

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Constantly surrounded by advertisements and branding in today's highly complex and aggressive world, consumers are bombarded with an abundant amount of options. With countless companies vying for customer attention and brand loyalty, it becomes necessary for brands to stand out from others by gaining a competitive advantage through differentiation. Packaging is a strong judgmental factor when an individual decides on a product, making it highly crucial especially when attaining first-time buyers. While browsing the aisles of a department store, how a product is displayed is essentially what shoppers have to use when assessing a product and its desirability. This study asks the question: How can the packaging industry communicate to and ultimately attract customers solely based on visual appeal? When constructing a marketing strategy, brands must give careful deliberation to three important facets in order to gain a strong competitive advantage: packaging, placement, and the psychology of buying.

The obvious starting point to drawing in a customer involves the elements of the package itself. Several purchases are made solely based on the container's individual characteristics, differentiating it from similar products. Convenience resulting from shape or material is a huge factor for individuals when purchase decisions are made. Faced with comparable products and price, customers are forced to base their choice on the practicality of one package over a competitor, emphasizing the importance of structural design.

However, with the increasing amount of options for purchase, it is no longer good enough to simply aim to stand out on the shelf. Where a product is located within a store has a big impact on the number of passer-bys. More importantly, placement can mean the difference between a

mere glance at a product and a true consideration for purchase. Today, companies are going as far as creating a distinctive setting and backdrop to draw attention to its particular package. This initiative can be seen through point-of-purchase marketing, often referred to as POP displays, representing the up and coming side to packaging. These displays include the big and exciting cutouts seen in grocery stores nationwide. POP displays are a means of securing crucial store placement.

Along with packaging construction and store placement, a marketing team must also take into account further aesthetics which affect an individual's inner feelings toward a product. Customer psychology is strongly important in advertising and drawing in customers. By recognizing the wants and desires of the target market, companies are able to deliver clients with packages satisfying these needs. For example, a shopper at Food-4-Less most likely has different concerns than one shopping at Trader Joe's. Food-4-Less is built on the guarantee of low prices and that is what chiefly attracts their customer base. Conversely, Trader Joe's customers are more likely interested with the uniqueness and distinction of products. Packaging becomes most important in stores with this environment where purchases are not based on price differentiation alone. Color psychology is also essential in packaging communication. Usage of color is crucial in how it affects potential customers' emotions. Color selection is key in grabbing one's attention and drawing his or her eyes away from competing products. Different colors bring out wide ranges of emotions and desires, especially in the food sector. Depending on the type of product, packages should include ranges of color specific to the emotions with which they are intended to impact. It can be the determinant in whether a customer merely glances at a product versus whether they stop and pick it up off the shelf. A high percentage of what people pick up, they end up carrying

with them to the register for purchase, signaling a successful communication from the package to the consumer.

The purpose of this study is to show the potential that strategic packaging communication can have on attracting a larger client base. Through revealing current packaging innovations and the psychology behind it, a company should be informed on how to appeal to the maximum amount of customers. This increase in retained clientele will inevitably lead to an increase in number of sales and profits.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The buying habits of the consumer weigh heavily on the distinctiveness of the packaging according to psychological studies. Dr. Hugh Phillips, De Monfort University senior lecturer and Visuality research company director, suggests, “Once in-store the consumer’s buying decisions will depend largely on the messages they see there.” Research by the Henley Centre goes as far as suggesting that this percentage of in-store purchase decisions is as high as 73 percent. “People shop on auto-pilot. When we shop, we process and reject 95 percent of the information we are presented with because we have to,” declares Phillips. Therefore, the challenge for brands becomes ensuring its package is one of the 5 percent of which customers consider, rather than the immediately discarded majority (Murphy).

Forced to make a decision quickly, customers look for clues in packaging, subconsciously determining its value in a nanosecond. Amanda Connolly, manager for Coley Porter Bell, an identity design consultant, states, “Before they go shopping, people will say that packaging makes no difference to their choice of brand, but once in store, they say all kinds of things that make it clear that it does.” Ultimately, the pack is the brand symbol. Rob Gray, managing director of integrated agency Mercier Gray, confirms this notion by indicating that “People often don’t go into a supermarket looking for a brand name on a pack. They know that the one they want is the orange one or the one in the square box and it is that sort of behavior that pack designers have to take into account” (Murphy).

