



Ernest  Packaging Solutions™

WHITE PAPER

Making Packaging Design Your Powerhouse Marketing Tool



**Ernest
To The
Rescue**

For food product manufacturers, packaging plays an important—and often undervalued—role for your product and your business.



When your product tastes good, consumers will keep buying it. But what makes them try a new product to begin with? That crucial first purchase is all about how your product looks on the shelf, and the story your packaging tells.

To grab consumers' attention, food packaging has to clearly communicate why your product is different, what makes it better than the competition, and give your audience a taste (pardon the pun) of the experience they are about to enjoy. Packaging is also a great opportunity for you to make a personal connection and help your product pop on the crowded shelves by telling your unique brand story. By combining images, colors, and graphics in just the right way—all in a very small space—you can really draw customers in and make them want to try your product.

Beyond selling your product, protection is also a big part of the packaging design equation. Your package design is key to preventing damage during shipment and ensuring your customers are getting the same high quality product you made. Your package also needs to keep the product fresh for as long as possible. After all, if it's not fresh off the shelf, customers won't give you a second chance. First you need to catch their eye in the aisle, and then you need to deliver a delicious product to keep them coming back. With the right packaging design, you can do both.

Retail success starts with smart design

This may seem like a lot to expect from your packaging design, but the right design can achieve multiple goals. When your packaging design shines, your product performs well on the shelves. According to Greg Feinberg, President of Aisle 9, a Los Angeles-based direct sales agency, “There’s a major battle for shelf space in stores. Consumers are trained to look for certain elements on food packaging today. They demand certain ingredients and shun others. If you want to succeed in today’s marketplace, your packaging must clearly communicate what your products offer and why they are special.”

To ensure your product succeeds all the way from the factory to the table, you need a winning package design. And to communicate exactly what your product—and your brand—is offering, that design needs to be tailored for your product. When your packaging design does everything you need it to do—not just some of it—you’ll find your product performs better on the shelf, and your sales can go up.

When it comes to designing your packaging, you need a packaging company that cares as much about your product as you do. You need someone with the experience, and the expertise, to help you perfect your packaging down to the smallest detail. The key to your success will be finding a resource that understands that packaging design is more than a process. It’s an art.

The art of marketing

In the store, your packaging is an opportunity to make a customer connection—even before they’ve tried your product. Packaging is a great marketing tool, and one that food product manufacturers often overlook. With so many other factors to think about—finding quality ingredients, cost of production, not to mention getting the recipe just right—it’s no wonder food manufacturers often leave packaging out of their process. But this is a mistake. The right design can turn packaging into a key element of your product-marketing plan.

From a marketing perspective, your packaging design needs to accomplish three key things:

- Deliver a great product
- Make it pop on the shelf
- Tell a story that emotionally connects with your customers

Our customer Poindexter Nuts is a great case study of how to use packaging design to pump up sales results.

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Case Study: Poindexter Nut Company

New story, new look

Poindexter Nut Company grows and packages walnuts in California, and also partners with other California nut growers to package and sell almonds, cashews, pecans, pistachios, and mixed nuts throughout the country and around the world. A family run company, Poindexter has been in business for over 60 years and is known for high quality products and outstanding integrity—having paid out substantial debts owed to growers by other companies that fell into financial hardship not just once, but twice.

Michael Poindexter, CEO and the third generation family member to run the company, says, “Over the last two years we have redesigned and improved every aspect of our business, from our new facility to our processing and retailing.” What they needed was a new packaging solution that would reflect this transformation, and tell the brand story in a fresh, accessible way—while also keeping their product fresh and accessible. Poindexter planned to unveil its new packaging at PMA Fresh Summit in Anaheim, so the pressure was on to design the perfect bag. Fortunately, the Ernest design team eats pressure for breakfast (along with a few nuts for protein).

John Sloane headed up the Sacramento design team’s quest to develop a custom bag that would set Poindexter up for success, while maintaining cost-effectiveness.

First, we asked Poindexter to tell us exactly what they needed. They laid it out for us:

- The packaging needed to highlight product information, industry facts, and nutritional data clearly, without smoke and mirrors.
- It also needed to act as a customer touchpoint and provide a unique and engaging experience.

We got to right work. Our team spent several weeks developing a custom bag design that solved all of Poindexter's unique challenges, and also embodied the company's fresh new approach.

It's all in the delivery

Fact: If customers have a bad product experience, they won't buy it again. That's why it's essential that your packaging protects your product during shipping, and keeps it fresh for a long time. If it does both these things, your customers will have a good product experience every time—and they'll keep coming back for more.

To achieve this for Poindexter Nuts, we designed a stand-up, gusseted bag that protects the nuts from impact. The re-sealable design also keeps the product fresh longer, so customers can enjoy their nuts without worrying about them going soggy or stale.



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Not just stand up—stand out

With so many products to choose from, packaging has to stand out on the shelf and make consumers want to buy it. This is where design can really do the heavy lifting. For Poindexter, Ernest redesigned the packaging using high quality graphics and earthy colors to attract health-conscious shoppers. To capitalize on the movement towards natural products, Poindexter's new packaging positions them to connect with this growing market from both a visual and verbal perspective.

We also added a full width window to showcase what's in the bag (it doesn't get more natural than that!). What better way to attract your customers when you have a fresh, enticing product that looks as good as it tastes? That's certainly the case for Poindexter. The way the product information is presented is also fresh and simple—just like their nuts.

Making a personal connection

Every company has a story to tell, and your product packaging is the best place to do that. Greg Feinberg says, “Your story and your ability to communicate that story will influence customer behavior, positively or negatively. It depends on how well you can tell it.” For Poindexter, they needed to tell the story of their modernization to the retail world.

In line with the company’s history of integrity, and its forward-thinking rebranding, Poindexter came up with a unique way to make a personal connection with customers. The company wanted to include branded quick response (QR) codes on every bag to encourage customer interaction. The QR codes enabled a unique in-store experience. First, they grabbed customers’ attention. Then, they engaged customers through a mobile website, and promoted community involvement by allowing them to choose a nonprofit for Poindexter to donate to. By making this personal connection with customers who are both health-conscious and socially responsible, Poindexter created a truly unique—and hugely positive—customer experience. You might even say it sealed the deal.

Poindexter is so happy with their new packaging, they even changed their tagline to: “It’s in the bag!”

“

Our new packaging isn’t just a bag anymore. It allows our customers to actually interact with us, and it keeps our product fresh.”

Michael Poindexter
CEO, Poindexter Nut Company



It's in the Bag!

NEW LOOK • NEW MISSION



The whole package

To boost food product sales, you need a packaging design that performs all the way from the factory to the table. Start by thinking of your package as a distinct marketing tool. This can help you design it in a way that strengthens your brand, and your connection to your customers.

At Ernest Packaging Solutions, we've been helping food manufacturers transform packaging challenges into marketing opportunities for decades. We've designed packaging for everything from peanut butter to potato chips. We understand the importance of design when it comes to optimizing on-the-shelf marketing opportunities. By combining the fine art of design with the power of experience and expertise, the Ernest team can help you create the perfect solution for your product, your brand, and your business.



Contact us today to talk about how we can use the fine art of design to tell your story, and boost your sales.

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