

USER-FRIENDLY PACKAGING

The process step by step



If you produce or design packaging and want to develop a more user-friendly packaging you can benefit from dividing the process into eight phases. Here you find a description of the first seven phases, their purpose, who they involve in- and outside the company and what activities they imply.

At www.userfriendlypackaging.com you can also download work documents for each separate phase as well as read more about the individual methods used in the process.

PHASE 1: INSIGHT



Purpose:

Starting a process leading to a more user-friendly packaging.

Result:

Deciding which product or products to work further with and whether it involves changing an existing packaging or designing a new one.

Involved:

Project manager in cooperation with management/decision-maker.

Activities:

- Packaging analysis of the company's existing products:
 - a) Packaging analysis
 - b) Test your packaging via mechanical tests
- Target group definition and analysis.
- Design frame for the project: new packaging or redesign?
- Estimation of project limitations.

A working document has been developed for phase 1. The document can be used for packaging analysis and you can download it from www.userfriendlypackaging.com.

Tip: A project on user-friendly packaging has a broad scope

A project on user-friendly packaging gives a broad insight into how the end users use the company's products, and this insight can be used for a variety of other initiatives and not merely for user-friendly packaging. So if the company faces change in packaging or investment in production lines the time will be well spent on user analyses.

PHASE 2: RESEARCH



Purpose:

Gathering knowledge to form a base for packaging decisions and to identify questions for end user analyses.

Result:

Thorough description of the purpose of end user analyses as well as a work plan for this.

Involved:

Project manager and marketing department.

Activities:

- Competitor analysis:
 - a) How are similar products packed?
 - b) What packaging mechanisms are available on the market which could be used for the company's products?
- How can the new packaging stand out from the rest?

Examples of focus areas:

- Opening of packaging with or without tools
- Situations for use – e.g. on-the-go or at home
- The end users' serving needs and shared needs
- Re-sealing and storage
- Disposal

Competitor analysis and question design can probably be carried out using existing company knowledge concerning market, customers and competitors.

Tip: Choose one purpose for the end user study

Often companies wish to investigate everything when designing questions for the end users. The best result, however, will be obtained by having one primary purpose for the analysis. We recommend testing maximum five products in each end user study. Otherwise it will become quite confusing for the end users.

PHASE 3: USER OBSERVATIONS



Purpose:

To use interviews/video observations to identify the actual end user needs concerning the company's products and thereby inspire innovation.

Result:

Video clips with important insight concerning the company's products and possibilities, to be used in the workshop for the entire company.

Involved:

Project manager and interviewer.

Activities:

- Selection of three to five end users from the target group.
- Procurement of products for test.
- Conduct end user study.
- Viewing and selecting video clips.

A working document has been developed for phase 3. The document can be used for end user observation and you can download it from www.userfriendlypackaging.com.

Tip: Ask neutral questions and document the user study

It is important to keep the questions neutral during an interview in order to make the results as credible as possible. The study ought to be documented efficiently enough to make a person who has not been present understand the coherence and the points. Alternatively photos and detailed notes can replace video.

PHASE 4: WORKSHOP



Purpose:

Initiating the concept development towards a more user-friendly packaging as well as obtaining a mutual insight and understanding for user-friendly packaging in the entire company.

Result:

Obtaining mutual understanding and gathering concrete ideas in the company concerning user-friendly packaging issues.

Involved:

Let all parts of the company participate: Development, production, sales and marketing, packaging supplier and management representatives.

Activities:

- The project manager presents insight and research from phase 1 and 2 for the workshop participants.
- Possibly presentation by external speakers on e.g. new packaging technologies.
- Divide the participants into groups of 3–5 persons with different backgrounds.
- The groups watch video clips from the end user observations and makes a note of insights on video cards.
- Concept development – insights from the videos are used to consider new packaging solutions for the company's products. You may use concept cards to document the different ideas.
- Presentation of ideas (a good thing to capture on video).
- Prioritisation of ideas and decision on who's responsible for the further work.

Video cards and concept cards have been developed for phase 4. The cards can be downloaded from www.userfriendlypackaging.com.

Tip: Represent all angles

Make sure that the groups consist of persons with different occupational backgrounds in order to ensure that all occupational points of view are represented so that all parts of the organisation will embrace ownership.

PHASE 5: CONCEPT ANALYSIS



Purpose:

To gather knowledge and continue to work with the concepts developed in phase 4 in order to determine which ideas should be implemented.

Result:

That realisable concepts are chosen and thoroughly described.

Involved:

Project manager, marketing department, production department and packaging supplier, possibly graphic designer.

Activities:

- Prioritisation of phase 4 ideas
- Compile ideas into concept groups
- Outline and verify the demands connected with each concept.

A working document has been developed for phase 5. The document can be used for concept analysis and you can download it from www.userfriendlypackaging.com.

Tip: Involve technical knowledge

It can be very useful to involve technical knowledge in this phase, as well as documenting why some ideas are dropped in the further process.

PHASE 6: PROTOTYPE



Purpose:

To manufacture a prototype as this can be used when testing end users and company representatives.

Result:

A prototype which is as similar to the final packaging design as possible in order to provide a useful test result regarding function, resealing, durability, graphic communication etc.

Involved:

Project manager, production, packaging supplier, marketing, possibly designer.

Activities:

- Obtain offers for the chosen packaging solutions.
- Production and first adjustments of packaging prototype.

Tip: Test the prototype

It is important to test the prototype on end users before putting it into production.

PHASE 7: EVALUATION



Purpose:

Evaluation of the user-friendliness of the final solution as well as making any adjustments needed in order to put the solution into production.

Result:

Final solution ready to be implemented into production.

Involved:

Project manager and management/decision-maker.

Activities:

- End user observations of prototype.
- Mechanical tests of prototype.
- Evaluation of how the new packaging influences production, distribution, economy.
- Adjustments of prototype.

Tip: Involve end users

It is crucial once again to involve the end users in this last phase of the process in order to ensure the user-friendliness all the way through to the final product. Furthermore it can be very beneficial to involve representatives with different occupational background once again. Having made the final adjustments of the prototype the packaging can be put into production.