products that contain some gases and spirits are highly inflammable, and their exposure to heat may cause them to burn or explode. Because of that, they have to be well-protected to keep the product in perfect condition until reaching the intended destination or end-user and avoid spoilage, breakage, moisture damage, contamination, pilferage, and theft.

2.4.1. Ghanaian Product Packaging Design and the Competitive Market

The success of packaging depends largely on the selection of the package material and design that can meet the competing needs concerning product characteristics and marketing considerations, including distribution and consumer needs, environmental and waste management issues, and cost. Even though balancing so many factors is difficult, it requires different analyses for each product, putting into consideration factors such as:

- The properties of the packaging material,
- The type of food to be packaged,
- Possible food/package interactions,

- Desired product shelf-life,
- The intended market for the product,
- Environmental conditions during storage, distribution, and product end use,
- Eventual package disposal, and
- The costs related to the package during the production and distribution process

Some of the factors, such as the type of food and the properties of the packaging material that determine the nature of food and package interactions during storage, are interrelated. Sometimes, the factors are at odds with each other for example, though single-serving packaging meets consumer needs, for environmental reasons, bulk packaging is better. With the public's growing concern for the environment, recyclable tin-coated steel and aluminium packages have enjoyed a recent resurgence in popularity.

Good package design is considered an important part of any successful business. Whenever prospective customers encounter a new product on the shelves, the packaging should provide them with the information they need to motivate them to make a purchase. However, packaging decisions involve many trade-offs. While making a product visible and distinctive may be the top priority, for example, businesses must also comply with various laws regarding product labelling and safety. Although protection for the products during transport is important, businesses must also ensure that their shipping cost is kept as low as possible. Packaging is of great importance to both sellers and buyers of products because it prevents spoiling, breakage, theft, or tampering. It enhances the convenience of using or storing products and also makes the product to be identified easily. A significant improvement in packaging can even create a 'new' product by expanding how it can be used and thus its potential markets. Good packaging protects a product well, but it also makes it noticeable on the shelf, conveys a brand or corporate image, can give information, and so on.

In recent years, packaging has developed well beyond its original function as merely a product protection. It now plays a key marketing role in developing shelf-appeal, providing product information, and establishing brand image and awareness as expected from its manufacturers. There is the need for consumers to fully understand the role that packaging structures play in promoting made-in-Ghana products and how powerful this tool can best be used to influence consumers buying decisions. Package Labeling plays an integral part in the packaging and cannot be underrated for successful product promotion in any part of the world. It is supposed to inform any level of consumer and all who come into contact with the product.

Identification of an item may come in different forms, but labelling is one sure way of placing identity on products. When it comes to selling packaged food, drugs, cosmetics, etc. (consumables and non-consumables), manufacturers are obliged to identify what they put on shelves for consumers to make a buying decision. The content of products cannot be ascertained unless there is a label on the packaging confirming that package's contents. Therefore, it is important to take a look at the labelling requirements of products. Packaging plays an important role in raising the product's appeal. This, when done well, will invariably increase sales and, for that matter, increase the profit margins, which is the ultimate aim of every producer (Obeesi, 2011). To perform this role effectively to reap the right results and benefits for the manufacturer, a product's packaging must be attractive, well-labelled (informative), and must identify the package with its content. There is a relationship between packaging structure, labelling, and consumer ability, to easily identify Made-in-Ghana products which are the first step in capturing the local market and increasing the competitiveness of Made-in-Ghana products on the international market.

2.4.2. Competition with Foreign Packaged Products

Competition has now become keener in today's marketing environment than it used to be some years ago. Companies that sell the same products, such as drinks, food, clothes, candies, cosmetics, etc., need to catch the eye of the customers. Even though the customers are in a hurry to make the purchases, they are often attracted to certain products they are forced to buy just by their looks. Given that companies and producers use advertising and colourful labels and packages to entice buyers. However, Ghanaians have a higher negative perception of locally produced products irrespective of the quality of the product. Everything that is made in Ghana is considered to be inferior compared to products coming from outside the country. The Ghanaian consumer of today is conscious of product branding and develops brand loyalty for certain products especially foreign products to the detriment of the local Ghanaian products. This is attributed mainly to the lack of stand-out appeal of the packages as compared to the foreign packages. This gives rise to the promotion of products coming from a foreign country.

