

HOW TO CONDUCT THE ANNUAL PACKAGING REVIEW

Congratulations on taking the first step toward a better process for packaging excellence. Below are the basics for ensuring that your review is successful, with results that give your team a better path for future packaging activity that advances the brand, targets the consumer, sells the benefit, and competes at point-of-sale.

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The most robust annual reviews, with the richest results, occur with collaboration/input from the entire brand team: marketing, sales, consumer insights/research, design, etc.

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1. A realistic representation of your brand and competitors' packs is key.
2. Also suggested is a list of issues & questions to keep the review on-track. Here are a few mandatories:
 - Long-term brand goals.
 - Year of last major pack redesign; trends in design and package design.
 - Topline results from consumer research about this brand's packaging [last 3 years].
 - Competitive activity (current and expected).
 - Major consumer insights; opportunities for this brand.
 - Messaging in this category, from your consumers' "radar" brands, and from similar brands in any category.
 - Internal valuation of current design; risk assessment for change.

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Schedule the formal annual review well in advance; possibly a couple of months before brand plan reviews. There is some preparation involved, so putting it on the calendar during a month that is not overwhelming makes sense for best participation and completion.

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Packaging always needs to be reviewed in context. This can be an in-house packaging room with shelving that is stocked with all brands according to real-life planograms. It can also be store visits which might reveal regional issues as well. Which channels are key? Which customers? Frequently, pre-review visits are made to a number of locations, and images sent in from key regions.

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- Review the package from 3 points of view:
1. the Brand (is this package representing me the way I want to be known?)
 2. the Consumer (can I quickly understand what this brand is about, why I should buy it, what does it say about me?)
 3. the Retailer (what is the impact of this brand's packaging in the category?)
- What new strategies emerge during these discussions?
Keep an open mind, while you are considering the exciting possibilities for your brand and pack's future!

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For more help with your brand's annual packaging review, or to discuss other packaging issues with a Brandesign branding specialist, see contact information below.

www.brandesign.com 609.490.9700 info@brandesign.com
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