

Sustainable Packaging 101

What It Is, What It Does & Why It Works

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Packaging is a constantly changing and evolving industry. The idea of sustainable packaging has become more and more prevalent over the course of the last year or two. In order to deduce market impact in terms of sustainable packaging, one must first understand what sustainable packaging is. In layman's terms sustainable packaging is packaging development to best reduce negative ecological effect, and overall environmental impact. Sustainable packaging is a positive step in the right direction in terms of the packaging industries green initiative.

Sustainable packaging reduces the use of resources required to produce effective packaging solutions. The packaging is developed through the utilization of eco- friendly materials. Eco-friendly material is best defined as any type of product that will not harm the environment whether in production, usage, disposal or decomposition. Eco-friendly material can be created from scratch or developed through the reuse of recyclable materials. Let's discuss the top three benefits of sustainable packaging as published by Industrial packaging, a New England based packaging organization specializing in the production of several sustainable market options.

- 1. Carbon Footprint Reduction** - Carbon Footprint is the amount of Carbon Dioxide and other Carbon Compounds emitted into the environment through industrial practice. The manufacturing process used within sustainable packaging takes a more environmentally conscious approach with fewer chemical additives and the implementation of earth friendly materials.
- 2. More Available space** - When you decide to make the packaging you use more sustainable, chances are you are finding more creative ways to make sure that you are being efficient about how much packaging material you use and how. Typically when this shift to sustainable packaging happens you end up with more space.
- 3. Allergen and Toxin Free** - Most biodegradable packaging options are non-toxic and allergy free. Though biodegradable flexible packaging options are not plentiful yet, they are available and making their way to better affordability and easy implementation. Some lines of bioplastics are able to run on the same machinery that regular flexible materials are run, making the transition easier.

The truth of the matter is simple, sustainable packaging is sure to become the way of the future. According to many market reports, sustainable packaging is growing rapidly. It's estimated that the market is growing by 6-7% annually and by 2026 Sustainable Packaging market value will have grown to over \$2,500,000,000. Conscious consumers and industry owners alike are continuing to become more environmentally aware as they commit to environmental responsibility in terms of production and raw material usage. It will be interesting to observe upcoming sustainable packaging trends, successes and failures over the course of the next decade. However, one thing is for sure, sustainable packaging is here to stay.