2.4.3. Positioning Made-in Ghana Products

A well-designed package should be able to attract buyers even to make purchases they might not have budgeted for to make them do impulse buying. This power of the package to drive or force consumers to do impulse buying makes it assume the personality of the 'silent salesman'. The pack must come alive at the point of purchase with dynamic, attractive, and eye-catching shapes, displays (images), and colourful displays to fulfil its role/function as the salesperson. Packaging is indeed the industry's silent salesman. It can do this by displaying and describing the product it contains to enable the consumer to choose the product that best suits his or her taste. This, together with the visual appeal of the package, is often a decisive feature in the purchasing situation. Therefore, the package becomes a persuasive force in motivating the consumer to make a purchase and promote the sale of one brand rather than the others.

Package designers should note that the physical shape and structure of a package alone could influence the sale of the product. Therefore, the designer should be creative enough to come out with varying packaging structures (shapes) that will break the monotony on the shelf to distinguish products from similar ones on the shelf to facilitate sales. The total character of the package and the product that motivate people to buy consists of its weight, size, price, design, and even

retail-selling environment. For that reason, the designer should be mindful of that so he can incorporate them into the design process. The designer's aim should be that the package would promote and encourage sales of the product both in the short and long term. Having fulfilled the requirements of containing, protecting, and facilitating handling of the product throughout its distribution chain, the package is equally expected to perform its functions of communication and sales promotion. Consideration has to be given to the graphic design and the appearance of the package to accomplish these functions. Attaining the marketing objectives of the package successfully depends on the execution of the structural design and its comparable qualities. Factors in sales promotion and communication, such as the accuracy of the information on the label and conformity with legal and environmental requirements, should be considered to attract the target market. In all cases, the package should not attract first-time buyers only but also encourage brand loyalty and lead to continuous purchases.

2.5. Contemporary Packaging Design

The direction of Ghanaian product design strategy should be skewed towards contemporary packaging. In recent times, packaging has taken a new dimension that offers manufacturers and producers to apply the latest technologies to address the changes in people's lifestyles and issues bothering environmental, social, and political concerns. Because of this, Ghanaian package designers have to introduce various forms of packaging, including aseptic packaging, cause packaging, and environmental packaging. Aseptic packaging involves using the technology of keeping food products fresh and intact without a refrigerator for a while. In the process, the package and the food product are sterilized separately, and the filling and sealing are done in a sterile environment as well. Examples of aseptic methods of packaging are bottling and canning. Cause packaging, on the other hand, is the form of packaging in which some companies use their packages to promote social and political activities. The issues presented on the package may not necessarily relate to or reflect what is inside the package. Often, the message printed on the packages encourages the consumers to participate in a campaign about issues or to think about an issue of concern. However, companies use cause packaging to differentiate their products from their competitors. Going Environmental packaging will provide a way for producers and manufacturers to react to the consumers' concerns about the environment by adopting environmentally friendly methods of producing packaging for their products, which leads to the production of less wasteful packaging. As part of the response, some companies have resorted to reusable, recyclable packages that are safer for the environment.

2.5.1. Deficiencies in Ghanaian Package Design

Food packaging gives protection to foodstuffs, but it may also be a source of chemical food contamination. The layer that has direct contact with the foodstuff is called food contact material. Different types of food contact materials are commonly used, each with different properties. Packaging for foodstuffs comes in many different methods. This is based on the technical requirements in the supply chain and the marketing needs, including the brand identity or consumer information and other criteria. For some types of food packaging, the food contact material determines the name: a plastic bottle is made of plastic and has this material type in direct contact with the foodstuff. The contact materials in packaging foodstuffs in glass jars are glass and the coated metal that forms the closure. In the case of beverage cartons, the direct food contact layer is the laminated plastic, not the carton. For aluminium cans, a coating is in direct contact with the beverage. Some types of paper can also be coated with a grease-proof coating. The term food contact material applies not only to food and beverage packaging but also to any other materials that come in contact with food, either during the processing, filling, storage, or during consumption (e.g., cooking utensils).

