

The Right Packaging System at the Right Time

5 Easy Ways to Boost Customer Experience and Save Valuable Warehouse Space

White Paper



**Innovative
Packaging
Company**



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Executive Summary

Half a century is a long time, and we've maximized it by packing it with industry skills and packaging expertise. Yet, that's precisely what you get when you choose Innovative Packaging Company as your packaging solutions supplier and our professional team of packaging experts.

Meet Jeremy and Matt Concannon, IPC's founders. The Concannon brothers began their journey in their family-owned paper business: Concannon Paper, which has now evolved into Innovative Packaging Company. The Concannon brothers pooled their expertise and skills to bring you the best offering available in packaging technology, but for a competitive price.

Unlike many packaging suppliers, team IPC firmly believes in striving toward its namesake - innovation, and that means adapting to meet the changing needs and trends in today's consumer packaging market.

IPC is not just business as usual.

We're a family affair, and that means seeing that your needs are met when and where you need them most. So, IPC continues to expand its offerings to make your life easier.

- Packaging
- Labels
- Automation
- Turnkey solutions
- Warehousing options

We aim to employ the most user-friendly business model available to meet your business needs. Why? Because IPC isn't just innovative packaging; it's making your entire packaging solution work harder for you.



Introduction

Packaging. It's what each customer dreams of, right? Okay, maybe not quite in the way that we'd like them too, but the packaging is certainly a big part of your brand's overall message and your customer's experience. The right packaging solution should brim with excitement. It should buzz with intrigue, and command your customer's attention while packing a powerful punch for your sales goals.

However, while some brands succeed with this goal, others don't. But good news lies ahead. With the right packaging solutions and some industry expertise, you can improve your customers' experiences and take your business' marketing efforts to the next level – and you can do it all without sacrificing more time, energy, money, and valuable warehouse space.

Whether you're a manufacturer or a distributor, your focus should be on your business – what you do best. Who wants to become an authority on creating a product, while also having to worry about the mundane, like how and where to store packaging materials in an already crowded warehouse?

Consider the changing needs of your consumers to top matters off. Then, add to that the growing need for the latest and greatest technologies to improve workflow inefficiencies, increasing customer experiences for optimal growth ... all while pondering your position in the universe.

Okay, maybe not the last one, but you get the idea.

Suddenly, you've grown a mountainous list of concerns. What if there was another way ... a better, more efficient way to lessen the load you carry while still allowing you to tend to your business?

Want to save time, energy, and warehouse space? Want to boost your customers' experiences while you're at it? You can do both effortlessly once you find the right packaging solution.



The Problem

Finding the right packaging solution is often challenging with the different bags, boxes, shrink wraps, or roll stock film available. The right packaging is solution-based, all-inclusive, and customized with you, your budget, and brand, and with your customer in mind.

Each packaging supplier offers the different services, solutions, and prices. Staying competitive in today's busy market while remaining on a budget is vital, but so is finding a supplier that meets your needs and goals.

First, though, let's talk more about why you're reading this: how to boost your customer's experience with the right packaging, for the right price, and while conserving warehouse space.

The perfect packaging solution can be a godsend to your business, your products, and your marketing efforts. It's grand, alluring, and exciting. The right solution is also technologically advanced and interactive.

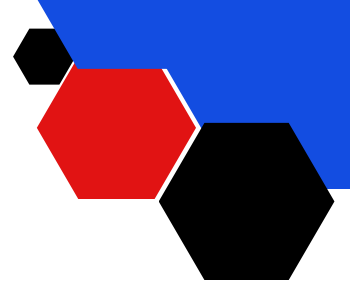
But there's one problem: You need to make space for your packaging in an already crowded warehouse – the same space you need for the products your business manufactures and your customers demand. You also need space for your employees to move around, and for equipment.

Even if your current packaging solution meets your product needs, there's usually a hang-up somewhere be it space, pricing, or type of packaging available, space for packaging being a main concern.

