

Q&A

Unique packaging strategies can help retailers wow their customers

An executive conversation with **Mark Schlossman**, vice president of sales and marketing, Accurate Box



Even before the pandemic, consumer behavior has been changing. Throughout the years, more people have begun to favor shopping online over going into stores. And this is particularly true for the younger generations. Now, with COVID-19, even fewer people are shopping in stores, and retailers are scrambling to find new ways to dazzle consumers. Digital Commerce 360 spoke with Mark Schlossman, vice president of sales and marketing at Accurate Box, a corrugated high graphics box manufacturer, to discuss how retailers can wow customers by creating unique experiences with packaging.

How would you describe today's customers' shopping expectations?

Generally speaking, the internet is relatively new. And as it has evolved, so has the behaviors of people who use it. Their shopping expectations are greater than ever. COVID-19 has only accelerated those changes. Some retailers and brands had to close their doors, which resulted in an explosion of people shopping online.

As these businesses continue to grow through their online sales, they have an opportunity to impress their existing and new customers with the online orders they ship to them. Today a salesperson may not have the chance to hand a customer a beautifully bagged item from across the sales counter, but the brand can ship a beautifully packaged product to that customer's home.

How can packaging help them better compete in today's ecommerce landscape?

Years ago, no one cared about how a product was packaged and sent to you. If it showed up, the customer was happy. But as more people shop online, expectations for nice packaging have begun to increase. Today, people make bigger, more expensive purchases online—whether it's luxury clothing or electronics. And they want their experience of receiving those products to match what they would experience if they bought it in a store.

What are the drivers behind these increasing expectations?

"Unboxing" videos—in which a presenter opens a package and shows viewers its contents—have helped increase customers' expectations around packaging, particularly with younger shoppers. These younger shoppers are more accustomed to shopping online, and they frequently share their experiences, positive or negative, on social media and on unboxing sites. If an expensive product shows up in a disappointing package—and that unboxing presenter has many followers—it can be very damaging to that brand.

Additionally, consumers are increasingly conscious about climate change. They want sustainability and recyclability in the packages they receive. Accurate Box makes packaging that is 100% recyclable and focuses on being a sustainable company, so we are thrilled to see more importance placed on the environment by the consumer.

What might be some unusual ways brands can stand out to customers?

Accurate Box is an independent and progressive company that has invested a lot in technology and machinery that allows us to create packaging that wows customers. For example, we can print on foil paper and use inks that are scratch-and-sniff and change color in sunlight. We can also print holographic images, as known as motion coat, that creates the illusion of movement on a box and QR codes so retailers and brands can drive customers to various promotions through their packaging.

Customers today have come to expect to be wowed by the brands with which they shop. This is the future of packaging in ecommerce.



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