One of the most noticeable clues of recognition playing on consumer psychology is color. Humans are naturally apt to be drawn to certain hues over others. Interestingly, this attraction to certain colors differs based on the age of the consumer. For instance, children are more likely to

be drawn to bright packaging, including ones with glitz and metallic foils (Hunter). Pepsi is a good illustration of this strategy of brand repositioning. The company explores changes in packaging often, molding to fit the generation it hopes to target at that particular time (Adamson). Text must also be considered, as it can be a definite enticer along the shelf. For example, a squeeze pop claiming the product to be “the perfect sweet treat to squeeze into your mouth, or into your friend’s mouth (or clothing, or hair, or whatever)” took advantage of using the package to communicate to their obvious target audience, children (Hunter).

Effectiveness of color selection also differs depending on the pre-conceived value of a product. High-priced, elegant products directed toward an upper class audience should exhibit cold, dark colored packaging, primarily black. Conversely, customers seeking a product based solely on price incentive are more likely attracted to lighter packaging colors, mainly white (Ampuero and Vila).

Color can also be used as an indication of what the package contains. Nabisco has decided to employ the use of green in the packaging of their *SnackWells* product, hoping to attract health-concerned consumers. The company believes individuals connect this color to “fresh” and “natural” ingredients, anticipating that shoppers will perceive their product as satisfying this criterion (Bone and France).

Another strong dynamic playing on consumer psychology has to do with package shape and its association with size perception. A set of experiments was conducted in order to explore if there is an existing relationship between a container’s shape and an individual’s judgment of quantity

within that parcel. Conclusions found that packages seen as attracting more attention to themselves were in turn perceived as holding a greater volume of goods when compared to same-size containers of less visual fascination (Folkes and Matta).

“As people get smarter and smarter about who their customers are, they start to understand more about what motivations their customers have and what really drives them to make decisions” (Beardi). By understanding the psychology behind why purchases are made, marketing teams are able to adapt their design accordingly. The package functions as the crucial medium for advertisers to express what the brand stands for and ultimately promises to deliver, functioning as the “number one communication vehicle between manufacturers and customers” (Forcinio). According to *Advertising Age* magazine, a package that expresses “simply and clearly what it promises to deliver is generally the most successful.” By highlighting the core difference between their product and the brand sitting next to it, companies are able to easily differentiate themselves. A clear example of this strategy being put into practice can be seen through Apple Inc. The organization has always capitalized on using the package as an instrument to distinguish their brand. The stylish, simple, practical design of its packaging substantiates the stylish, simple, practical design of its products (Adamson).

Point of Purchase Advertising International (POPAI) president, Dick Blatt, concludes, “What this research [concerning consumer psychology] is identifying is the opportunity for multiple messages in-store.” According to Kevin Coyne, executive VP-director of media and new technologies at Cordiant Communications Group’s Bates Worldwide, “[In-store advertising] plays a role in the overall mix” of what drives customers to make decisions. As a result,

companies including POPAI are striving to elevate in-store advertising as much as possible (Beardi).

Manufacturers are looking to point-of-purchase (POP) displays as a way to capitalize on customer impulses among the flood of new products bombarding the shelves of supermarket aisles. POP advertising and promotion is rapidly growing as a technique in communicating brand messages through in-store advertising in hopes of influencing buying habits. Most analysts agree that in-store promotion is on a much faster growth rate than traditional means of advertising. “As TV seems to have lost some of its effectiveness in terms of clutter and fragmented audiences, advertisers are looking for other ways to attract consumer’s attention,” according to Allen Banks, media director at Publicis Groupe’s Saatchi & Saatchi. Research done by the POPAI has deduced that traditional advertising is at a growth of 4 to 6 percent annually over the past five years, while the use of in-store promotions has increased 10 to 15 percent (Rabinovitz).

Omnicom Group has also witnessed an increase, in that their clients spent 5 percent more on construction of POP displays than they have in the past (Beardi). The potential for growth in the point-of-purchase field continues to be promising due to the fact that “every year, there’s more retail space, and the retailers are challenged to have the space deliver more in sales” (Elliot).