2.5.2. The Role of Graphic Design in Package Design

Packaging encompasses the physical appearance of the container and includes design, colour, shape, labelling, and materials. In designing a package, consideration should be given to three (3) factors:

- The stand-out appeal,
- How the package will communicate verbally, and
- Non-verbally

Linking it to advertising, packaging also communicates verbally and non-verbally. Even after consumers buy the product, they must continually be 'sold' on it. Research has shown that the consumer has an active relationship with packaging and responds to a package intuitively. Therefore, package design can be as powerful a tool as advertising in building a product's brand image. Packaging establishes the personality, image, and prestige of the brand. Therefore, the design must consider what the consumer thinks others would regard as prestigious. This is especially important with the so-called non-rational products – such as health and beauty aids, perfume, sports, accessories, and confection gifts–for which fancy, whim, and mystique all operate in place of rational choice. The package must literally sell the product off the shelf. This can be done by using shape, colour, size, interesting visuals, or even texture to deliver a marketing message, give product information, and indicate in-use applications. Additionally, the packaging should continue to promote the product in the home, creating brand image and loyalty. Therefore, packages should be designed to open and close easily and not be awkward to handle.

2.6. Attributes to Be Considered for Good Packaging Design for Ghanaian Products

Any good package design that focuses on lifting the selling power of the product should have the following outstanding features or characteristics:

- Graphics that will give the product the image and image quality required
- Colours that will make the product attractive to catch the consumer's eye or attention

- Uniqueness of shape to make the product stand out from others on the shelf
- Size of the Pack that gives volume and makes handling easier
- Product information with legible fonts to help users know the ingredients and nutritional properties of what they are buying
- Quality and safety of the material being used for packaging the product
- The versatility of the material as to whether the material is reusable or recyclable

The combination of these characteristics of the package will determine whether or not a product is bought, draw consumers' attention to products, and differentiate the product from similar ones, as products are now becoming more alike. It will also make the product portable, stimulate the impulse buying behaviour of consumers, attract consumers, increase its sale and reduce the marketing and advertisement cost of the product.

There are many different schemes for the classification of elements of the package. While designing and producing an efficient package, there are six essential things designers and package producers have to put into consideration. These include form, size, colour, graphics, material, shape, and brand. These have to be evaluated to be successful in packaging decision-making.

The main activity involved in the execution of the package and the application of the elements identified above is consequently subdivided into two major blocks that are:

- The structural elements including the form of the package, the size of the container and the package materials, and
- The graphic elements comprising the colours, typography, shape, and image (illustrations or displays)

It should be noted that these two blocks do not include verbal elements of the package.

The package designers should attach greater importance to the positioning of the elements of the package by separating the verbal elements from the visual elements. Verbal elements of a package are:

- The brand name,
- Product name,
- Producer/country of origin,
- Information,
- Special offers,
- Trademarks,
- Instruction of usage,
- Slogans,
- Logo,
- Graphic symbol,
- Personality, etc

The verbal elements are otherwise referred to as the information elements, whereas the images, pictures, colour, form, size, graphics, materials, smell as well as visual appeal constitute the non-verbal elements. In effect, visual elements relate to the aspects of the package that deals with consumers' decision-making process. In contrast, the information elements relate to the cognitive aspect that moves the consumer to make purchases. The type of message communicated depends on the two major elements, namely:

- The Visual elements of the package that are used to transmit information that affects consumers' emotions, and
- The verbal elements that transmit information that affects the consumer's cognitive orientation

