



Melinda drives engagement with farmer-centric marketing using digitally printed boxes

When Melinda wanted to showcase its apple farmers in a marketing campaign, the company decided to use its packaging to tell their personal stories. Using HP digital print, Melinda printed 1000 farmers' photos, each with a personal message, on 3.2 million carry-home apple boxes. Seeing a great response in stores and across social media, Melinda plans to expand the campaign and include even more farmers.



Industry sector: Corrugated packaging

Brand name: Melinda Consortium

Testimonial from: Andrea Fedrizzi, Marketing and Communications Manager

Print Service Provider: Ghelfi Ondulati in Sondrio, Italy

HP equipment: HP PageWide T1170 Press

Websites: www.melinda.it, www.ghelfiondulati.com





Challenge

"It's important to show that our apples are different because of the valleys they are grown in and the proud people who grow them. What could be better than to put the faces of our farmers on the boxes?"

—Andrea Fedrizzi, Marketing and Communications Manager, Melinda

Reinforce the brand image of quality apples through the story of quality farmers

Melinda is a consortium of 4000 apple farmers in Italy's Val di Non and Val di Sole valleys. The farms are all family-owned, with many in the same family for several generations.

Following its hugely successful 2016 package marketing campaign, combining digitally printed boxes with social media to raise money for earthquake-devastated families, Melinda decided to leverage the power of its packaging again – this time for a new campaign dedicated to its farmers.

Melinda recognizes that the quality of its farmers and soil-rich valleys are key to the brand, so the consortium allocated part of its 2019 marketing budget to create the new custom box campaign.

"We allocated funding from our marketing budget for special, digitally printed boxes because the package is one of the best ways to communicate the message," says Andrea Fedrizzi, Melinda's marketing and communications manager.

The campaign concept called for photos of their many farmers, together with a personal quote, to be printed on the smaller, take-home sized boxes. "Transparency is essential. We want to enable consumers to look at the face of the producers, to see real people selling real products. It couldn't be models or actors," says Fedrizzi. "It was a cool idea."

For more information on HP's Corrugated Packaging Solutions:
hp.com/go/corrugatedpackaging

Solution

"We needed the right partner to be able to print the photos and quotes in a dynamic way on the boxes. It was obvious to us that HP technology would be the best for the job."

—Andrea Fedrizzi, Marketing and Communications Manager, Melinda

Smart packaging design and high-quality digital printing tell the farmers' quality story

Before embarking on the project, Melinda validated the concept through a neuro-engagement study, which showed that fruit boxes featuring photos of people's faces attracted more attention, handling, and purchases than boxes without the photos.

Several photo shoots were conducted around the consortium's region. Each farmer was asked to provide a statement about themselves, their region, their apples, or the importance of sustainability.

It turned to corrugated packaging converter Ghelfi Ondulati to produce 3.2 million boxes on its HP PageWide T1170 Press, using food-safe true water-based inks. The 1000 different versions were printed in high quality on the top liner, which Ghelfi then converted and finished.

With its HP solutions, Ghelfi has extensive experience in digital printing for fruit and vegetable packaging. With that it helps companies across Europe achieve greater consumer engagement over a diverse range of applications.

Although Melinda was already experienced with HP PageWide printing from its previous Ghelfi-produced campaign, Fedrizzi said he was amazed by the high print quality. "When I saw the first boxes come out, I congratulated Ghelfi because it was really great work. The images were very sharp. Even better than I imagined."

Along with the packaging campaign, Melinda's promotional agency executed a broad social media campaign using the images from the packaging and behind-the-scenes video clips from the photoshoots.

Results

"I'm super proud of this campaign. We're happy because it's working with farmers and with the market, and the communications are generating great PR."

—Andrea Fedrizzi, Marketing and Communications Manager, Melinda

Buy-in, buzz, and increased sales

The packaging campaign has produced excellent results on multiple levels – among farmers and consumers, on social media, and in the stores.

"When the farmers see themselves on the package, they are really proud," says Fedrizzi. "They are telling us how great it is that for the first time they can help market our consortium."

Fedrizzi confirms that the farmer-centric campaign is positively impacting purchases. "It certainly helped our sales. There was a great response at the stores and we sold a lot of apples in the first eight weeks."

The momentum of consumer response is self-perpetuating. Farmers see their boxes and share the experience on Facebook and Instagram. Likewise, consumers see farmers from their area on the boxes and they share it with their friends and the farmers. As a result of the constant buzz, additional farmers from the consortium now want to be on the boxes too.

Fedrizzi says: "We're getting the buy-in and engagement not just of customers but also of the people that are supplying our apples. We've met our goals, so we are very happy."

But Melinda is not stopping there. The consortium plans to expand the campaign to include as many of the remaining 3000 farmers who want to participate. With that, Melinda is working on a mini-website, due to launch with the expanded packaging campaign.