Point-of-purchase displays can be very effective in utilizing that retail space and is evolving into its own strategic tool (Beardi). Normally, getting a product noticed is more difficult in some sections of the supermarket than others. According to the President of POPAI, Dick Blatt, “The opportunity to convey the branded message in-store is an opportunity that’s overlooked” as a way to go beyond the barrier of poor store position (Rabinovitz). POP displays have emerged as the clear solution to this long-standing dilemma. Using a hidden video camera in supermarkets,

Pretesting Company Inc. discovered the worst supermarket placement to be the open-fresh dairy and freezer section as customers were not willing to repeatedly open and close cold, freezer doors in order to compare products from different sections (Beardi). Industrial designer, James Richardson, created “secondary freezer display space” by installing a portable freezer that would stand alone in the freezer section. Covered with posters on all sides promoting the product, Richardson was able to distinguish his product from the mainstream by giving it its own backdrop. As a result, the display was able to produce an increase in sales for McCains Super Fries and Campbell’s Le Menu frozen dinners by 100 percent (Rabinovitz).

As proven by Richardson’s example, in-store advertising “reinforces the national brand advertising story” by supplementing it with “something that makes the product stand out on the shelf” (Elliot). By implementing this promotional technique, there is a definite jump in sales. An additional instance of the success of in-store advertising can be seen in POPAI’s new research that reveals brand-oriented displays generated a jump in sales of cough and cold medicines by 35 percent (Beardi). Richardson believes, “Any time you feature a product in-store with a separate display, it will increase sales—that’s a given” (Rabinovitz).

Nevertheless, point-of purchase advertising cannot be an orphan (Rabinovitz). “Designing POP material should be part of a whole communication process brief because POP material and packaging are all supposed to reinforce the brand message,” according to Carl Cox, managing director of POP solutions. It is exceedingly important to preserve a feeling of synergy between all avenues of advertising in order to keep the brand image strong and cohesive, continually attracting customers to a product through each distinct realm (Murphy).

Work Cited

Adamson, Allen. "Why Packaging Must Pack a Bigger Punch." Advertising Age 22 October 2007: 24.

Ampuero, Olga and Natalia Vila. "Consumer Perceptions of Product Packaging." Journal of Consumer Marketing 23 (2006): 100-112.

Beardi, Cara. "POP Ups Sales Results." Advertising Age 23 July 2001: 27.

Bone, Paula Fitzgerald and Karen Russo France. "Package Graphics and Consumer Product Beliefs." Journal of Business and Psychology (15) 2001: 467-468.

Elliot, Stuart. "Merger Fever Spreads to the In-Store Advertisers that Entice Shoppers at the Very Last Minute." The New York Times 1 November 2008. C.8.

Folkes, Valerie and Shashi Matta. "The Effect of Package Shape on Consumers' Judgments of Product Volume: Attention as a Mental Contaminant." Journal of Consumer Research (31) 2004: 390-391.

Forcinio, Hailie. "Attention Grabbers." Prepared Foods October 1998: 21-24.

Hunter, Beatrice Trum. "Marketing Foods To Kids: Using Fun to Sell." Consumers' Research Magazine 1 March 2002: 19.

Murphy, David. "POP Put to the Test. (Packaging Design Helps in Point-of-Purchase Decision Making)." Marketing 16 April 1998: 24-28.

Rabinovitz, Jonathan. "All About/In-Store Promotions; Influencing Shoppers During the Moment of Decision." The New York Times 18 August 1991.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The intention of this study is to show the potential that strategic packaging communication can have on attracting a larger client base. The particular methods explored in this study will be elite and specialized interviewing, descriptive research, and content analysis.

Elite and specialized interviewing is a process that engages experts on the subject in order to create a compilation of applicable information to a particular field of study. It was chosen as a method to be used because it will give the study insight to professional opinion and experience (Levenson). By retrieving information from business professionals who work with packaging and placement in their everyday transactions, I will be able to learn what the current packaging trends are and how consumer psychology is taken into consideration. I will interview Ryan Hill, a Sourcing Specialist in Print Services with Walt Disney Incorporated. With Disney, he focuses on Home Entertainment DVD and POP print needs. He also has had experience with point-of-purchase displays when he worked for Dioptics Sunwear designing these displays and their packaging for eyewear. A sample of open-ended questions to jumpstart the conversation may include:

- How have point-of-purchase displays transformed the importance of store placement?
- In your opinion, how can marketing teams attract customers through packaging?
- How much consideration is given to store placement in hopes of attracting customers to certain products over others?
- Have you noticed an increase in demand from clients to install point-of-purchase displays in your store?

- Have you done studies to explain this behavior of customers being attracted to these displays? Or researched other's studies?
- How concerned are marketing teams with colors chosen for their brand? And how do they arrive at a color selection?
- What research is done to determine the psychology behind consumer attraction to a brand?