2.7. Poor Package Design and Its Effect on Made in Ghana Products

Forbes (2022) describes packaging design as the process of designing product packaging to securely contain, identify and deliver a product. As such, every product in a store has packaging. Most of them are good, and some of them are bad. Though graphic designers and packaging engineers have the responsibility to come out with packaging design, anyone can also produce it, regardless of skills or expertise. However, Sutevski (2022) admonishes that though packaging plays an essential role in retail, having poor packaging could have far-reaching consequences. Some of you may have not even imagined it. Leed (2022) emphasizes the points made by Forbes and Sutevski by elucidating, 'Packaging can help the brand to change the buying behaviour of consumers as most of the customers go for buying the products, which are packed properly and safely.' He also declares, 'There are two types of packaging- good and bad packaging, and these producers must make sure that they choose the right and good packaging for their products. Leed further states that the buying behaviour of consumers can be changed with the designs and sprinting of boxes as graphics and designs of boxes have more power to change the mind of customers. Using a good packaging design can make the customer who is not interested at all in the product become interested. Additionally, one can also create an aura around the products by adopting custom packaging designs. This will eventually make a lot of customers easily attracted to the product.

The following are some of the reasons why poor packaging could be disastrous for Ghanaian businesses. Bad packaging methods in Ghana are characterized by oversized boxes, which allow products to shift and move to their detriment. Too much movement harms the product's output and could therefore defeat the basic aim of getting the products to the end user without blemish. For example, a nice painting and frame are only useful to the customers when it comes in one piece and without dents and scratches (Packsizes, 2013). That is not to mention how much cardboard is wasted in building a part of the box that never gets used. Oversized boxes are just not the perfect fit for what is needed. However, in anyway, most people deal with them because that is all they can do. In filling all that extra space, Styrofoam, sawdust, packing peanuts, paper, and plastic are often used to cushion and make the product tight in the box. Although the

package may perform its job admirably, there is an over-excessive use of the resources. This kind of bad packaging of the Ghanaian is wasteful and has the potential for a lot of problems in our future as it does not make packaging sustainable.

There is an adequate reason why producers should be careful about package design because people are not motivated to buy things that they feel badly about. The Packaging design should be used as a vital bridge between the customers and the product. Customers want to see and touch the packaging before they ever interact with the product. Furthermore, as awesome as the product might be, the packaging does the selling. So producers should not let poor packaging undermine their sales (Ludin, 2020).

2.8. Impossible to Open Packages

Humans, by nature, want to be as simple as possible. So in many instances, they like things to be easy. However, some packaging designs ignore this cardinal principle of human nature by being outrageously difficult to open. When customers and consumers encounter difficulty in opening packages, they develop hatred for the identified packages.

There is even a name for the feeling consumers experience while encountering one of these hard-to-open packages: 'wrap rage.' Although 'wrap rage' may be considered fun, so to say, it is not fun to experience. Moreover, it does not even have to take a marketing psychologist to say the ordeal impacts negatively on the product and that it should be fairly clear that making one's customers feel rage is a bad way to encourage repeat business. It must be noted that making it easy for customers to remove the packaging and get access to the product inside is an essential part of building a positive user experience.

2.9. Lack of Differentiation

Even though the goal of any product packaging is to catch the eyes of prospective buyers, a lot of Ghanaian products lack differentiation. So many of the products look almost like their competitors' products. Some of the products do not have packages that advertise them in terms of Brand Name, logos, nutritional information, and trademarks, or trade names. So consumers find it difficult to ascertain whether one product on sale in the market is the same product from the same producer or otherwise. Such products include garri, rice, Alata Samina, salt, flour, cereals, sugar, meat, etc., which are sometimes sold in plain or transparent plastic film bags or unwrapped in jute sacks, trays, and others. The labels on these containers are not clearly printed to offer the buyer the necessary information needed to make usage convenient. Those that have packages such as boxes, wrappers, snack chip bags, etc. face the same differentiation problem as they imitate the colours of their competitors, making them nearly identical and impossible to distinguish between the two products from a distance. Sometimes, the logos on the product's package are so tiny and unremarkable that they cannot stand out from the competitors' products. In a situation like this, customers are likely to overlook them and even choose the competitors by mistake.

