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PACKAGE FACTS

*Notes on
Labels, Cans, Cartons and Bottles*



By

GEORGE P. NELSON
70 Fifth Avenue, New York

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THE AUTHOR

Mr. Nelson's experience with the organizations listed below, qualifies him to discuss packages.

CARTONS AND BOXBOARD,

Fort Orange Paper Company.

CANS,

Manufacturer's Can Company.

LABELS,

Karle Lithograph Company.

BOTTLES,

Glass Container Ass'n of America.

CLOSURES FOR BOTTLES,

*Secretary of Cap and Closure Division,
Glass Container Association.*

His articles on packages have appeared in such publications as *The Business Digest*, *Canning Age*, *National Lithographer*, *Pacific Bottler*, *Glass Container* and others.

IF I were going into business again and had only \$100, I'd spend \$99 getting the right kind, design and color of a package. That's how important I consider it."

—Schoolmaster's Classroom, *Printers Ink*, Aug. 15, 1918

PREFACE

“Package Facts” is not a handbook on packages; it is the off-spring of a note book, compiled during my ten years of package experience.

No attempt was made to arrange the material logically. You may find some experience gained as reel-boy on a box-board machine abruptly followed by amplified notes made by me at a Washington conference on label requirements or an observation as tin can salesman may be followed by comments on my survey of our hundred New York delicatessens.

Some one of those disconnected paragraphs may suggest to you a weakness to be guarded against or a strength to be capitalized.

The niche this little volume might properly occupy is admirably summarized by a manufacturing chemist who packages more than a hundred drug preparations. He writes:

“Unconsciously as I read I kept applying your thoughts to our own products, and it is easy to see that such an application is very much worth while, especially so if it were done in advance, before marketing a product.”

Perhaps the thoughts expressed in the pages to follow may help clarify the thoughts of others and thus contribute in some degree to a better appreciation of the package.

GEORGE P. NELSON.

New York, 1922.

ESSENTIALS ON THE LABEL

The advertising manager of a firm which is nationally known for its grape products writes as follows concerning an article published by the author: "We like to see ourselves as others see us and the criticisms of the 14 labels pictured have been very helpful in looking at our own problem from a new angle. For instance, we find that in the 14 labels pictured the average number of words used is 27 whereas, our label with 76 words tops the list. Of course, a number of other bottlers may be using back labels."

The last sentence is the crux of his letter. In addition to "back" labels he might have enumerated bottles with blown-in lettering, neck labels, lithographed metal or paper caps, printed bottle cartons, booklets, inserts or other devices used to keep the main label free for essentials.

A well thought out package if possible relegates non-essentials to some place other than the main label; the government recognizes the need for and permits the use of devices other than the main label. As yet, no printed regulation has been issued but the Bureau of Chemistry, which is charged with enforcement of the Pure Food and Drugs Act, states in a letter that with certain minor limitations any wording blown-in a bottle or appearing on its cap may be

considered as part of the main label. Until that interpretation appears in printed form the bureau should be consulted concerning its application.

Any definition of essentials in label wording is impossible unless two packages can be found which are marketed under identical conditions.

It might be pertinent in a discussion of label essentials to call attention to the Jonteel label, which pictures an extraordinary bird and limits the wording to "Odor Jonteel."

It is almost unbelievable that so simple a design should require two years for execution—that statement is made on the authority of the vice-president of the United Drug Company.

Why obscure necessities with a lot of extraneous matter which might possibly help if it were read but which probably prevents proper display of essentials?

HARD CANDY IN TIN OR GLASS?

The Charms Company had decided to add to their line a large twenty-five cent package.

Differences of opinion within the organization led to a test to determine whether the new package should be of glass or tin.

At first glance it would seem to be the height of folly to hide those luscious squares of hard candy behind non-transparent walls. Yet that is exactly what was done, and done in the face of an established demand for hard candy in glass.

Precedent counts for little in package design; generalities may prove costly.

Glass certainly makes an effective display container for hard candy, but with glass it was not possible to reproduce exactly that well-known little paper package of Charms, millions of which had up to this time been distributed.

Decorated tin could be shaped to perfectly resemble the small package. The "family" resemblance was the determining factor; the tin reproduction was immediately accepted as the "big brother" of the popular five-cent package while the glass jar was accorded the status of a poor relation and barely managed to mount the very lowest rung of the ladder of popular recognition and good will.