Through the employment of descriptive research within this study, information can be collected on the situation at present (Levenson). To satisfy this element, a survey will be electronically distributed to a sample audience primarily consisting of college undergraduates who range from ages 18-25. Those addressed represent regular consumers who most likely have minimal income forcing them to shop on a budget. The survey will reveal which packages shoppers are most attracted to on the shelf, helping to uncover color psychology of human behavior. Questions will also help to reveal audiences' level of attraction to point-of-purchase displays and the importance of store placement. Packaging effectiveness will also be addressed throughout the study. Possible survey questions will include the following:

1. Have you ever purchased a product solely because of its packaging?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. If yes, which product was it? And what drew you to this package in particular?
(Fill in)
3. Which package are you more likely attracted to on the shelf?
 - a. Cheapest price

- b. Brightest packaging
 - c. Well-designed packaging
 - d. Packages on their own display away from similar products
 - e. Familiarity with brand
4. Which of the following colors are you most attracted to when low price is a strong factor in your decision to purchase?
- a. White
 - b. Yellow
 - c. Gray
 - d. Black
 - e. Other (fill in)
5. Which of the following colors are you most attracted to when quality is a strong factor in your decision to purchase?
- a. White
 - b. Cream
 - c. Gray
 - d. Black
6. Which color package would you judge as containing the healthiest food?
- a. Purple
 - b. Green
 - c. Red
 - d. Blue
 - e. White

7. Is price the main determinant in which product you purchase?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Depends on product

8. If not, on what do you base your purchasing decision?
 - a. Packaging convenience
 - b. First package you are drawn to
 - c. A package that is on its own display away from similar products

After the elite and specialized interviewing has been conducted along with the completion of all descriptive research, the research procedure will conclude with a content analysis. Through this content analysis, a visual representation of data is created, allowing for the quantification of data in order to arrive at a set of clear, comprehensible conclusions (Levenson). The data from the previous two research methods will be transformed into numerically expressed results. The questions along with their related answers will be divided into categories concerned with color, placement, and impact on sales. Answers will be transferred to a matrix composed of rows with these same category titles and columns designated to the particular names of those interviewed. Each response will be attributed with positive (+1), neutral (0), or negative (-1) scores relative to the study's hypothesis. The numbers will then be added up resulting in either a positive, neutral, or negative correlation with the hypothesis.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Interviews were conducted with industry experts in order to further this study's research. Meg Hammond, Brand Manager at PepsiCo, was interviewed for an insight into the industry. A separate session was conducted with Ryan Hill who is a Sourcing Specialist with print services at The Walt Disney Company. He has additional experience with packaging when he previously worked for Dioptics Sunwear designing point-of-purchase displays and packaging for eyewear. Jacqueline Paschall, Structural Designer for Pacific Southwest Container, was also interviewed for a final perspective.

In your opinion, how can marketing teams attract customers through packaging?

Meg Hammond: By infusing insights: Understanding what people look for when buying product (ie. flavor; calorie count)

Ryan Hill: It depends on the quality level of the product and the price plan associated with it. The sale price will dictate how much money will go into the packaging of that product. [Ryan is currently working with high priced items, such as DVDs and BlueRay discs.] Disney tries to add value to these products through packaging, with the use of foils, embossing, and different substrates in order to capture one's eye in the marketplace. On the other hand, if a team is working with a low-price item, extra resources will not be as readily available. Other options must be explored in order to capture the consumer's eye, such as specialty die cuts. Overall, the project itself and the resources associated with it determine the strategy used to attract customers.

Jacqueline Paschall: POP displays and lug on attachments (looks like a pop-up on the package) are a successful option. It can be useful to have the package resemble the shape of the product itself. In addition, colorful printing, engraving and foil embossing, and soft touch, UV coatings all help to attract customers to a certain package.

How have point-of-purchase displays transformed the importance of store placement?

And how much consideration is given to store placement in hopes of attracting customers to certain products over others?

Hill: I believe “store placement is extremely important.” [When he worked with Dioptics he had a lot of experience with this concept at WalMart.] Shelving units at the front of the store were used to display promotional items. It was a big seller for us if we got placed in the front of the store. I believe this display location alone drove a lot of their sales. However, mass retail stores are now moving away from corrugated palette units and toward more permanent fixtures in attempt to clear aisles and clean up the overall feel of their stores.