2.9.1. Labelling in Packaging

Ensuring food safety requires a shared responsibility between governments, producers, industry, and consumers. Food labelling is one of the ways in which consumers can get knowledge about the food they want to buy, and that being able to follow the information provided on food labels, such as expiry dates, handling instructions, and allergy warnings, can help consumers to prevent unnecessary food-borne illnesses and allergic reactions. The presence of food labels makes it much easier to find foods that have the nutritional value one needs. Nutritional information on food labels provides the basis for serving that particular food. It also helps to make healthy choices about the foods that are on sale. Food labels enable consumers to know exactly what is inside the package. Food labels can help consumers limit the amount of fat, sugar, and cholesterol in a particular diet by making it easy for someone to compare one food item with another and choose the one with lower amounts.

On the other hand, food labels can be used to find food items that are higher in vitamins, fibre, and protein. Food labels are also used to communicate exactly what is inside the package. One can just look at the list of ingredients and notice that 'the first ingredient represents the ingredient with the most amounts; the second ingredient is the second highest amount and so on.

2.9.1.1. Colours

The logo and colours of the package are what people perceive and associate a particular brand with. Manipulating a handful of colours to a desirable package design and echoing those colours onto the packaging is a great and major way to expressly convey the brand's presence. Colour psychology plays a big role in advertising and retail sales because the colour of the package has a notable effect on consumers and can turn them on to the product or chase them away. Depending on the demographics of the target market, the colours that are chosen to employ on the packaging materials can make or break the success of a product (Roberge, 2019). From the consumer's standpoint, the colours of the packaging can greatly, or gravely, influence the decision to purchase the product over the other belonging to the competitors. Statistical information of Buyers such as age, culture, gender identity, and global location should all be considered in selecting the colors that will represent your product on the shelf, on the web, or in the local Ghanaian market if the product is to make the most impact. Selecting different coloured packaging for different locations may be worth considering while selling globally. So it is important to align colour selection with a product and its intended retail geography. With regards to what are considered some of the most popular packaging designs, it is their logos and the colour of their packages that are perceived to make them popular brands. However, most of the colours of 'Made in Ghana' products are not distinctive to register the product on people's minds. People very easily associate the colours with different products and brands.

Attractive and meaningful colours of packaging can leave a strong first impression on the consumers. Colour psychology is important in packaging, and choosing poor colours can leave a negative and fading impact (London Catering Supplies, 2022). The London Catering Supplies stresses that colours can give away the right message. The colour and design of a package can make one look classy, quirky, conservative, or funny. For this reason, designers and producers have to pay attention to the choice of colour for the package of Made in Ghana products so that they do not put the consumers off. Good packaging can compel the consumer to buy a costlier product. Colours and design form the visual aesthetics of any product. Many products, such as those for gifting purposes, are bought largely because of their attractive looks. So consumers are prepared to pay extra for the products that convey their emotions. If a consumer wants to buy gifts for kids, they will look for product packaging that appears to be attractive, colourful, and lively. The same consumer may purchase a package that is coloured in monochrome and dark colours for elderly people (London Catering Supplies, 2022).

2.9.1.2. Shape

The shape of the package also plays a significant role in a consumer's decision to buy a product. Therefore, it is important to keep it in mind during the design process. Cosper (2022) emphasizes that packaging designers have the chance and ability to create unique packages based on shape, and it is the basic shapes that trigger emotional responses from individuals. Cosper continues by saying that the designers need to find out what existing target customers perceive about various shapes before designing a new package. Shapes of packages should be in consonance with target market expectations and associations to meet the visual appeal of the package. In view of this, Ghanaian package designers should note that shape contributes immensely to the visual branding of a product. Harrison (2020) declares that unique shapes are common occurrences that always fascinate people all the time and that fascination can be used as an advantage in times of packaging products and gift items. Harrison goes on to say that the universal admiration of unique shapes has inspired the packaging industry to a great extent. As a matter of fact, unique shapes have single-handedly evolved the packaging design trends. Package shapes play a pivotal role in differentiating one brand from another and influence consumers' decisions to buy a product.