HALF-TONES ON CARTONS

The wholesale grocery firm of L. F. Hersh & Brother packages under their own brand, the usual wide variety of foodstuffs.

Their containers, which range in size from the bulky cornflake carton to the small spice box, were all of clay-coated chip box-board. That paper furnished a perfect printing surface for the fine screen half-tone of the baby which is the Hersh trademark.

At first the carton requirements were small but as the quantities increased the clay coated paper ceased to be an item—it assumed alarming proportions. The expense finally forced the use of a patent coated chip board requiring a coarse screen half-tone for reproducing the baby.

In place of the life-like and fat, smiling baby was a “muddy” reproduction little better than those found in newspaper portraits.

RELATING THE PACKAGE AND TRADE NAME

A long record of court actions to establish trade name infringement is further proof of the value of advertising.

The infringers may be entirely innocent but more frequently they are attempting to secure to their product the good will built up by the original.

The public could hardly be expected to differentiate between "Colax" and "Calox" or "Ceresota" and "Cresota." A similarity less marked, is noted when "Autola" and "Autodo" or "Kolodont" and "Sozodont" are compared.

Such trade names as George Washington, Tuxedo and Little Brown Jug are perfectly legitimate infringements because any good will they thus secure to their products is not obtained at the expense of a competing article. These latter three names profit by the reputation of an American president, the garb worn at gatherings of men and the name of a well-known novel.

The "Little Brown Jug" deserves special mention. It is unfortunate that two masterpieces of package design should be forced to compete in the syrup industry; in some respects the "Little Brown Jug" excels the justly famous "Log Cabin."

Paid advertising went far toward making the "Log Cabin" famous but Meridith Nicholson's novel "The Little Brown Jug of Kildare" partly accounts for the sense of familiarity experienced when the "Little

Brown Jug" is mentioned. That entertaining piece of fiction can be found in thousands of homes and public libraries; the story continues to indelibly impress it's title on new generations of readers.

Meridith Nicholson unknowingly gave to a table syrup valued advantages which usually must be paid for in cash. Paid space advertising has as one of it's aims the building up of that sense of familiarity which is otherwise known as goodwill.

If the product and organization back of the "Little Brown Jug" have the same degree of excellence as is found in the name and package there is another niche in the hall of business fame about to be filled.

On the theory that "advertising helps those who help themselves" the "Little Brown Jug," with its soundly laid ground work, appears to be ripe for using that great hastener of success—advertising.

There is a point which syrup packers generally recognize and other industries almost universally neglect. "Log Cabin" syrup is contained in a miniature log cabin; "Pitcher" syrup appears in a decorated tin pitcher, with spout and handle; "Little Brown Jug" syrup is packed in a brown china jug. Those three trade names are permissible in that they are not descriptive of the product which is syrup; however,

the names are descriptive of the containers and the containers are so closely associated with the product as to be generally considered as the product itself.

A negative presentation of the last mentioned point will perhaps make it more intelligible. Suppose "Log Cabin" syrup were put up in an ordinary bottle; thus packed it would step down into mediocrity.

Congratulations on their progressiveness are here extended to the syrup packers.

MANUFACTURING ECONOMY AND PACKAGES

A packer of honey and syrup who uses tin and glass containers for his products writes as follows: "We are now engaged in revising our labels to get a better display by changing design and perhaps coloring differently. . . .could you refer us to some specialist or label artist? *We would not want this to be a label manufacturer's representative*, as they seem to be prejudiced on certain colors and etc. Can you help us in this matter?"

It is the old story—the regiment judged on the conduct of its individual soldiers. Label manufacturers are here condemned because a short-sighted

salesman sold his goods on price instead of holding out for quality and individuality of design.

The writer of that letter was sold an atrocious label which was so colored that it could be printed on the same sheet with the similarly colored labels of a half a dozen other manufacturers. Quality was again sacrificed on the altar of price.

It is of course important that packages should be produced economically but why produce in quantity and at a low cost a package which fails utterly to accomplish its purpose? If economy is sought spend \$200, or if necessary \$1000 for the design which is an initial expense and does not go one forever—five colors like the brook do go on forever. There are many two and three color packages on the market which tower over their weak five color neighbors; two extra colors will rapidly eat up the \$1000 it might be necessary to spend for designing a superior package which fifty years from now could still be printed in three colors.