Paschall: By placing point-of-purchase in a prominent position, it increases the amount of product sold. They also block out competitors products that are behind the display. It segregates a new product launch (new flavor, style, etc.) from the existing merchandise.

How is Pepsi able to stand apart from its rivals on the shelf?

Hammond: Our color and its branding is what does it. We also make designs that appeal to our different target consumer groups.

What is your demographic and what attracts that particular group of consumers to a package?

Hammond: We have 2 target groups. One is adults between the ages of 18-24 with a multicultural skew. The other is females 40 years-plus. Both groups fall under lower income and middle education. As far as what attracts them to our product it would have to be consistency. We have always been known as the blue with the globe.

How do customers respond to POP displays? Why do you think they react to them?

Hammond: People are more apt to purchase something when it is off the shelf because they think it is on sale.

Hill: It really depends on the product and how captivating it is as to how well customers will respond to POP displays. They must be very engaging. The price point of the product also plays an important role. At Dioptics, sunglasses were placed on a palette and the company experienced mixed results. In the end, it came down to how the product was positioned--which demographic it was seeking. When aimed at store owners, these palettes failed miserably. [Ryan believes it had to do with the messaging on the palette itself that ultimately led to this failure.]

Paschall: Consumers love them! Since they are unique and out of the ordinary they will automatically catch the consumer's eye.

How concerned are companies with choosing colors for a brand? And how do they arrive at a color selection?

Hammond: Most people have established their colors over time. They do not change them. Also, our brand color designates certain things (white/silver is diet and gold is caffeine free)

Hill: Marketing teams have done several studies to determine how to choose a successful color for their brand. In general, a brand will select a palette and then stick within that particular array of colors throughout their marketing decisions. For example, Tide will always use orange in its product. When extending its line out to different varieties, it will always keep within that same palette of colors even if it means changing hues a little bit. [Ryan had a lot of experience with this dynamic when he worked with Dioptics.] Depending on the quality of the product and its price point, different hues were chosen. Cheaper items usually leaned toward a less complex palette, and bright colors. When trying to upsell a more expensive item, more muted, subtle colors were chosen. It makes a lot of sense in a retail store because cheaper items are trying to jump out at you. Premium items will be in the same area but a customer will have to look a little harder to find

them. In the end, it depends on the marketing positioning statement on the package for a customer to determine if that product is the one they purchase.

Paschall: They are very concerned. We have to constantly make sure we match the printed color to their logo. They arrive at a color selection through consumer questionnaires, as well as, internal employee contributions. Sometimes an advertising agency may assist. Or at times, it could just be what the color is generally associated with (For example, green generally means healthy or sustainable).

Rank the following in its importance and role in attracting consumers to a product: price, sustainable packaging, shelf placement and explain why?

Hammond: 1. Price 2. Shelf placement 3. Sustainable Packaging

Price is the ultimate attraction to our target market. Also, people buy soda so often they have to be cost conscious.

Paschall: 1. Price: Our economy is suffering and it is important for consumers to find a good deal. Realistically, you are going to want to price your product the best when comparing to similar products.

2. Shelf placement: You want the consumer to see your product first!

3. Sustainable packaging: I think this topic is becoming an increasingly important factor when designing packaging. I know I always try to design with the least amount of material possible. And when my design allows for it, choose a material that is 100% recyclable.

Has there been an increase in demand for point-of-purchase displays? What do you predict will be the future of POP displays?

Hammond: There has actually been a decrease. Retailers want a clean looking store. As far as the future, there will be less and less. They are declining year over year. There has been greater competition from consumer product companies for them.

Hill: Corrugated palette units, those that are designed to be ready to start selling immediately off the truck, are going away as far as right now. Mass retail industries are trying to clean up their stores and are moving toward more permanent fixtures for a less-cluttered visual appeal. As far as what the future holds in trying to attract customers, I see the trend toward reducing the amount of materials used for both sustainability and cost issues. “The hot topic right now is making the overall design cheaper as much as possible without losing customer attraction, and at the same time without it failing structurally.”

Paschall: For the future, POP displays will be designed in a way to be greener and faster to assemble.

Following is a chart representing a content analysis of the elite and specialized interviews, quantifying the responses into either a positive, negative, or neutral correlation with the study's hypothesis.

