



PACKAGING DIGEST
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Chocolate bars pair up in traypack

Some packaging ideas are golden from the outset. At Lindt & Sprüngli's Stratham, NH, operation, packaging for a single, specific type of retail outlet is sweetening the marketer's 1998 profit outlook.

Developed exclusively for sale through the Sam's clubstore chain, a paperboard tray framing two of L&S's larger Lindt premium chocolate bars represents the use of minimal materials for maximal movement through the holiday season. Measuring approximately $7^{1/2} \times 11^{3/4}$ in., the shrink-wrapped tray establishes a self-service showcase for the long-established Swiss chocolates; and it is easily gift wrapped.

With distribution started last fall, the package is also a superb opportunity for L&S to build an additional consumer base for its products in a highly competitive category. Powerful graphic components expressed on gold-paper wrappers for 300-g (10.58-oz.) Swiss milk chocolate with whole hazelnuts and Swiss bittersweet chocolate could well prove memorable to consumers who seek the products in other retail outlets after the two bars are a pleasant memory.

An exclusive

The innovative tray, which effectively protects the bars through the entire distribution cycle as well as enhancing the perception of Lindt quality in the consumer's mind, is licensed exclusively for the Sam's application for one year, PD is told by Victoria Duffy, marketing coordinator and project leader at L&S. Designed and developed by Powers Packaging Group, the tray is supplied to the marketer in ready-to-load condition for manual filling and automated shrink wrapping.

PPG president Bill Powers explains to PD the tray is formed from a single blank that is die cut "with spring-loaded ends that set up as the tray is filled in the plant, becoming a clamp carton. The board is heavy enough to arch slightly on all sides as the shrink film is applied, improving its grip on the bar wrappers and creating an attractive picture frame effect."

During production of the tray blanks, the infold flaps are glued only in the longitudinal direction; even so, there's no side shifting of bars in transit because of the tray's locking structure and the strength of the shrink film. The trays are produced by Rice Packaging using an .018 SBS, which it prints in six colors via offset lithography on a new Heidelberg Speedmaster 7-color press. There are four PMS colors plus a special blue and gold; the seventh station of the press applies a gloss aqueous coating.

Place for history

Printed on its sides with L&S's Lindt of Switzerland logotype on gold on a blue field, the tray is designed to inform the consumer of the company's rich history. Fully two thirds of the base's exterior is decorated with graphics and copy under the logotype and heading "Master Swiss Chocolatier since 1845."

Copy introduces the company's founders and discusses their roles in evolving the chocolate L&S markets to this day. In the balance of the space are presented the nutrition facts table, bar code and a one-paragraph quality guarantee. Additional protection for the printed surfaces and point-of-sale sparkle come from the 60-ga polyolefin shrink film, DuPont's Clysar, supplied in 12-in. W rolls by Shrink Packaging Systems. Because of the film's ideal width, there is no waste on the L&S packaging line at which it is applied to the trays.

Optimistic first

Noting that the dual-bar tray is "a first for us, since the big gold bars are sold individually in other retail stores," Victoria Duffy is optimistic about what she hears from the clubstore's representatives. In fact, she confessed to expecting a reorder imminently during a late-October interview, since the suggested \$7.99 retail price "places the package well within the range" of purchase for personal consumption for true chocolate lovers.

Adoption of the tray is a natural for a marketer that is comfortable in pioneering production and packaging development. Just over a year ago, L&S went on stream with an advanced, completely automated system for its Lindor filled chocolate balls, quadrupling its daily output to 1,800 metric tons (see PD, Mar. '98, p. 39).

Beyond this, the tray program's success is encouraging the marketer to develop other site-specific packaging "where it makes sense" for such channels as upscale department stores as consumer palates become more sophisticated and demand for premium products continues to defy swings in the economy.

Like the tray itself, outlet-specific packages for quality products may be growing into an affordable necessity.

More information is available:

Tray design/development—**Powers Packaging Group**, 5631 Dorset St., Shelburne, VT 05482. Circle No. 282.

Tray—**Rice Packaging**, 356 Somers Rd., Ellington, CT 06029. Circle No. 283.

Press—**Heidelberg USA**, 73-45 Woodhaven Blvd., Glendale, NY 11385. Circle No. 284.

Film—**DuPont Packaging & Industrial Polymers**, 1007 Market St., Wilmington, Del. 19898. Circle No. 285.

Film representative—**Shrink Packaging Systems Corp.**, 15 Progress St., Edison, NJ 08820. Circle No. 286. www.shrinkpackaging.com