There are manufacturers and agencies competent to design packages but money must be spent if it is to be done properly. Unfortunately for business the package is one of the first considerations of a new venture; new firms are too frequently handicapped by lack of funds so it is a great temptation to them to

avoid the initial cost of research and good art and favor as a substitute, a lavish and perhaps unintelligent use of color which adds to the cost only a few cents per thousand packages. The few cents per thousand for superfluous color is the royalty demanded by the printing presses on every thousand packages for the generations of the package's existence.

WASHING BOTTLES

A manufacturer who distributes more than a thousand products has a leader which is sold in glass jars.

It astonished the author to find that the two sizes of jars were received in open crates and filled without washing. Bottles which are corked as they emerge from the high temperature of the glasslehr and immediately sealed in cartons or shipping cases might properly be treated as sterile but glass which has been exposed to contamination in freight cars and handling most certainly can not be considered as clean.

CONTRAST AND PACKAGES

A study of merchandising conditions is essential to the creation of art such as is found on highly success-

ful packages. A design which is strikingly effective on the artists sketch board may prove to be weak when it is later placed on the package. Or, if the design instead of weakening the package, improves it, there is always the chance that the completed package may suffer by comparison with the competing packages which are it's neighbors on the retailer's shelf.

There are two orange colored labels on the market which admirably illustrate the relation of the design to the package and the relation of the package to it's competitors.

One of those orange labels ignores the container on which it appears and for this reason might be called a "sketch board" label; the other takes advantage of a similarity in competing packages and reflects a careful study of the conditions under which the product is retailed.

The Whistle label is solid orange and is trimmed sparingly with dark blue. The orange label blends perfectly with the orange color, which the beverage gives the transparent bottle. Whistle is "cloudy in the bottle"; if the drink was clear there would not be the same solidity to the background and a stronger contrast would be furnished.

A reversal of the color scheme on the Whistle label

would perhaps improve the appearance of the entire package. A dark solid blue label, orange trimmed, would stand in sharp contrast to the orange drink in the background.

Notable for its effective use of contrast is the Cutex label which is a glistening patch of black on the dull frosted bottle. So marked is the contrast that the Cutex label appears to detach itself from the bottle. The designer of the Cutex package utilized the contrast afforded by dull and high finish, as well as the more usual contrast of color.

Another contrast of finish, although the reverse of the combination employed by Cutex, is the flat color Temtor label on it's glistening jar.

There is one other package to which tribute should here to be paid; the Nazma package is a masterpiece of contrast and harmony. Nazma hand lotion is sold under a simple lavender label, but a distinctive three color package is obtained by displaying the emerald green contents in a transparent bottle crowned with a white enameled cap. The bright green lotion tastefully sets off the lavender label and the whole package is enlivened by the white cap.

In planning the Nazma package, its cap, bottle, label and contents were so related that each contributes

it's share to the general excellence. It might be said that the Whistle package fails to recognize this essential relation of the elements.

Returning to the other orange label. Various brands of chocolate bars, like other merchandise displayed in retail stores, are usually grouped for the convenience of clerks. Among the drab purples, blues and browns of it's neighbors Touraine's bright orange wrapper is instantly noticed and identified.

The artist who designed the wrapper for Touraine chocolate recognized and took advantage of the retailer's custom of grouping like merchandise. Do not underestimate the value it is, to have your product instantly seen on a newstand or other place where bits of confectionery are traded for the change returned to the purchaser of a daily paper.

A busy newstand is hardly the place for deliberate choice—an approaching train or trolley causes patrons to make hasty selections; such haste benefits those packages which are brightly colored eye-magnets.

BOX BOARD WHICH CRACKS

Box board which has dried out, is short fibered or of inferior quality will frequently crack even though

it is properly scored on the cutting and creasing machines.

Artists who design cartons should avoid placing solid bands of color where the creases fall. On a white surface cracks are likely to pass unnoticed but when an inked surface breaks and shows white through the color, the package might well be considered unfit for use.

Good quality stock may be cracked by unnecessarily heavy pressure in the automatic glueing machines.

THE PACKAGE—REPEAT ORDERS

A fundamental in package merchandising is perhaps pointed out by the following episode.

A salesman for the A. B. Dick Company sold the author a mimeograph. After the machine had been installed several days and before its novelty and unusual advantages had become commonplace, the salesman again called.

That salesman timed his second call well. I appreciated his machine but up to that time my appreciation had not been expressed. I realize now that he skill-

fully led me on to tell him why I liked his machine—I warmed up to him because his further interest, after the sale had been made, was unnecessary.