2.9.1.3. Expiry Dates

To ensure safety throughout the entire food chain, displaying the manufacturing and expiry dates have become necessary. This makes it imperative for producers to display a 'use by date' on the package and should not be eaten after this date, as this could present a health risk. In addition, food packages must display a 'best before date', indicating the 'minimum durability', or the period during which the specific properties of food will be retained if properly stored. A product whose 'best before' date has expired may still be safe to eat. However, the manufacturer will no longer take responsibility for the loss of the sensory properties of the product (e.g., taste, smell, appearance, etc.). Nonetheless, because of the poor nature of the packages in terms of material, font selection, colour, and printing, most of the Made-in-Ghana products do not display this all-important information.

2.10. Storage, Preparation, and Cooking Information

Instructions for storage are required on certain food products in addition to the expiry date to ensure proper handling by consumers. Food poisoning bacteria can grow to levels that may cause illness if food is not stored correctly. These instructions should specify how to store the food once the package is opened. Although consumers purport to use storage conditions and preparation guidelines, it is only when they buy a new product that they become conscious of it. The study indicates that while consumers say that information on storage, preparation, and cooking information of food on labels is important, they may not often use this information. However, it is the responsibility of the package to provide it.

2.10.1. Product Printing

A lot of the packages identified as Made in Ghana do not have eye-catching typography that could make the brands stand out. This is typical of the brand or product name. This makes the packaging bad, and they also have bad printing on it, affecting the brand negatively. Customers will not like to buy the product if the printing on it is not legible, reliable, and honest. According to Leed (2022), 'Good packaging should contain the right type of typography that is catchy and appealing enough to get customers easily attracted'. All the necessary information can be printed on the boxes to make the boxes more interactive and reliable. Consumers' trust in the product heightens when the needed information is printed on the packaging box. The information must be authentic and honest to make the customers believe they are getting a reliable product. With honest information, one can establish a good relationship with the consumers for survival in the market.

2.10.2. Allergy Warnings

Other important information on food labels includes allergy warnings which help consumers with specific food allergies avoid those allergens that may be present in specific food products. Consumers with food allergies reported that they spend a lot more time shopping for groceries to find suitable products. However, they sometimes observed that the majority lacked information on potential allergens in the food products they would want to purchase and consume. Other observations indicated that food product labelling remains confusing to those with food allergies leading to risk-taking by either ignoring warning labels on foods or assuming that the wording reflects the gradation of risk. It is an indisputable fact that to sell food and drink products, the label must be clear and easy to read, permanent, easy to understand, easily visible, and not misleading. The package, of course, should display certain basic information and a list of ingredients. It has to show certain warnings and also follow special regulations for different products, including the labelling of wine.

However, most Ghanaian food products do not have these qualities. A lot of them do not even have packages. For those that have, the labels have faded because the prints on them are not permanent, as the inks used are not meeting the standards. The text which constitutes the information aspect of packaging and labelling is ghosting, a printing defect that makes reading very difficult.

3. Conclusions

- Ghanaians mostly patronize goods coming in from other countries, especially from some of the European countries like the UK, Germany, France, and countries like America, China, Japan, Australia, South Africa, etc., to the detriment of their product. This is not because of its quality but because of its attractive packaging that instantly lures or catches their attention.
- Bad packaging, such as single-use plastic bottle, damages the environment.
- We have all purchased an item and then marvelled sadly at the excessive and unnecessary packaging surrounding it. It is not exactly a rare occurrence.
- Many Ghanaian producers pay little attention to their product packaging. Some pay attention only to design but fail to realize how every aspect of packaging could affect their bottom line. They then wonder why they are having so many issues with the performance of their products and complaints from clients without considering that poor packaging can be disastrous for their small business.
- The look-alike nature of packaging is one of the major causes of trouble for the sales of made-in-Ghana products, as customers mistakenly purchase similar products instead of the intended ones.
- Poor packaging leads to worse things than a damaged ego because it leads to lost sales and revenue, and it is not wonderful why people's brains are measurably impacted when they look at product packaging. Attractive packaging often stimulates the brain's reward centres, but poor packaging design activates areas of the brain that are associated with negative emotions.
- Colours help to a great extent in deciding the success of any product. However, most of the colours and images in some of the package designs have faded, and others are pixelated, rendering the packages unattractive.

