



Packaging Europe Puts Subscribers on the Map with a Unique Unboxing Experience

As a magazine dedicated to keeping packaging professionals and decision makers up-to-date with market innovations and trends, Packaging Europe knows that the package itself is an ideal vehicle for delivering a branded message. To prove its point, the publication partnered with HP and LIC Packaging on its New Year's 2019 edition, for a unique unboxing experience that put the magazine, and its readers, on the map.



Industry sector: Corrugated Packaging

Brand name: Packaging Europe

Testimonial from: Tim Sykes, Head of Content, Packaging Europe and Gareth Harrey, Head of Studio, Packaging Europe

Print Service Provider: LIC Packaging

HP equipment: HP PageWide C500 Press

Websites: packagingeurope.com, licpackaging.com



Challenge

“Customization of packaging according to geography appears to be a shrewd strategy for international brands to engage with consumers on a local scale.”

– Tim Sykes, Head of Content, Packaging Europe

Enhance loyalty and demonstrate the power of geo-targeted packaging

Packaging Europe, a leading industry publication is read by 30,000 packaging professionals and decision makers looking to learn about industry innovations. Among the current hot topics is the increasing trend to treat the delivery box as a vehicle for delivering a branded message direct to the customer.

But Packaging Europe is more than a storyteller; it’s a publication that likes to practice what it preaches. And so the idea for #unboxingEurope was born. A unique project to create multi-versioned packaging for its New Year 2019 edition. Something that would engage readers and create social media buzz. The goal was two-fold – to demonstrate to readers how packaging could be used as a powerful media channel to generate digital engagement, and to prove its effectiveness as a measurable marketing tool.

“The possibilities opened up by digital print is a huge topic for us and we decided to conduct our own experiment in customization with the marketing objective of enhancing the reader experience and attracting new subscribers,” says Tim Sykes, Head of Content, Packaging Europe.

“We hit on the idea of customizing boxes with designs reflecting the geography of the reader,” continues Gareth Harrey, Head of Studio, Packaging Europe. “Then we thought of making something that was greater than the sum of its parts to create a great wow effect!”

To do this, the magazine needed the ideal partners, which it found in HP and the Italian converter LIC Packaging and its HP PageWide C500 Press.

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

Solution

“Working with the HP PageWide C500 Press gave me the freedom to come up with a concept without being weighed down by typical packaging or printing constraints.”

– Gareth Harrey, Head of Studio, Packaging Europe

Customized boxes that connect with readers

Packaging Europe decided to create 20 different versions of the corrugated box for its New Year’s edition, digitally printed with a stylized map per geographic region. All the versions would then fit together to form a complete map of Europe, creating a beautiful piece of corrugated art that would serve as the campaign’s prize.

Having recently seen a demonstration of the HP PageWide C500 Press, Sykes was impressed by the lifelike printing quality it delivers directly to the corrugated substrate, and by the turnaround time. He notes: “The ability to create 20 different versions and turn that around really fast was a perfect fit for our marketing needs.”

Implementation began with a die-cut corrugated sleeve created by the HP marketing team. Packaging Europe then designed the graphics using typography from the mass transit systems and newspapers of the 20 featured countries in order to increase local relevance. Once the design was complete, the boxes were printed by LIC Packaging on its HP PageWide C500 Press. And as Harrey says: “The results were simply stunning.”

Once the boxes were ready, it was time to create some buzz. Subscribers were invited to video their unboxing experience and share it on Twitter, giving them the chance to win the full set of boxes.

Some 7,700 New Years’ 2019 editions of Packaging Europe were shipped to the magazine’s European subscribers at the end of January, and the impact of #unboxingEurope began to unfold.

Results

“The campaign has generated great PR and has exposed Packaging Europe to hundreds of potential new subscribers.”

– Tim Sykes, Head of Content, Packaging Europe

A marketing masterpiece that increased new subscriptions by 94%

According to Sykes, the #unboxingEurope campaign was a huge success. Recipients of the 20 packaging versions in 43 countries were greatly impressed by the marketing masterpiece they received. As requested, many took to social media to share their reactions, and win the coveted full map prize. In fact, the results were so positive, that Packaging Europe saw a 94% increase in new subscribers, proving digitally printed customization can generate both digital engagement and bottom-line conversions.

The idea of connecting different locations to build a bigger map showed how something local could fit into the global framework of a company, supporting its products and marketing campaigns.

In addition to creative flexibility, the campaign also demonstrated the efficiency of digital printing in terms of production times, as well as supply chain savings.

With more than 650 Packaging Europe subscribers directly involved in the corrugated industry, and around 3500 operating as brand owners or retailers, the campaign did more than market Packaging Europe. It did double duty by raising awareness among packaging buyers of the possibilities of digital corrugated printing and by serving as an effective platform for demonstrating the powers of corrugated customization to European packaging converters.

“A customized box makes people feel special and a unique unboxing experience is something people want to show off to others,” concludes Sykes. In other words: Digitally printed packaging is an ideal marketing platform with unlimited potential that’s only now beginning to be unwrapped.