In telling the salesman why I liked his machine, I fixed it's advantages firmly in my mind; on several occasions recently, in fact, more than two years after my purchase, I have praised to others the A. B. Dick Company, it's product and Mr. F—— their salesman.

Note that after the sale was made Mr. F—— continued to answer questions, offer helpful suggestions and most important, he *asked questions*. His questions tended to fix the merit of his product firmly in the mind of his prospect.

Whether packaged goods or machines are involved the situation remains unchanged. Immediately after the sale is made, at a time when the buyer is thoroughly sold he will welcome an opportunity to justify and explain his purchase to others. Questions at this critical time tend to clarify and make distinct in the buyer's mind the advantages of the product. Questions at that time are better strategy than further praise.

The sale of every ten-cent package of cereal can not be followed up by a personal call. A package product unaccompanied by a salesman at the critical period immediately following the sale must depend on

it's package to answer questions, give directions and *ask questions*. Questions crystallize and cause the expression of favorable opinions which have been subconsciously formed.

Ask questions on folders, inserts and other literature which accompanies the package. All through the various stages of package design it should be borne in mind that the package or some adjunct must be counted on to maintain the favorable opinion already formed. After the sale is made, in that period of heightened interest every effort should be made to change favorable interest to expressed enthusiasm.

Some very interesting data would be furnished if it were possible to depict graphically the varying degrees of interest shown by a person, first as a prospective buyer and later as a purchaser. As interest is gradually aroused by publication advertising, circulars, posters or salesmen the curve ascends to the point where the sale is made; the ascending line represents doubts eliminated and questions answered.

Apply this all to packages. After the sale is made the package is alone with an interested audience and repeat orders are the goal. Make the package do it's share to bring in the "repeats"; personality, warmth and friendliness are today expressed in cold type and illustration.

Package design should present a problem sufficiently enticing to inspire any advertising or sales manager.

STRENGTH VS. INDIVIDUALITY

Questions of package strength seldom arise in connection with the use of tin cans; strength assumes greater importance when paper is used in the form of cartons; while in bottle design strength should never be neglected. Only bottle strength is here discussed.

A bottle's shape is of course dictated by a series of considerations; some of which are: character of contents; conditions under which used; individuality or beauty of container.

That characteristic of glass which permits it to be molded to any shape, enables the buyer of bottles to select or create any design; the selection may be based on reason or it may be merely whim.

Corrugations, flutings, panels and other devices appear on bottles because they are demanded by bottlers. Delicate, unusual and easily identified shapes are thus developed.

There is no question but that distinctive containers have sales and advertising value but it is worth while

to weigh any advantage thus gained against a possible sacrifice of strength or ease of washing both of which concern the mechanics of producing and distributing.

Angles, shoulders and other irregularities, in the bottle's surface create weak spots and cause increased breakage in the processes of washing, filling, capping, labelling, packing and shipping.

The straight sided round tumbler is an ideal container from the standpoint of strength. Here is given the result of a test made on jelly tumblers.

A case containing 24 five ounce jelly glasses arranged in four rows of six and packed in an old re-shipping case of 175-pound double faced board, was submitted to 200 falls in a testing drum without breakage occurring. After that test the case was dropped from a height of 36 inches three different times—still there was no breakage.

However jelly glasses are hardly proper for liquids which must be poured so we have all the many varieties of narrow-mouth ware. Narrow-mouth bottles can be strengthened by eliminating shoulders and gradually tapering the sides to the base.

GAS PRESSURE

Temperature variation and time have had disastrous effects on packaged products.

During the hot weather in May, 1922, retailers in all sections of the country angrily protested to the packer of a bottled disinfectant that his goods were exploding on the store shelves and in store windows.

That trouble, which resulted in a tremendous loss of goodwill might have been caused by insufficient head-space between the level of liquid and the bottle's cork.

If an increased amount of head-space, to permit gas expansion, does not entirely correct such difficulties it will be found that heating the liquid prior to sealing the bottles will help to remedy the trouble. A liberal estimate of the maximum temperature, which the package can be expected to later encounter, should be set as a filling temperature.

Fermentation in tightly sealed containers should also be carefully guarded against. A packer in the Brooklyn Bush Terminal had a bitter experience with grape extract, sold in waxed paper containers. The seams of the paper container could not resist the pressure created by the gases given off in the process of fermentation.