	Ryan Hill	Jacqueline Paschall	Meg Hammond
Importance of Color	+ “Marketing teams have done several studies to determine how to choose a successful color for their brand.”	+ “Very concerned” with color. Use customer questionnaires, internal employee contributions, and advertising agency to arrive at right selection.	+ “Color and consistency” stand us apart and attract the target market to our brand. “We have always been known as blue.”
Importance of Store Placement	+ “Store placement is extremely important”	+ “Segregates a new product launch from the existing merchandise. It also blocks out competitors products that are behind the display.”	+ “People are more apt to purchase something when it is off the shelf because hey think it is on sale.”
Impact on Sales	+ “It was a big seller for us if we got placed in the front of the store. I believe this display location alone drove a lot of our sales.”	+ “By placing POP’s in prominent position, it increases the amount of product sold.”	+ “We understand what people are looking for by infusing insights. Price is the ultimate attraction” and accounts for our sales.

Result: Both experts revealed a positive correlation within each category to the study’s presented hypothesis.

In response to elite and specialized interviewing, a survey was created in order to collect information on the situation as present. It was distributed to a range of individuals, with responses coming primarily from college undergraduates, part of the very demographic that Hammond identified as being part of PepsiCo’s target market. Those addressed represent regular consumers who are surrounded with a magnitude of packaging every day. The questions along with the consumer responses are listed below.

What is your age?			Response Percent	Response Count
Under 18			0.0%	0
18-24			73.1%	49
25-39			14.9%	10
40-55			3.0%	2
55+			9.0%	6

Have you ever purchases a product solely because of its packaging?			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes			67.2%	45
No			32.8%	22

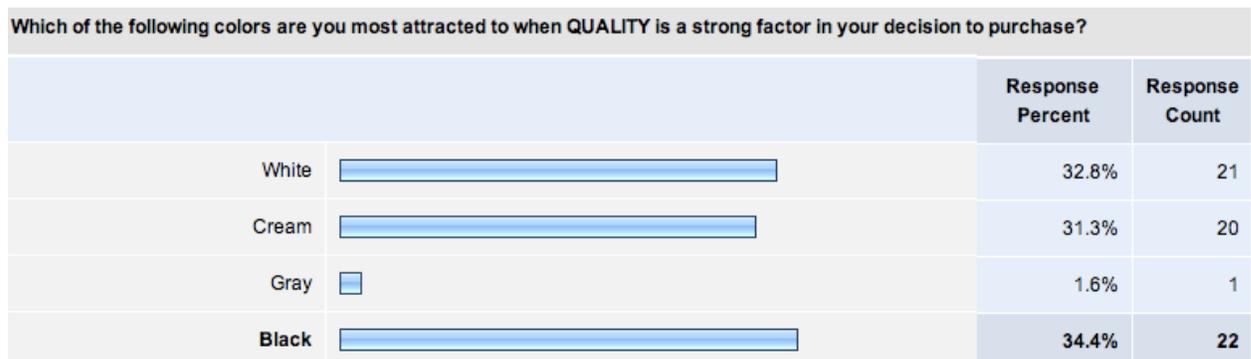
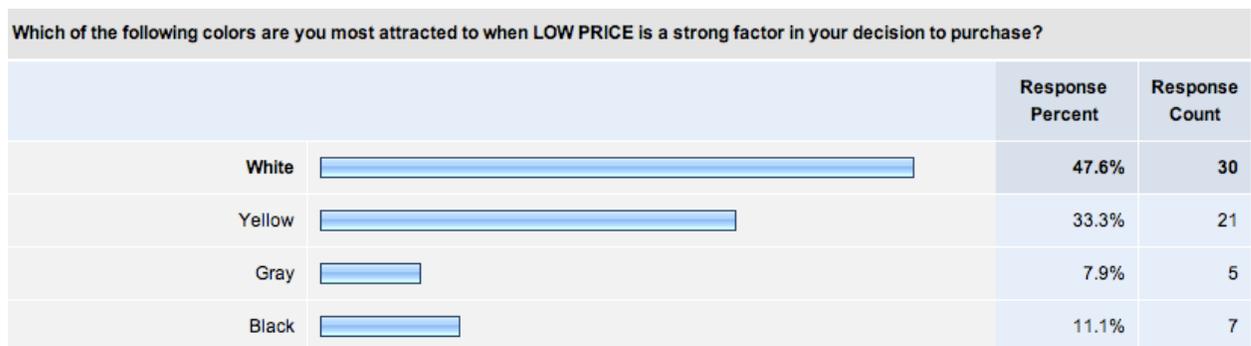
As a follow up to this question, consumers were asked, “If so, which one?” The majority of those surveyed replied that has been with soap products, wine, and chocolate. Food products were an overwhelming sector where purchases were based solely on packaging.

