



INNOCENT Smoothies avoids the typical image of a 'drippy' fruit

Food designs

CAROL HOUGHTON discusses how trends towards healthier lifestyles are impacting food label design

In recent years consumers have become increasingly concerned with nutrition and wellbeing. Where food was once an affordable indulgence, buying decisions are often now based on the caloric and nutritional values displayed on the main panel of a product's label. Healthy foods are no longer considered boring and tasteless and this needs to be reflected by the label and packaging.

Twenty years ago, low-calorie or fat-free products – 'lighter' versions of a regular product – were extremely popular. Generally, these products were associated with restrictive diets and were supported by quite bland packaging.

More recently, the high demand for such products encouraged a number of new brands to launch, specifically targeting the 'light' market. These brands do not have alternative products for non-calorie counting consumers, unlike, for example, Müller, which used the same brand and design for its main and 'light' yoghurt range. The only difference was the background color.

Guillermo Dufranc, graphic design coordinator at design agency Tridimage, adds, 'This

trend is so popular that "light" products are even bought by people who are not on a diet; moreover, it has become a habit for them. It is considered to be a smart choice that allows the consumer to "eat without guilt".' He believes 'light' products, are now a synonym for nature and wellness. 'This is evidently defining consumers' way of life, and that is exactly what the marketing teams need to know to identify what the new consumers' needs and interests are.'

DESIGN PARADIGMS

Dufranc says these changing market trends require new forms of communication. 'The challenge of the new era is to create products that look as if they do not want to be sold, designs which break the rules and defy the laws of tradition. Creativity has really become a basic need.'

White backgrounds, opaque matte materials and simple logotypes are particularly popular characteristics of 'healthy' food labels. Dufranc highlights the importance of using white space as a design decision – not the consequence of emptiness. 'It is important to use it thoroughly, otherwise it could be perceived as an incomplete design. Every negative packaging aspect that



HÄAGEN-DAZS Five Ice Cream design uses white background to convey purity and give a fresh, natural feeling

BELAZU'S natural origin is depicted by a tree that looks like a hand and symbolizes craft care

DESIGNED by Tridimage, Baggio Light is one of a number of products launched specifically for the 'light' market

COMPANY PROFILES:

TRIDIMAGE

The Latin American branding and structural and graphic package design agency based in Buenos Aires, Argentina and offices in Madrid, Mexico DF and Bogota works closely with clients on 'award winning design solutions'.

Contact: info@tridimage.com
www.tridimage.com

BRIDGER CONWAY INTEGRATED BRANDING

International branding and marketing agency with offices in Miami, Nueva York, Buenos Aires and Dubai has an integrated approach to branding by implementing customized marketing solutions that generate brand awareness.

Contact: Alejandra Pouchot, packaging account director – apouchot@bridgerconway.com
www.bridgerconway.com.ar

SMART PACKAGING TACKLES FOOD WASTE

An estimated five to seven percent of food is lost in the perishable food sector because of poor inventory management, according to Smithers Pira, a worldwide authority on the packaging, paper and print industry supply chains. Smart packaging systems could help deal with this waste.

An interesting response is SAP's Future Retail Centre, set up to investigate how RFID and temperature sensors on pallets and food packaging could provide real-time information to avoid wastage along the supply chain. And as recently reported in L&L, PragmatlC Printing has embarked on a project to integrate intelligent circuits into food packaging to help monitor food through the supply chain.

perfection. Brands want the image to look as real as possible, imperfection is considered an honest brand attitude.'

The new packaging design trends are not only a set of graphic resources – such as soft white illumination which creates a natural 'look and feel'. Dufranc notes a major change in the style of package texts; with more products using verbal branding with colloquial claims and phrases on the front panels. This approach talks to consumers in a more relaxed and friendly way, 'Capital letters yelling "BUY ME" are history. The new brand strategies aim to represent consumers' interests more than their own.'

Governmental requirements have also had an impact on food label and packaging design. Legally, Guided Daily Amounts (GDA) must be included to allow consumers to make informed and healthy decisions based on a product's nutritional offering.

BRAND GUIDELINES

Whatever the product category, working with strict brand guidelines presents a challenge for designers looking to create innovative packaging and labels.

Design agency BridgerConway, for example, has been working on the supermarket chain Jumbo's brand

consumers perceive will have an effect on their trust about the product. White space symbolizes purity, a direct speech which does not want to distract with decorative ornaments. The usage of white background has created a new visual language.'

CONVEY THE TASTE

The search for nutritional quality has raised the expectation for packaging design. Low quality packaging suggests a bad quality product. Dufranc adds, 'Consumers prefer natural authenticity to industrial



BELAZU'S natural origin is depicted by a tree that looks like a hand and symbolizes craft care



THE HEINZ Whole Peeled Tomatoes label depicts tomatoes in their natural environment

packaging design since early 2011. Alejandra Pouchot, packaging director of BridgerConway explains, 'Considerations need to the complexities and limitations of brand guidelines. Developing inspirational and innovative ideas using creative designs takes time and a new working approach when working within strict guidelines.'

The objective was to achieve a unique graphic identity, enabling the two product lines, Clásico and Gourmet, to be easily differentiated and recognized by consumers.

JAMMY DESIGN

A good example of a label design for a niche 'artisan' product, is Bonnie's Jams. Company owner Bonnie Shershow designed the labels herself when she first started her business, 12 years earlier. Recently she approached Louise Fli's design agency to move the product to the next level.

Originally a book cover designer, Louise Fli founded her graphic design studio in 1989, branching into restaurant and food packaging design. 'A design inspired by handmade French labels for a line of artisanal jams was appealing to me – it just needed a more professional approach' says Fli.

'In the many makeovers I have done for food packaging, I have found that a lot can be changed, as long as one or two elements stay the same. In this case, we kept the jar, changed the lid from gold to silver, and retained the black and white, all-type label. From there, I developed a font based on samples from my many collections of alphabets and handwriting, specifically from the 40s. The rubber-stamped batch number was reconfigured to look more authentically hand-crafted, and the text was arranged in a grid that could accommodate type both horizontally and vertically, for a vintage yet crisp apothecary look.'

Shershow reports that the business has doubled since the label redesign. Fli adds, 'Many people have told me that they bought the jam for the label, but then were pleasantly surprised to discover that the product was excellent.'

Fli concludes, 'This project is typical of a movement towards artisanal, hand-crafted designs in food packaging. This is a backlash against computer-driven design, and a preference for the virtues of tactility.'



LOUISE Fli recently redesigned the label design for Bonnie's Jams