PRODUCTS THAT BLEACH IN GLASS

By the use of glazed paper or other materials, it is possible to adjust the glass container to products which are bleached by the action of sunlight. Chocolate, which is thus affected, is packaged in the form of "shot" or bits of pencil lead about an eighth of an inch long. These "shot" are effective on such confections as whipped cream or cake icing and their appearance is so appetizing that an effort should be made to adapt the glass container to them.

A bottle carton would prevent bleaching of the chocolate in the store and would be discarded in the kitchen; thus the carton protects in the retail store and discloses in the kitchen where sunlight becomes a relatively unimportant factor because the "shot" revealed are rapidly consumed.

This unusual form of chocolate displayed in transparent glass on the pantry shelf suggests for itself a variety of uses.

CONTAINERS THAT ANTAGONIZE

A spoon is of course, the proper and most convenient implement for removing horse-radish from a bottle. Why then should the National Grocery Com-

pany adopt a glass jar with a mouth too narrow to admit a tablespoon and a depth too great to allow a teaspoon to reach the bottom?

Jules Ferond's large hair preparation bottle and the one and three-quarters ounce tin of Prince Albert tobacco are less pronounced examples of impractical containers. The hair preparation is of the consistency of vaseline and the tobacco must be loosened, yet both are packed in containers deeper than any but the very longest fingers. It is trifling but annoying habits in people that cause discord. These three packages which always resist delivery of the last inch of horse-radish, tobacco and hair preparation are "nagging" their friendly consumers.

To iron out annoyances and create packages which have publicity value because of their convenience has been one of the aims of Colgate & Company. Consider three of the most frequently encountered members of the Colgate family: the refill shaving stick which "screws in just as the electric light bulb does"; the tooth paste that "comes out in a ribbon and lies flat on the brush"; F A B in the handy slotted carton. Colgate's advertising has stressed convenience of container rather than any special formula for the contents of those containers.

LABELS AND CARTONS THAT FADE

George Washington Coffee, which is put up in tins, was found in the window of a New York grocery store labeled in faded blue and red.

The trouble has undoubtedly since been remedied but that lot of poor quality labels give a counterfeit appearance to a well-known product.

Sinclair & Valentine and probably other manufacturers of printing inks test their colors for permanency. A powerful light with a daylight equivalent makes it possible to determine the length of time a certain color or quality of ink will retain its original appearance in strong sunlight.

Responsible package manufacturers protect their customers by using fast colors for box board and printing ink.

LEGITIMATE FIELDS FOR PAPER CONTAINERS

The Truxton Dairy Company of New York City sold milk in paper containers for three weeks early in the year 1920. While the return to bottles is not accounted for it is safe to assume that the experiment was not successful.

Milk requires a container which is adaptable to sterilization by heat, which is strong enough to resist the weight of ice and which is so constructed as to permit rapid handling by machinery. That bottles show the cream line and are re-used an average of 25 times by a New York milk distributor makes their position as a milk receptacle more secure.

IF LIGHT CAUSES DETERIORATION

Sunlight, which is believed to have a slight purifying effect on milk, quickly causes deterioration in hydrogen peroxide. The full strength of that antiseptic is maintained by the use of brown glass.

STOCK LABELS—PENNY WISE POLICY

In the interest of economy new products sometimes appear under a stock label.

A stock label brands as mediocre, handicaps and hangs a mill-stone on the neck of a good product. This mill-stone must be struck off before any real success can be attained.

The black and white script label used by Hester Price has about it an air of dignity and good taste

which cannot fail to impress. Her label, simple as it is, has character—the stock label printed in red, two shades of blue and gold lacks character.

To furnish Peter's Jam or Fritzs' Vinegar a cheap name-plate, it is only necessary to change several words on one of these stock designs.

The resultant labels serve the purpose for which they were intended almost as well as do the illustrations which appear in poorly edited humorous magazines. Those magazines buy any rejected art work which is cheap—it must be cheap—and employ men to find or write jokes to fit each of the otherwise useless illustrations.

Stock labels and those illustrated jokes fall so far short as to be almost pathetic; they both have nothing to recommend them except cheapness and like most bargains are not quite useless.

ON BOX-BOARD COLOR AND FINISH

The degree of whiteness found in patent-coated chip box-board generally varies in inverse ratio to the finish.

A high finish is secured by increasing the pressure at the calender rolls on the paper machine. Highly

calendered paper furnishes an excellent printing surface but the color tends toward gray.

It is possible to secure a dead white color by sacrificing a high finish.

