

# Joint enterprise

Gilchrist's **Lisa Bale** and **Barry Pritchard** of Twinings talk to *Packaging & Converting Intelligence* about the design of heritage products, the process of integrating a new carton structure with a familiar brand, and the benefits of a long-term relationship between brand and designer.



Twinings' innovative click lock packaging.

**G**ilchrist, a UK-based company specialising in brand implementation for the packaging industry, picked up a Silver Award at the 2010 Starpack Awards for its artwork on leading tea brand Twinings' innovative new click lock packaging. Twinings wanted to change the structure of its tea bag carton packaging to prevent it being compromised when handled. To reinforce the premium positioning of the brand, an innovative carton was created featuring a hinge lid and click lock closure, allowing consumers to use the packaging for the life of the product without damaging its structure.

The development of the click lock packaging was largely driven by customer feedback. "This product was developed to enhance the structure and performance of the carton," explains Barry Pritchard, international packaging development manager at

Twinings. "It presents the customer with differentiation from our competitors and reinforces our premium position."

For Lisa Bale, Twinings account director at Gilchrist since 2009, there were several advantages to using cartonboard for the click lock packaging. "It is good quality and easy to print on, but it has also led to improved performance," she says.

**“Packaging is part of the overall communication mix. We need to ensure that our packs work to support and emphasise the values of the brand in both structure and design. The strength of the brand is a key factor in our strong market share.”**

"New equipment coupled with the new profile for the click lock design means that Twinings has been able to maintain and improve line speeds, with more products going through on less energy."

#### **Man and machine**

Pritchard stresses that the company uses cartonboard from accredited

sustainable sources, but acknowledges that using the material has also led to production challenges. "As manufacturing flexibility is paramount, we needed to develop a new production line incorporating bespoke downstream lid-closing machines to match line speeds," he says. "A new multilane conveyor system was developed to manage a complex mix of SKUs using 2D matrix

coding to divert the cartons to the correct end-of-line collation.

"Specifically focusing on the click lock carton, the material performance is very important.

This was measured using the CD and MD stiffness values to ensure that the specified performance met manufacturing requirements. When conducting the initial trials, it was also important to measure the resistance of critical creases and scores to ensure consistent quality."

Twinings also faced challenges in terms of adapting the brand's design

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to fit with the new packaging configuration. This is where Gilchrist came in. “The original artwork was developed in the US for the North American market and required a diligent approach from Gilchrist to match the graphics to the demanding tolerance imposed by the new carton structure,” Pritchard explains. “Numerous sample proofs were produced to ensure full approval of the artwork layout from both marketing and manufacturing before the final sign-off.”

For Bale the biggest branding challenge was remaining consistent but also adapting the design to the new packaging structure. “We needed to keep the integrity of the design on the new packaging shape because we didn’t want to shock consumers or prevent recognition,” she remarks. “We had to make sure the prominent features of the original were on the faces and keep the key branding messages upfront. It took time to really understand how to achieve this because the packaging was very different.”

**Communication is key**

Communication between the different departments involved is also important for maintaining a brand’s heritage when a new design is launched. “Through collaboration and communication across our teams globally, we ensure that the branding and pack design stay true to the brand values,” Pritchard notes. “We have strong relationships with our design agencies and work closely with them on design briefs to likewise ensure designs reflect the brand’s essence.

“Packaging is part of the overall communication mix. We need to ensure that our packs work to support and emphasise the values of the brand both in structure and design. We also need to

ensure the tea itself and all parts of our communications – whether on pack or through media – are consistent in message. The strength of the brand is a key factor in our strong market share.”

Yet the design does vary slightly depending on the market into which it is being sold, as Bale explains. “The UK and Western European products did take a lot of new branding. We moved away from the old style logos to a new design, especially with some of the infusion blends. Twinings as a brand does have to take things slowly because of its heritage, but certainly the British and European packs have a more modern feel.”

**A brand new relationship**

Part of the success of the new Twinings packaging can be attributed

to the long-standing relationship between the established tea brand and its design partners. “We’ve worked together for a long time and understand the brand,” confirms Bale. “We have a good understanding of what works and what doesn’t because we’ve gone through a learning curve over the last six-seven years and documented everything. We were clear from the start where the brief could go and how far to push it.”

Yet it is crucial not to become complacent when working with a long-term collaborator, Bale warns: “You have to maintain a high standard and level of service; just because you know them well, you can’t take anything for granted.”

So what can the industry expect from the Gilchrist-Twinings partnership in the future? “The packaging probably won’t be redesigned for around three years,” Bale concludes. “Twinings will be looking to do special editions now they have the click lock format nailed.” ■

**Sustainable cartonboard in Europe**

The raw material of cartons is cartonboard made from wood fibres. Around 80% of the wood used to make paper and board in Europe comes from European forests, with the remainder coming from outside the EU. No tropical rainforest wood is used.

European forests used by the paper and board industry are sustainable; every year, new growth exceeds the wood harvested by an area equivalent to 1.5 million football pitches. Management of the forest for timber production and leisure activities also provides economic benefits to the owners and local communities.

Forest owners and operators carefully manage their forests and can prove that their forests are well-managed through certification schemes such as PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes) and FSC (Forest Stewardship Council). A ‘chain of custody’ certificate provides traceability at each stage of the processing of the wood.

Founded in 1999, the PEFC Council is an independent, not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation that promotes sustainable managed forests through independent third-party certification. The PEFC provides assurance to purchasers of wood and paper products that they are promoting the sustainable management of forests. With responsibility for more than 220 million hectares of certified forests, (two thirds of the global certified area) PEFC is the largest certification scheme.

The Forest Stewardship Council is an independent, not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation, established to promote the responsible management of the world’s forests. It provides standard-setting, trademark assurance and accreditation services for companies and organisations interested in responsible forestry.

While there is overlap in the types of forest certified by these two schemes, the FSC scheme is more generally applied to large forest areas typical of state and forest industry ownership, while the PEFC is used for the certification of smaller private and family owned forests.

Source: Pro Carton, European Association of Carton and Cartonboard Manufacturers