If you lack warehouse space, what can you do? Make fewer products to save room for packaging. How absurd! Yet, it does mark the first point of our report - the reality of today's warehousing space is more coveted than ever.

Available warehouse space in America is shrinking as more warehouses are nearly bursting. According to Statista, available warehouse space has decreased by 1.4% from the first quarter of 2016 to the third quarter of 2018 and the problem isn't improving. These statistics put you in a bind. You can either get another warehouse, build a bigger warehouse, or find an alternative packaging solution.

The first two solutions involve a lot of proverbial red tape and let's not go into the costs involved. Plus, once you settle on a new warehouse, you face the added cost of shifting supplies from one warehouse facility to another that may be farther away. Finally, you must work out a viable new distribution system to meet your customer orders on time throughout the transition and afterward.



Many companies adapt to a new distribution center model. For other businesses, the problem with warehouse spacing leaves little choice other than adding more space and growth.

Warehouse growth across the U.S. has skyrocketed in many places already. The most prominent being Inland Empire, a metropolitan area of southern California that saw a whopping 24.44 million square feet of new warehousing space under construction in 2017 alone.

What's interesting, though, is that the need for more warehouse space across the U.S. is so great that high rates of warehouse occupiers are rushing to pre-lease spaces while new warehouses are still under construction.

You read that right - pre-lease.

While pre-leases for warehousing space are not a new trend, they usually average 38%, but lately, that number has jumped to a historical high of 43%, according to Materials Handling and Logistics. And these numbers may increase further.

So, what drives businesses to seek new warehousing space? The answer is often two-fold between the need to upgrade with newer technology and the need to meet increasing consumer demands.

Solving the problems associated with warehouse space is a burden that some businesses face and must find a way to budget additional costs for leasing new space and transitioning to the new facility.

To meet their packaging and warehouse space demands while limiting costs, many manufacturers are transitioning to distribution centers, which offer some amazing benefits.

- Saving time
- Increased efficiency
- More space

There are plenty of distribution and logistics centers to accommodate needs, but finding the right distribution center at a competitive price is invaluable. It's also one, powerful way to boost your customer's experience because time is money and no one enjoys waiting.



The Approach

It's not always clear what distinguishes today's customer experience from yesterday's customer service. The two concepts are related, but there are a few key differences that impact the outcome and messaging your brand is sending.

“No one is going to understand your brand better than you.” - Alexander Wang

Your brand speaks to your customers, like a whisper in their ears or a friend over for coffee. How your brand approaches customer service and customer experience has a greater impact today than ever before. So, what's the difference between the two? Entrepreneur, [Patrick Bet-David](#) describes it this way: customer service is a reactive model while customer experience is a proactive model.

Customer service solves challenges, problems, concerns, and answers questions, while placing orders. Alternatively, customer experience levels up your game through calculated anticipation of customer wants and needs while promoting your brand authority.

Conceptualizing the perfect customer experience differs among businesses, though. In truth, it's a labyrinth of possibilities. Just when you think you've found your center, there's another path to explore.

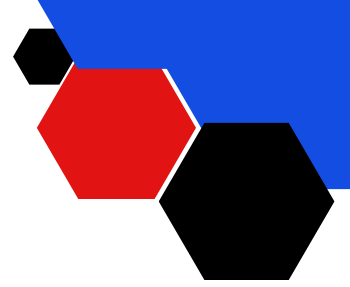
Exceptional customer service and customer experience go hand-in-hand, but don't mistake this to mean that you can have one without the other. You need both to maximize the benefits and get the most bang for your buck.

Creating the right customer experience makes or breaks your customer's loyalty to your brand, too. Maintain more meaningful relationships with your customers and you're more likely to increase your overall customer base, which brings us to the five ways to boost your customer's experience and save valuable warehouse space.

1. Win with Customer Loyalty

Businesses that succeed with customer experience do so through consistent, measurable efforts. In their 2018 Digital Intelligence Briefing, Adobe, in partnership with eConsultancy, reported that [19% of businesses](#) expressed that one key opportunity for their brands relied on optimizing efforts with customers' experiences. As consistency with customer experience grows, brands gain a natural boost with a rise in product loyalty.