A dead white paper is desirable if its surface is to remain largely exposed; the highly finished paper with its slightly grayish tint should be used for ink spreads. A gray tint will pass unnoticed when spread with ink and uncovered only where lettering or decoration appears.

MORE THAN A NAME-PLATE

Labels are not merely name-plates serving to identify and vouch for their products. Nor are labels limited to their service as attractors of attention and mediums for printed salesmanship.

The "Cresca" labels actually makes a mechanical improvement in its container. Asparagus is put up in glass jars under the "Cresca" label. The label is so placed on the side wall of the jar that it can only be read when the jar is held bottom up. Displayed in this reverse position the tender tips are by this ingenious labelling kept at the top of the package and the weight of the stalk is placed upon the tough butt end.

Nujol's label is pasted on its bottle face down. Such a unique arrangement not only fixes the package in the consumers mind but also demands that the label be read through the walls of the bottle and most important—through the oil itself, thus forcefully demonstrating its perfect transparency.

Neck labels are frequently and legitimately used to conceal the empty space which is caused by contraction after sealing, containers of varying capacity or other mechanical difficulty.

WHAT SIZE CARTON?

Assume the product to be packaged has a cubic capacity of 100 inches.

A carton 10x10x1 or 5x5x4 will furnish that capacity. The 10x10x1 size gives a display surface of 100 square inches, a most desirable condition in that the package would appear to be larger than the ordinary corn flake carton.

The 5x5x4 size gives only 25 square inches of display surface but its advantages are apparent: it approaches the perfect cube which assures strength and requires lighter weight box-board; has 14% less

surface area thus further reducing the amount of paper required ; has greater stability and manufactures more economically.

Of course the comparison here drawn, is an extreme one.

STRENGTH OF GLASS AND TIN

An ordinary green soda bottle has withstood a lateral pressure of more than 2000 pounds and a horizontal pressure of almost 10,000 pounds. Such pressure resistance is not usually required of glass.

It is the impact, not steady pressure which is fatal to glass. A sixty pound blow shattered the soda bottle previously mentioned.

An unusual opportunity for the bottle is created in the packing of cement for roofing material. A quantity of cement is packed in a round container and used as a core for each roll of roofing.

Any shock those containers might be subjected to is absorbed by the many convolutions of roofing material so ability to withstand heavy compression is the principal requirement of these cement containers.

Tin containers, which are in general use for roofing cement will not fracture under impact but under the heavy pressure endured by rolls of roofing in shipment there is the tendency of tin to buckle and permit leakage.

The opposing characteristics of glass and tin, here brought out, speak eloquently for the possibilities of each when properly used.

GENERIC WORDS CONDEMNED

Recently a Pittsburgh packer received a summons to appear before the New York food authorities to show why he should not be prosecuted for violation of certain state laws. Their alleged offense concerned the label on their sweet pickle relish; the word "vegetables," which is prohibited as a generic term, was used.

A proper description of the pickle relish would be "Cucumbers, peppers" and an exact statement of other ingredients.

PLAY BIG WITH PACKAGE MEN

It does not pay to draw up rigid carton specifications which are believed to insure delivery of perfect

cartons. Even the most responsible manufacturers resent such tactics; it is human nature to take advantage of the loop-holes that must sooner or later occur in the buying of made-to-order products, such as cartons.

Box-board quality and thickness most frequently cause friction between manufacturers and buyers of packages.

An excellent opportunity to illustrate the use of too heavy box-board is afforded by the "R—" Spark plug carton. Box-board known as single manila-lined chip .030 inches in thickness was used for the R— carton which is very little larger than the penny match box. Board about one half the thickness used in those spark plug cartons suffices to make the one-pound sugar carton.

If board calipering .013 inches could be used for spark plugs, although that weight might be a trifle light, two million cartons could be made from exactly the same quantity of board as would be required for one million of the .030 thickness.

True, it is better to err on the side of safety, but to double the board weight purchases safety at rather a high figure.

Another troublesome point is box-board quality. There should be a new name coined for certain grades of paper—they might well be called “sponge” board.

“Sponge” board can be identified by its porous and lightly calendered surface, and an entire absence of that tin-like snap found in good box-board.

A quantity of “sponge” board which calipers .019 inches will make 1383 cartons of a certain size while exactly the same quantity of strong fibred snappy board, also calipering .019 will make not more than 1086 cartons of an identical size.