4. Recommendations

- In packaging food, for instance, producers must use packaging that is suitable for food use. Suitable packaging is marked 'for food contact' or has a symbol on it that looks like a wine glass and a fork (Ludin, 2020).
- Producers must make sure their products are visually distinct from the product of their foreign competitors and should not make the mistake of blending in.
- Producers in Ghana should be mindful of the customer experience from the beginning of the decision-making process. Give consumers a reason to remember their brand and seek them out. Testing out packaging options before committing to a full run should be a matter of concern to producers and their designers. This will let them choose a packaging option that will protect the product and will allow the consumers to open it without a rage-induced melt-down.
- To gain a competitive edge in the market, Ghanaian producers should employ professional designers (both graphic and structural designers) to design and produce outstanding packages that can distinguish themselves from their competitors' packaging so that consumers and customers will not overlook their products or choose their competitors' products by mistake.
- Using vibrant and bold colours can make the product stand out among other products. It helps the brand to have more sales revenue. Getting the attention of customers is easier when the colours match with their demands and taste.
- The impressions that the brand creates on customers' first encounter count so much. Therefore, the design of the product packages should be one that can stand out from the rest of the packs on the shelf, and the packaging design should also align with the branding.
- The shape of packaging can be used as a game-changer for the Ghanaian business market because materials, colors, design, and shape are critical factors that customers consider in judging a product. In view of this, producers of Made in Ghana Products should aim at innovative shapes that demand attention to make their packaging extremely functional.

5. References

- i. Cospes, A. (2022). *Desjardin*. Retrieved from Desjardin Website: <https://www.desjardin.fr/Forbes>, P. (2022, July 29). *Packaging Design: The Forgotten Marketing Medium*. Retrieved from Packhelp Website: <https://packhelp.com/packaging-design/>
- ii. Harms, Kroon, & Weigel. (1993). *Experience Technology Today*. New York: Glencoe.
- iii. Harrison, D. (2020, March 22). *Web Writers Spotlight*. Retrieved from Web Writers Spotlight Website: <https://webwritersspotlight.com/He>, J. (2014, September 05). *Prezi Inc*. Retrieved from Prezi Inc. Website: <https://www.prezi.com>
- iv. International Trade Centre. (2015, August 25). *International Trade Centre*. Retrieved from International Trade Centre Website: <http://www.intracen.org>
- v. Kerin, R. A., Hartley, S. W., & Rudelius, W. (2015). *Marketing 12th Edition*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- vi. Leed, M. (2022, June 30). *Thrive*. Retrieved from Thrive Global: <https://www.thriveglobal.com/solutions/>

- vii. London Catering Supplies. (2022, July 29). *London Catering Supplies*. Retrieved from London Catering Supplies Website: <https://www.lcsupplies.co.uk>
- viii. Ludin, K. (2020, January 17). *Packaging Strategies*. Retrieved from Packaging Strategies Websites: <https://www.packagingstrategies.com/articles/95315-packaging-design-mistakes-and-how-to-avoid-them>
- ix. Packsize. (2013, March 06). *Packsize*. Retrieved from Packsize: <https://www.packsize.com>
- x. Roberge, D. (2019, March 27). *Industrial Packaging*. Retrieved from Industrial Packaging Website: <https://www.industrialpackaging.com>
- xi. Sutevski, D. (2022, July 27). *Entrepreneurship in a Box*. Retrieved from Entrepreneurship in a Box Website: [https://www.entrepreneurshipinabox.com/Watts, F. \(1990\). Finding out about Packaging. London: Hobsons Publishing plc](https://www.entrepreneurshipinabox.com/Watts, F. (1990). Finding out about Packaging. London: Hobsons Publishing plc)