So, where does packaging fit into all this?



The right brand packaging is like going on a gem dig. You're sifting through the dirt and debris and finding nothing. Then, there it is stuck to the bottom of your bucket in a clump of dirt – the bling you've been searching for and it's bigger and better than you imagined.

The right brand packaging is similar. It's exciting, invigorating, and brimming with anticipation of new possibilities.

Although packaging products and digging for gems aren't technically related, the experiences are comparable. Like other experiences in life, a great experience releases endorphins in your brain enticing you to repeat the root behaviors that triggered them.

The right packaging does this too.

If your consumers are excited about your brand, product, and packaging, then you can expect increased engagement. This is precisely what you should expect from your packaging to engage your customers and get them talking about your brand.

Last year, Fundera reported that 43% of customers spend more on the brands they know and trust. To borrow a quote from the movie, Field of Dreams, "If you build it, they will come." And if you build customer loyalty, they will stay, too.

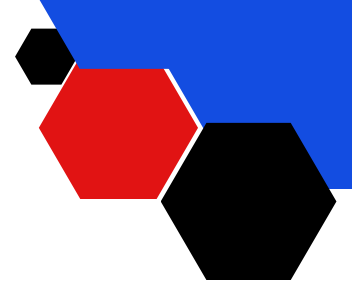
2. Tickle Their Senses

Several years ago, a direct sales representative once commented about her former opinions about her new home and state. "I always thought the people here ..." constituted more of a "crunchy granola" kind of community. While caution warrants that a comment like that might offend some within her new community, it also adds dimension to how much our perceptions weigh on our opinions of our communities, brands, and the products they sell.

It doesn't matter whether your customers are other businesses within the community, region, nation, world, or the individual walking past you in the grocery store. How your customers perceive your brand and products is crucial to the success of your business. So, don't just package your product. Package your product and brand in a way that gives your customers something positive to talk about.

Packing, like pour spouts and easy-tear containers, announce simplicity. Clear packaging windows offer a way for consumers to visually try your product before they buy it. And embossed or engraved images or textures tug, pull and tickle the senses, but so do color patterns, packaging materials, and more.

If you're looking for an easy and efficient way to conjure a better experience, tickle your customers' senses by considering the overall design of your product packaging.



How you design your product packaging clues customers in on what they might expect from your product and brand.

- Quality
- Luxury
- Fun, serious, or professional
- Green
- Healthy or hygienic
- Iconic
- Classic or rustic

Product packaging didn't always increase customer experience. There was a time when product packaging was, simply put, something that held your products – nothing more.

Today, however, we live in a much different world. With the advancement of technology comes the ability to provide enhanced product packaging that engages customers.

So, how do you want your product perceived?

The question is as important as how you want your brand perceived. Enhance your customer's experience through product packaging that speaks to their needs, expectations, desires, and tantalizes their senses.

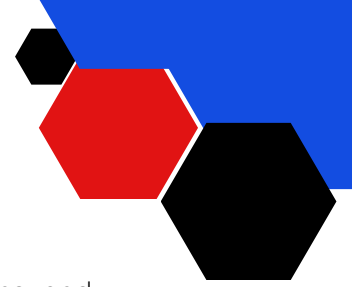
Research suggests that when your packaging design prompts your customers to touch it, that attribute adds weight to your customers' buying decisions. That doesn't mean that your packaging must be digitally and technologically enhanced, though. Sometimes simplicity matters more.

3. Lead with a Cause

Look around you and you're certain to find brands across the country and the globe that have paired up for cause marketing and packaging efforts. It matters not if it's The American Heart Association, the Susan G. Komen Foundation, the ASPCA, the National Resources Defense Council, or another organization.

According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics, there were about 1.5 million non-profit organizations in the U.S. in 2015. That leaves no shortage of charitable causes that brands might support and market with. But, be aware of whether your brand and the charity make sense. Successful cause marketing requires careful planning and consideration.