When asked “What attracted you to this particular package?” consumers overwhelmingly replied it was the color and design of the product. Clean and simple designs seem to be the most favorable. Also, a few responses pointed out the importance of a packages being

constructed out of eco-friendly materials. The following was a response illustrating this particular concern:

“Eco-friendly: minimal packaging needed to do the job. I have taken to deliberately avoiding over-packaged items and choosing more rational packaging instead. For example, my favorite cheese switched last year from slices in a brick (wrapped in one thin plastic sleeve) to slices laid out display-style in an elaborate molded plastic shell, so I stopped buying it. I found it in the simple brick format at another store, so I bought it there.”

Surprisingly, price was only mentioned one time as the determining factor in attracting the consumer to a package.



Which color package would you judge as containing the healthiest food?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Purple		1.6%	1
Green		75.0%	48
Red		3.1%	2
White		15.6%	10
Blue		4.7%	3

Is price the main determinant in which product you purchase?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		26.6%	17
No		4.7%	3
Depends on product		68.8%	44

If not, on what do you base your purchasing decision?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Packaging convenience		51.2%	21
First package you are drawn to		39.0%	16
A package that is on its own display away from similar products		9.8%	4

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

As previously mentioned, the purpose of this study was to reveal the potential that strategic packaging communication can have on attracting a larger client base. It asked the question: How can the packaging industry communicate to and ultimately attract customers solely based on visual appeal?

When constructing a marketing strategy, brand owners must give careful deliberation to three important facets in order to gain a strong competitive advantage: the psychology and desires of consumers, store placement, and the packaging itself. After conducting elite and specialized interviews, the three categories were ranked in importance in the order stated above.

First, several factors fall under the psychology of consumers and their buying trends. A marketing team must take into account all aesthetics that affect an individual's inner feelings toward a product. As Meg Hammond of PepsiCo stated, it is important to understand what people are looking for when buying a product. By recognizing the desires of the target market, companies are able to deliver clients with packages satisfying these needs.

Price has become increasingly important to shoppers. Directly tying into price perception is color selection. To a consumer walking down an aisle, color is the first factor that grabs one's attention as to the probable price level of a particular product. For this reason, color selection is huge in branding. Out of those surveyed, white packages were determined as being the cheapest, closely followed by packages in yellow.

Depending on the quality of the product and its price point, different hues are usually chosen as these differences subconsciously relay unique characteristics about the product. As Ryan Hill suggested, cheaper items usually leaned toward a less complex palette, and bright colors. When trying to upsell a more expensive item, more muted, subtle colors were chosen. Marketing teams must keep these color assumptions in mind, especially when consumers are so sensitive to price.

Secondly, store placement is the next issue in the success of a product. Hill believed that store placement alone drove a lot of their sales when their product was placed at the front of a retail store. Products must stand out from competition on the shelf. Point-of-purchase displays have been effective in attracting consumers to one particular package. Shoppers see products away from the shelf and tend to think they are a better deal or on sale. Jacqueline Paschall pointed out that these displays are helpful in drawing in consumers in that they often block out competitors products from eyesight.

However, research showed that point-of-purchase displays may soon be on the way out. Hill and Hammond both commented on the fact that retail stores are looking to give their stores a cleaner look. POP displays often contribute to a cluttered atmosphere. In the future, marketing teams will need to find a simpler, cleaner way of gaining this same advantage of superior store placement.

Hammond declared that there has been a shift in marketing strategy from creating point-of-purchase displays to a more direct focus on the packaging itself as being an influential seller of a product. Although ranked by experts as having the least importance in a consumer's decision, the packaging itself still bears a significant amount of value. Of those surveyed, an overwhelming majority admitted to purchasing a product solely because of the package in which it was contained. Also, it was discovered that if price is not the main determinant of a purchase, it is packaging convenience.

Sustainable packaging is becoming increasingly more important, but it is not a necessity as of yet. Paschall noted that she makes an effort to use recycled materials but only when it is convenient as the design leans itself toward the substrate. It is highly probable that as the world becomes more and more aware of the environmental issues with which it is surrounded, sustainable packaging will make its way up the ranks of consumer importance.