

# Raising Packaging Compliance and Capabilities

## Consumer Acceptance Survey

### Summary of Findings



This is a brief synopsis of the research conducted by Mintel on behalf of the London Trading Standards Authorities (LoTSA) in May 2005.

It highlights some key results and presents challenges for businesses and Trading Standards services.

The aim of the research was to gain an understanding of what consumers perceive to be 'acceptable packaging'. The Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2003, with which all new packaging must comply, is intended to reduce levels of packaging, but is contingent on what is 'acceptable' to consumers.

### Key Findings

**93%** of consumers agree (of which 62% strongly agree) that Manufacturers should be encouraged to reduce the amount of packaging used.

**80%** would accept less packaging on computer peripherals e.g. a computer mouse

**78%** would accept less packaging on skincare products.

**75%** would accept less packaging on an Easter Egg.

**55%** thought that packaging often gives a misleading impression of the amount of goods inside.

**51%** feel that products at Christmas are over packaged

Consumers are prepared to accept less packaging on higher priced goods

Those under 35 are significantly less likely to be interested in issues in support of packaging reduction, and especially true in the teenage group.

There is in general stronger opinion in favour of reducing levels of packaging in London and the South.

### of Frequently Bought Goods

- The research found a high level of interest amongst the general population in the principle of reducing packaging.
- On average, over half of the nationally representative sample claimed to be in favour of reduced packaging for both food and non-food products bought from a supermarket.

- Almost two-thirds of Londoners would like to see reduced packaging on food products sold in supermarkets.
- Of the sample, 45% would like to see packaging reduced on non-food products bought from a supermarket.
- A significant number of people who were shown digitally reduced packaging options for various products stated they would be prepared to accept the reduced packaging option.
- High levels of support for reduced packaging was for Easter Egg's, where the packaging for the example shown comprised several different packaging components.
- Just over half of the nationally representative sample supported the view that packaging on Christmas gifts is often excessive. 48% of Londoners agreed that products sold at Christmas are often over packaged.
- Reduced packaging was also acceptable amongst purchasers of computer peripherals, DVDs, DIY tools, toys and skincare products.

### Specific products selected by LoTSA

During the research process, the nationally representative sample were shown photographs of a range of products packaged in their original packaging, as found in the high street, and with a reduced alternative, digitally enhanced. This included an Easter Egg, a PC Card, a DVD, a Skin Care Cosmetic, Jewellery, a Toy Footballer, a PC Mouse, a Pen, a DIY Tool and a set of Headphones. The survey asked respondents to determine whether they would accept a high level of packaging if they were buying the goods for themselves, or as presents. The results showed that:

#### Goods bought as presents

- More purchasers voted for reduced packaging on pens, jewellery, toys and computer peripherals when being bought for someone else.
- Over two thirds of the nationally representative sample of Easter Egg purchasers were in favour of reducing the packaging if the egg was being bought as a present.
- One third of Londoners felt products sold at Christmas, intended for people to give as gifts, are over packaged.
- Londoners are more accepting of lower levels of packaging when buying a present for someone else, when buying for themselves however, this tendency was not as strong!
- In general, consumers would be prepared to accept reduced packaging on products being bought as a present.

## **Goods bought for self**

- 12% of the national sample agreed that they like to buy day-to-day products which are attractively packaged.
- More purchasers voted for reduced packaging on DVD's, DIY Tools, toys and skin care cosmetics when being bought for personal use.
- Some 80% of computer peripheral purchasers would be prepared to accept less packaging for a PC mouse when bought for their own use.
- Londoners tend to be more accepting of products using less packaging than the national average.

## **Britons Want Reduced Packaging**

Participants in the survey were directly asked whether they believed manufacturers should be encouraged to reduce the amount of packaging used in their products. Here, there was little room for ambiguity, this was reflected in the responses which showed that: -

- Well over nine in ten agreed with the statement that manufacturers should be encouraged to reduce packaging. Indeed, almost two thirds strongly agreed, showing a strong groundswell of opinion in favour of cutting packaging.
- Only 5% of British consumers disagreed with the statement.

Base: 1,971 adults

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Source: NOP/Mintel