Done correctly, leading with a cause benefits all involved, and increases customer engagement, experience, and public relations efforts.



The key to effective cause marketing, however, is to align company goals, missions, and brand with an aligning charitable cause. Many top brands across the country have already seen success with cause marketing. However, a few have, in the public's opinion, chosen the wrong cause to market. So, take the time to find the right fit before you begin to ensure a successful campaign.

What can cause marketing do for your brand?

- Increase customer experience
- Increase customer engagement
- Improve public relations efforts and brand image
- Grow your bottom line while helping a worthy cause

Consumers are looking to the brands they know and trust to support the causes they care about most.

Make no mistake, it's more than just slapping a charity name on a label, bag, or box and calling it 'good.' Consumers expect supporting brands to be true to those causes, which makes finding the right cause to support crucial.

The Rosica agency is a public relations agency that claims the prestige of pioneering cause-related marketing alliances back in the '80s. The agency reports that cause marketing creates an alliance between a for-profit business and a non-profit organization allowing both to benefit.

As with any good public relations campaign, building and maintaining trust and reputation among your many publics is vital to brand building and business growth.

One 'good' cause is not 'as good as another,' which is why brands who employ cause marketing with care and diligence reap greater rewards from their efforts.

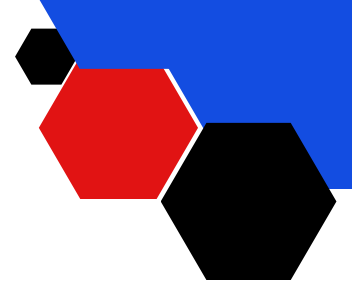
Marketing for a cause also helps your brand earn more. It only takes a glance into the current market trends to understand consumers' appetites.

The landscape of consumer spending differs today. Modern consumers expect more from brands, and they're willing to spend more and support brands that engage in supporting the causes they care about.

A 2018 study by Cone and Porter Novelli reports the following views by their American consumers.

- 89% want brands to demonstrate corporate and social responsibility
- 85% want to see proof through brand strategy
- 85% want to see a global social impact
- 71% want brands to find an emotional connect with causes

The same research also reports that when businesses align themselves with purpose, consumers are willing to spend more and try new offerings from their favorite brands.



4. Innovate and Replicate

Technology impacts businesses in new and exciting ways. We have blockchain and cloud technologies that allow a broad selection of “as service” technologies.

On-the-go business professionals have mobile access to financial and other vital business tools and information when and where they need it most. The Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, and machine learning are also helping businesses grow their digital and global portfolios daily. And technology impacts your customer’s experience and modern product packaging solutions as well.

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Smart technology allows manufacturers and customers the advantage of increased product engagement. Smart labels and packaging allow us to track and temperature check our products and more. Market Research Future, a marketing insights group, pointed out recently, smart packaging is expected to grow by 5.16% through 2023. Like time, technology waits for no one.

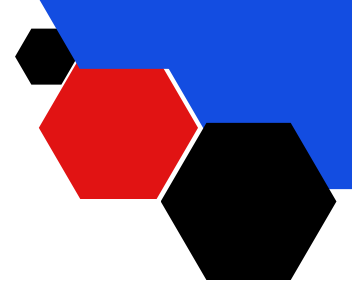
Technology, packaging, and marketing play key roles in creating exceptional customer experiences for your consumers and it’s impacting sales as well. We are becoming more globalized than ever before and large businesses and corporations aren’t the only ones keeping up with global and technological trends, consumers are as well. This is particularly the case with your target market.

As Acosta points out in their 2018 report, although many brands are beginning to market to Millennials (ages 22-36), the emphasis, at least in the food industry, is on Gen X shoppers (ages 37-52). Gen X shoppers are currently spending the most, an average of \$380 per month, on groceries, according to Acosta’s Why Behind the Buy report.

While Gen X shoppers ranked first for spending, it was the Boomers (ages 53-71) who followed close behind. So, where do Millennials rank in all this? They came in third place. Yet, this example only accounts for the food industry.