The 1086 cartons are strong and first quality while the 1383 are inferior. Such differences in quality are responsible for the slightly higher prices sometimes quoted by responsible manufacturers.

The caliper or thickness is important but no more so than quality and finish. Those technicalities cause reputable package manufacturers to lose business to mushroom competition which for very good reasons can underbid the long established and therefor responsible manufacturer.

Irresponsible manufacturers complying with the letter of specifications may legally fulfill their contract with an inferior product while on the other hand the old time firm with a long record of fair dealing

loses the order because the spirit of the contract is taken into consideration. It is the policy of the time-tried firm to give a customer the benefit of the doubt and furnish only such material as will perfectly fulfill all requirements.

“CHEVY CHASE” AND MAYONNAISE ARE NOT SYNONYMS

Mayonnaise in glass but completely covered by a label which prevents recognition of the product should be prominently marked “Mayonnaise.”

It is appropriate that a salad dressing packed in the District of Columbia should be named “Chevy Chase,” but it is a mistake to draw on its label the word “Mayonnaise” in high, narrow and fancy lettering which cannot be read at a distance of several paces.

Too much is taken for granted by the owner of that label. The name “Chevy Chase” may eventually mean “Mayonnaise” to every person in Washington and its environs but until it does the word “Mayonnaise” should be just as conspicuous as “Chevy Chase”—on the Del Monte label the words “Current Jelly” are more prominent than is the name “Del Monte.”

DISTINCTIVE FORM AIDS RECOGNITION

In designing packages it is well to remember that that form is recognizable when lettering is illegible.

An envelope sticker prepared by the Glass Container Association included a slogan and an illustration showing eight nationally advertised products in bottles and jars. Of the eight packages just two could be recognized when reduced to fit that postage stamp size of sticker.

The Clicquot Club esquimaux and keystone shaped Heinz label could be distinguished and had to be marred with a cold-chisel on thirty sets of nickel steel electros because the association did not deem it proper that these well known packages should appear in their publicity material.

Shape and form have a greater recognition value than wording or color scheme. This fact can be profitably applied to the design of packages.

Del Monte's shield permits the use of large lettering for the words "Current Jelly." The shield plus the red and green color scheme assure instantaneous recognition to that family of canned fruits and vegetables. Those two devices tell the consumer that the container is "Del Monte," thus leaving to illustration and lettering, the task of telling the public that the package contains peas or peaches.

It will be found that the color scheme and shield furnish such perfect identification as to permit the words "Currant Jelly" to appear in larger type than does the firm name.

"DISAPPEARING" CORKS

The ill-fitting cork which sinks below the bottle's lip each time it is replaced must be classed as a public nuisance. Frequent searches for a suitable cork remover have not heightened the author's regard for Milk of Magnesia packed under the A. D. S. label.

ACCURATELY CUT CARTONS AND LABELS

Only labels and cartons which are accurately cut to a fraction of an inch will permit capacity production on automatic machines.

A manufacturing confectioner, accustomed to buy 150,000,000 labels on one order, was forced to change his source of supply when old fashioned hand methods went into the discard and automatic machines were substituted.

Minute variation in label size caused the machines to jam, resulting in idleness for machines and employees.

Three cornered arguments involving the label manufacturer, the machine maker and packer can be avoided; the machine designer should be required to draw up label specifications showing maximum and minimum size which will properly operate in the machine.

There should be frequent inspection and rejection of those lots of labels which do not come up to standard.

WHY DOES THE WESTERN UNION USE BLUE AND WHITE?

Perhaps there is some significance for package designers in the fact that the Western Union and Postal Telegraph companies use for their signs a white letter on a blue ground.

Extreme legibility is one requirement of these signs, which even in rural communities must prominently designate the telegraph office for travelers and others addicted to rapid communication. The numbered signs used to designate New York streets employ the same color scheme.

Black on a white background furnishes the greatest color contrast with violet on yellow in second place. Color contrast is, of course an aid to legibility.

Colgate's new shaving cream carton is banded in two shades of blue and its lettering appears in white on these bands. Long distance legibility might be a minor consideration but for the fact that packages, live for generations and to be successful must be seen by millions of persons.

SNOW UNDER A BLACK CLOTH

It is a well known fact that snow, under a black or colored cloth will melt faster than that under a colorless material.

Two bottles—one clear and the other of colored glass were filled with the same liquid. The two were exposed to the sun an equal length of time; the temperature of the colored bottle's contents was found to average three to five degrees higher. Heat hastens bacteria growth so in this respect colored glass is a drawback. Visual inspection for cleanliness is prevented—another disadvantage of non-transparent glass.

