

Consumer behaviour is shifting - Shouldn't your brand be too?

By [Gidgette Osborne](#), issued by [GO Content Lab](#)

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The 9th Packaging Conference on consumer insights and packaging trends, hosted by Stratcom Branding, is coming to Johannesburg on 2 March 2018.



Our packaging connects people to your brand.

Shopping habits are changing. A lifestyle change sees consumers replacing large weekly shopping excursions with more rushed frequent trips. The buzzwords "healthy", "fresh", "natural" and "organic" being on everyone's tongue, have shoppers visiting the fresh and chilled aisles, whilst turning their backs on processed, ambient, and frozen offerings. This fast-paced shopping and emphasis on "au naturel" could see your brand sitting unmoved on a shelf for unwanted extended periods.

Retail packaging is the primary vehicle through which consumers connect with brands. Consumer goods companies are challenged with delivering brand value in an increasingly complex and time-compressed market environment. Regulation, size, labelling and the adoption of sustainable 'green' products are just a few of the deliberations when considering the design and branding of your packaging.

What catches your eye when you walk down the aisle? A familiar logo? A colour? A slogan? That simply is no longer enough for today's consumers, who have moved beyond the labels that "keep it simple". Consumer products brand design is often based on the notion that shoppers make decisions purely instinctively and reactively. Eye-tracking studies show that consumers read on average only seven words in an entire shopping trip, buying instinctively by colour, shape and familiarity of location. Best sellers succeed by appealing to the brain that decides long before logic has a chance to show face.

However, like it or not, millennials are the biggest spenders and are increasingly looking for labels to go beyond a simple ingredient list. They want to know in-depth information such as the source of the ingredients, what channels have touched the product along the way and even the time frame from farm to store.

And despite popular belief, the majority of millennials are brand loyalists. Of 1,300 millennials interviewed by Forbes, "60%

said that they are often or always loyal to brands". As the oldest wave of millennials enters parenthood and the youngest wave of millennials enters adulthood, new buying habits and brand preferences are being formed.

Instinctive reactions can be designed into packaging through sensory cues that affect our subconscious, generating emotion and action before the conscious part of our brain can respond. Does this still work? Or do our new-age consumers need more? Identifying these key combinations that are interconnected, is becoming essential to understanding how to get brands to connect emotionally with consumers.

To be successful, every brand must have a distinctive point of view and be able to express this clear and unique reason for being. Effective packaging makes it easy to understand at a glance, who I am, what I am, and why I am relevant to your life. Naturally, the product has to deliver on its promise to ensure repeat purchase.

With consumers avoiding some areas of the shop altogether, packaging needs to work harder in order to meet their specific needs and desires and to communicate this fact at the point of purchase. Contemporary design, recyclability, or unique shapes are becoming increasingly important to draw in consumers.

"This branding complexity requires a clever, pragmatic approach to 'connected packaging' which can greatly enhance the user experience, generate increased loyalty and customer pull. The market is quickly realising that connectivity is an option at all price points, across many sectors and categories," says Gail Macleod, CEO and founder of Stratcom Branding.

As more consumers move online, digital strategies must address the integration of branding and consumer purchasing in real time. Translating the path to purchase from in-store to online is not only about how a product appeals to the consumer on the shelf. We need to consider how the look translates to digital as online shopping and e-commerce continue to boom. On shelf or on screen, mobile or online, the design of your brand requires clever thinking to come up with smart, seamless and beautiful designs that are functional and flexible to go from shelf to digital.

It is for this reason that the 9th Packaging Conference on consumer insights and packaging trends will be held in Johannesburg, hosted by Stratcom Branding, a founder and active participant in the Global Local Branding Alliance (GLBA), on 2 March 2018. Stratcom Branding is known to resonate innovative packaging for the world, with the aim of building deeper connections that are smart, beneficial and beautiful.

The conference will bring together key global and South African packaging specialists to look at the trends and move packaging forward not only here in South Africa, but globally, unpacking packaging trends, with the view of creating local giants with global standards that can lead the way.

Brand decision-makers and visionaries should not miss this opportunity.

For more information on the conference or Stratcom Branding:

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About Stratcom Branding:

Known for providing commercially successful solutions for African, American, Asian and European brands, Stratcom Branding offers smart, seamless, professional problem-solving to a brand, bringing functionally relevant, emotionally engaging, technically finessed packaging to local and international markets.

A careful balance between beautiful design and absolute functionality have always been the hallmark of their philosophy. After two decades in the business, they have expanded into a global alliance that gives clients on a local level a distinct advantage. GLBA (Global Local Branding Alliance) means local outputs are reinforced with international inputs.

With over 300 global packaging innovations, designers and engineers, Stratcom Branding aims to build deeper connections through understanding and driving business branding which includes Business to Business, Business to Customer and Business to Consumer.

Their extensive Packaging, Corporate Identity and Packaging Digital competencies include: Consulting, Investigation, Strategy, Creation, Structure and Execution.

Packaging speaks volumes!

ABOUT GIDGETTE OSBORNE

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