Considering how they might rank in other industries, smart packaging is a smart way to package.

Big data and smart labels allow today’s brands new ways to engage with their customers. While some brands use smart labels to monitor product freshness or provide nutritional information, other brands have increased their involvement with this technology.



With the scan of a QR code, some consumers are able to interact with their favorite brands to learn more about the company or product, get trending recipes, or even participate in interactive brand storytelling.

With the evolution of technology, there's no end in sight as to what businesses can do to market their products using the Internet of Things. Yet, one thing's for certain. Brands are making digital waves with their packaging and creating interesting new ways their consumers can engage.

5. Get Time and Efficiency on Your Side

Boosting your customer's experience with your brand goes beyond the call center and rests, instead, on the shoulders of each of your employees. Customer experience is the quintessential notion that clambers to customer relations. And it's what provides that extra "oomph" in customer approach, customer management, and the public's view of your brand.

Apply the proper amount of time and efficiency to the overall experience and you have a winning combination, but efficiency is not what you might think.

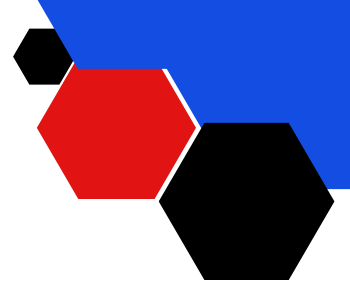
From the customer's lens, efficiency includes faster order and checkout process, rapid payment process, improved personalization efforts, and faster shipping with fewer errors. It's also fewer steps from product selection to delivery.

Take care in how efficient you become. As [UX magazine](#) points out in their 2011 article on efficiency, there is such a thing as becoming too efficient.

Efficiency from the consumer's lens is a multi-generational concept that differs from one generation to the next. Older generations still seek a more direct interaction while younger generations, like Gen-X and Millennials, prefer indirect, technology-dependent experiences. So, tying efficiency with consumer experiences means tailoring the outcome based on your target market.

Ironically enough, packaging can help you with some this.

The right packaging design improves your customer's experience and can improve their view of your products and brand. Do you remember when pudding used to come in those single-serve pop-top cans? They had a little pull-tab and the aluminum lid would pop open and peel off.



While this used to be a thing nearly every kid in America loved and drooled over, when the packaging changed to plastic cups with thick, foil lids, the change was for the better. Today's pudding cup lids are easier to peel off, and in the rare event that a lid fails, it's easier and safer to find an alternative solution to open the product translating to less waste and improved efficiency and satisfaction.

The translucent plastic cups also offer a tantalizing, visual promise of the smooth, sweet treat waiting inside. The cardboard carrier is lighter today, made with less packaging and has less of an environmental impact than its weightier predecessor. In short, packaging innovation has come a long way. It's not stopping, and neither are we.

The Solution

When you exceed your customer's expectations, you boost your brand's image and rise as an industry leader. Packaging your products with the customer experience in mind is like that. The only difference is how you accomplish business goals while exceling in customer experience in this realm.

The answer is finding the right all-in-one packaging supplier who offers the best packaging solutions at an affordable price. It's also equally important to find a packaging supplier who offers added amenities like custom packaging options, onsite warehousing, full turnkey solutions, automation, and vital industry expertise when and where you need it most.

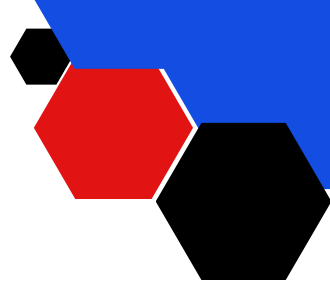
Innovative Packaging Solutions is proud to offer comprehensive packaging solutions like these, and all with a competitive pricing structure.

A great customer experience benefits your brand image. There is no doubt about it. It helps you build public trust, improves your public relations efforts, generates more leads and sales, and improves customer satisfaction. Pair customer experience with the right packaging solution and it's a win-win. Make this your year to shine with customer experience.



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