PACKAGES HAVE HORIZONS

Round packages have horizons beyond which it is impossible to see. It is a common occurrence to see a

person turning a round package from side to side, so that the directions or other wording may be read. Type lines are set too wide.

It is ridiculous to suppose that any user of cartons so letters his package that it must be turned to be read—each of the four sides and two ends carry a complete message. The users of round containers are the offenders.

Diamond "W" gilt paint and other products in round containers are so labelled that when viewed from one angle they present incomplete words and sentences.

By panelling a label which is to be used on a curved surface it is possible to add tremendously to its display value.

AVOID FINE REGISTER

In the cutting and creasing of cartons fine register is an even more difficult process than printing press register. Artists should recognize this limitation and avoid the use of panels or other decoration which closely parallels the scores and outer edges of the carton blank.

An eighth of an inch should be sufficient margin between all printing and scores.

THERE ARE MANY VARIETIES OF BEANS

Canners have been prosecuted for using stock labels which do not correctly picture the contents of their cans. The family tree of the lowly bean is a wide-spreading one and Uncle Sam's inspectors are enthusiastic students of bean genealogy.

The government will not permit apparently harmless misrepresentation—illustrations on can labels must correctly picture the variety, size and color of the product contained, and not some closely related variety.

OVER-WORKED RED

Of 229 packages chosen at random all but 61 employed red as part of their color scheme.

PEARS APPEAR UNRIPE IN GREEN GLASS

An uneven distribution of manganese in molten glass will result in some bottles having a pinkish tinge while others from the same batch will be greenish in

color. Milk seen through greenish glass has a curious and rather unpleasant appearance and pears thus viewed look unripe.

ONE SOURCE OF SUPPLY

“Not responsible for delays due to strikes, fires or other circumstances over which we have no control” is a clause, which appears as a warning on the letter-heads of firms, manufacturing packages.

In splitting large package orders among two or more firms there is everything to gain and nothing to lose. Small buyers must, of course, sacrifice the lower price if they decide to maintain more than one source of supply.

CELLULOID LABELS

Celluloid, which lends itself to lithography perhaps better than paper does, is sometimes used for labels. It's appearance can be renewed with a damp cloth and it's perfect surface shows color printing to advantage.

The manufacturer of Herpicide uses celluloid labels for those of his bottles which are refilled many times ;

the high labor cost of hand application (only two gross of bottles can be labelled by one girl in a day) can be divided by the number of times the bottle is refilled.

METAL AND GLASS AS HEAT CONDUCTORS

Certain products such as fruits, vegetables and meats must be subjected to sterilization by heat after being sealed in cans or jars.

The rate at which the heat penetrates to the center of a package is largely controlled by the character of the contents although the material of which the container is made does have an effect on this rate.

String beans which are packed in a free flowing liquid are processed more rapidly in the tin can while corn cut from the cob and of a viscous consistency reaches a given temperature more rapidly in the glass jar.

In heating the advantages of tin are partly secured to the glass jar, which generally has metal cap, by inverting the jar so that the contents come in contact with the metal.

CAPS AND BOTTLES

Because of storage limitations bottles are stocked in smaller quantities than are their less bulky caps. In consequence it may be found that a quantity of caps are on hand when the bottle stock is exhausted; perhaps price or other factors makes it advisable to change the source of supply for bottles. The new bottles must fit the old caps.

The bottle manufacturers association is making progress in standardization of cap and glass finish, but until the work is further advanced the packers themselves should take all the necessary precautions to prevent misfits.

The U. S. government considered it necessary in testing bottle capacities to examine 50 samples picked at random. This would seem to be a wise precaution in the problem of relating the cap to the bottle.

LIGHT BORDERS REDUCE APPARENT SIZE

A light color border at the extreme top, bottom or sides of a label or carton design tends to decrease the apparent size of a dark colored package. The dark body of the label appears to mark the outline of the package, creating an impression that the over-all

size does not extend beyond the limits of the dark color. A large appearance is most certainly desirable so it is well to extend the body color the full height and width or employ a border darker than the containers body coloring.

A SIMPLE BOTTLE TEST

The United States Bureau of Standards bases its specifications for glass on the boiling test. Glass that has not developed cracks or flaws at the end of six hours boiling is regarded as being of good quality.



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