

Holographic Packaging The 6th "p" Of Marketing Mix ?

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Aug. 22, 2009 - [PRLog](#) -- Packaging is the dress code of any brand. It is the 6th element of the marketing mix which is heavily integrated into our daily lives, which we see all around us, on everyday items such as chocolate bars and potato chip packets. Packaging is distinct from “packing”, and plays an integral part now, since we live in an economy where there is adoption of branded products and widespread consumer preferences.

However, if we look at it from the manufacturer’s point of view manufacturers take great pains in making their products. Then they spend great sums to market their product. The consumer accepts it and it is a great success. Soon they get unwanted publicity. Though all of the assets are protected, the “golden goose”, that is the brand, is unprotected. This is because, unknowingly, the consumer often buys products that resemble what they want (counterfeits). If you think it will not happen to you, think again. Fake spurious and counterfeit products have flooded the market. The reason they are so popular with counterfeiters is that they are money spinning brands with a wide appeal and can be easily reproduced and sold in the Indian market. The problem is so widespread and compelling that it even has arch rivals Hindustan Lever and Procter & Gamble working with FICCI’s Mumbai-based Brand Protection Committee, which comprises 20 FMCG companies. The spread of new printing technologies has facilitated proliferation of counterfeits. This is a grave cause of concern for companies because fake products often ride on the success of the original product, eating into sales, and, in some cases, harming the consumer. Every time a company tries to shake off fakers by altering the design or colour of its products, counterfeiters are usually only a few days behind them.

Add to this, getting manufacturers to get their product noticed on the shelf & market, can be even more difficult. Today, in India India, where supermarkets chains are increasing day by day, some 30,000 items fight for a shopper’s attention on an average trip to the supermarket. Research shows that nearly two thirds of those items are not noticed at all. Unseen is unsold, quips one expert in shelf psychology. According to American Psychologist Schwartz, “we need to completely rethink the belief that increased choice means increased satisfaction. The range of choice today is so immense that one always has the nagging feeling of have actually made the wrong one.

It is certainly amazing that companies spend crores of rupees on marketing to increase their market share by a few per cent, but do not consider the effect anti-counterfeit measures can have on their market share, at a much lower cost. Data from around the world indicates that brands protected by overt anti-counterfeit measures have benefited from increased sales, through a great reduction in counterfeits, leading to increased consumer confidence in the brand. The best strategy to increase sales and also counteract counterfeits is to use innovative tamper-proof packaging, multiple holograming practices and periodically changing authentication measures on a product specific basis. Today the most cost-effective method to combat counterfeiting and build consumer confidence is the incorporation of hologram image on the product or packaging. Holograms as anti-counterfeit devices are so successful that now over 40 currencies around the world have holograms as part of the anti-counterfeit protection system - including the Swiss Frank, Euro, British Sterling, Japanese Yen, etc. One important application in recent times is the use of holographic material as a packaging material.

There are various types of holographic materials used as packaging materials. They are Holographic Packaging Films, Hologram Hot stamping Foils, Holographic Aluminum Foils, Hologram Labels, Hologram Tape/Security Tape, Hologram Stickers. Nowadays, package designers are familiar with holographic treatments like a laminated film or transfer films.

These holographic materials are used in a variety of sectors such as

- Food industry sectors
- Toiletries
- Dental products
- Wine and spirits
- Tobacco
- Detergent sector
- Personal health care products
- Pharmaceutical products

In recent years, holographic special effects have become more affordable due to advantages like;

1) Holography adorns packages around the world by providing an added dimension of distinctiveness and **BRAND IDENTITY**

2) Customer perceives higher value addition, since holography **PROVIDES DIFFERENTIATION** and shelf appeal that brings product to the front on the shelf – In this era, where customers face the psychology of choice, everyday, holography helps in getting the attention of the customers and moving the product off the shelf. This is because holographic images can “move” and “speak” to consumers through optical motion, and packages with holograms provide enough enticing eye candy to attract attention and gravitate toward the package. For e.g. In February 1999, when Colgate-Palmolive Canada decided to enter the whitening toothpaste market for the first time, it knew it had to capture attention quickly in a lively, competitive environment and the Colgate name alone wasn't going to do that.

3) Inherent use of holography **AGAINST COUNTERFEIT** helps to build in levels of security and authentication – In reality, all products are subject to counterfeiting. Counterfeiting and tampering can undermine consumers trust in the quality and safety of a branded product, leading to a loss in market share. Due to the inherent nature of the hologram, it prevents tampering and counterfeiting. Hence proper holographic packaging on consumer goods serves an important way for brand protection and also protection of the brand's integrity. For e.g. In 1989, Glaxo welcome (then Glaxo) discovered that its ulcer-treatment drug Zantac distributed in the United Kingdom was being counterfeited. The dupe's packaging was so good, said a Glaxo representative, that it literally took a magnifying glass to prove that it was counterfeit. To prevent this from happening again, Glaxo started using a holographic tamper-evident closure seal for packages sent to the UK and told users that the appearance of a hologram denotes authenticity.

4) Greater impact at the point of sale as they differentiate package from the competition due to new and **INNOVATIVE PACKAGING METHODS** - For e.g. When Nicolas Feuillatte was considering a unique package to display its champagne for the 2005 holiday season, they decided to use holography. The basic idea was to create a package that would make its brand stand out in a category specially known for its stunning packages. What made this package unique was the innovative way in which the holographic film was incorporated into the package, producing a dramatic and strikingly beautiful and attractive box.

5) **ENHANCED AESTHETICS** ensuring a Premium look - In the end, it is important to realise that the advancement of printing and packaging technologies is not only benefiting manufacturers, it is also helping counterfeiters. The use of holography is a cost-effective way of countering which, also, adds to the attractiveness of the package. Across the whole range of packaging applications, there is no more creative

or secure medium than holography. Hologram and Holographic effects have proved themselves successfully for packaging of branded products, foods, pharmaceuticals & hi-tech products and promotions for many years. These catch a consumer's attention and also prevent someone from devising a similar package. To combat illegal duplication of a product, companies need to incorporate holographic effects into packaging and develop unique holographic designs that will serve as a "visual cue of authenticity" that will be easily recognizable by users. Manufacturers must stay one technological step ahead of counterfeiters, and that step is holography.

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The Hologram Manufacturers Association of India (HOMAI) is a non-profit organisation established in 1998 to represents and promotes the interest of hologram industry in India as well as to fight against counterfeiting.

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State/Province	Delhi
Zip	110019
Country	India
Industry	Advertising , Consumer , Marketing
Tags	P S Of Marketing , Homai , Innovative Packaging Methods , Holography Provides Differentiation , Brand Identity , Packaging
Link	https://prlog.org/10318131



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