

THE DESIGN OF AN INSPIRATIONAL TOOL FOR PACKAGING DESIGNERS

TO DESIGN PACKAGING THAT WILL BE RECYCLED BY THE CONSUMER

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Subject

The goal of the assignment was to design an inspirational tool for packaging designers, which contains guidelines for designing packaging that the consumer will recycle faster.

Background Information & Relevance

At this moment people in the Netherlands recycle way too little, about 50% of the household waste is collected separately. The government wants this percentage to rise to 75% in 2020. To achieve this, next to the responsibility of the Dutch government and the municipalities, one way to (partly) achieve this is by communicating through packaging. There has not been that much research into the connection between packaging and recycling behaviour of the consumer. This assignment focusses on that connection, through the eye of packaging design.

Approach

To get an insight in all the different and important views on recycling by consumers and the packaging involved, literature research has been done and interviews are conducted. This research was based on three different actors, namely the consumers, the recyclers and packaging designers. In this research some interesting findings were made. Although there are no fixed guidelines, some brands already use the logos of the 'Weggooiwijzer' from the KIDV (Knowledge Institute Sustainable Packaging) that explain to the consumer how to recycle each part of the packaging. Also 'images of nature', texts and an ecological appearance are mentioned as things consumers should experience as sustainable. At the same time it was found that consumers do not like it when packaging deliberately stimulates them. It also appears that consumers often have a different perception of what is sustainable than what is actually sustainable. What can be recycled and how is for most of the consumers general knowledge, although there is still lots of pollution in waste streams.

The findings of this research are used to set up a user test in which two questionnaires were used, one for a 'control'-group and one for a 'test'-group. The goal of the test was to compare the outcomes of both surveys with each other. In the testgroup, the respondents saw edited images of packaging, with for example logos, motivating texts, nature images and ecological appearance. Next to testing the influence of this edited packaging, there was also tested if the respondents knew how to separate packaging and they were asked about their definition of sustainable packaging and how well they separated packaging on different locations.

Results & Limitations

The results found in the user test showed that it was very clear that logos and texts regarding recycling ensure that the consumer sees the packaging as more sustainable and more positive. Although consumers think they know how to recycle, the results show that consumers do not really know how to separate certain packages. While logos and texts make the consumer think packaging is more sustainable, the influence on the recycling itself is questionable. At the same time the edited images did influence the respondents, they thought sustainability was much more important for packaging than the controlgroup said it was. Also, very clear was that consumers are paying close attention to separating when at home, but not when they are at for instance their school or sport club.

Out of all the results an inspirational tool was set up, in the form of a document that can be used as a booklet but also as an online document. It contains information about graphical options, materials, sales locations and a chapter about what goes wrong often. In a flowchart all the chapters can be found in the direction that is followed when designing. Some images of the final deliverable can be found below.

Conclusions & Recommendations

In conclusion, it can be stated that the goal of the assignment, to design an inspirational tool for packaging designers is achieved. Although there is done lots of research, it is still possible that the consumer will not recycle packaging, for instance due to low biospherical values, but it will be very hard to change that. Next to the conclusion, some recommendations can be made. The inspirational tool that was made works at this moment, but in the waste section there is a lot going on now and in the upcoming years. The way waste is collected and general knowledge could change and next to this there is also a discussion going on about deposit money on small plastic bottles. While the tool is good for now, it could be completely outdated in a few years. For this reason, it would be recommended to update the document once a year. When doing this, the printed version would get outdated soon so it would be a good addition if a website would be built around this document. Another recommendation would be to further research which design cues exactly influence specific recycling behaviour and how.

ONTWERPEN VAN VERPAKKINGEN

ZODAT DE CONSUMENT DEZE OP DE JUISTE WIJZE RECYCLED



MEER INFORMATIE?

Op zoek naar meer informatie of naar specifieke situaties? Kijk dan eens op de volgende websites:

- Milieucentraal.nl: Alles over energie en milieu in het dagelijks leven
- KIDVal: Website van het Kennisinstituut Duurzame Verpakken
- Verenigingsafvalbedrijven.nl: De vereniging afvalbedrijven behartigt de belangen van bedrijven die actief zijn in de totale afvalketen
- Recyclingplatform.nl: Recycling Platform biedt het laatste nieuws over recycling, afval en hergebruik van materialen.
- Rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/afval: De Rijksoverheid over afval en recycling

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