



# Package purchasing in one easy step

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➔ Packaging professionals continue to feel the pressure of many competing corporate goals. How many times over the past few years have you found yourself saying, "I'm expected to do more with less; save money on my packaging purchases but provide better quality and in shorter time frames. And now I need to think about whether or not the package is sustainable. How can I be successful?"

To make the best purchasing decision, consider whether it makes sense for you to include a packaging distributor as part of your package-development team. Such a move, when executed well, could bring value to your purchases by saving time and improving the bottom line.

Maybe the saying, "Time is of the essence" is a cliché is, but it's a universal truth, and a product's packaging is no exception. From the moment the decision is made to sell a new product or rebrand an existing one, the clock starts to tick, and speed-to-market is an important competitive advantage. And what does "package" mean? In some cases, perhaps it's just one bottle, but in others it might mean several sizes of bottles, the closure, folding carton, clamshell, and the decoration, to name a few components and service options.

With a packaging distributor as part of your package-development team, you might save time and improve the bottom line in part by gaining access to a wider range of resources. At the least, you can quickly narrow your possibilities to a manageable decision. The possibilities presented for your team's consideration will be those that best serve your needs and will not be limited to a certain type of equipment or material available. In some instances, you might also gain creative design and engineering capabilities, if a specific package idea hasn't already been proposed.

In addition, your company can strengthen its cost-of-acquisition management capabilities, from packaging components to the shipping

costs and inventory storage.

The complexity of dealing with all the necessary packaging components does not end once the package has been finalized. Project management and paperwork processing then begin to strain your department's resources. The service a distributor provides can also help here. You have one contact for following up on the project, no matter how many components are involved. The amount of paperwork, from quotes to invoices, will be reduced by combining several components' paper flow into one.

Once the components are ordered, you begin wondering, "Where am I going to put all these components? Do I need to rearrange the warehouse? Look for outside warehouse space?" Space is another resource that can be optimized when purchasing through distributors because they can hold inventory and ship it on an as-needed basis.

Now that supply chain management has the added consideration of environmental issues surrounding packaging, the complexity grows. A distributor's involvement again assists in improving the circumstances. The wide array of sources means you can source as close to your production facility as possible, perhaps even combining with other shipments, thereby lowering your carbon footprint. Technical knowledge of the latest materials and manufacturing processes means you have more alternatives for "green" packaging.

Your business's success depends upon having the time and resources to improve your core business activities and pursue new business. To do that, you need to make the most efficient

use of your resources, whether it includes time, dollars, space, or personnel. To make sure each of these aspects is enhanced, conduct an audit of your package-development process to assure that you are not overlooking any additional players who could be an asset to your team. **PW**



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