

“THE ROLE OF PACKAGING IN THE SALES PROMOTION OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS”

INTRODUCTION

Packaging, although is a subject of recent technological origin, the art of packaging is as old as the primitive humans. Uses of leaves for wrapping of meat, animal skin for storage and carriage of water was practiced an old as human race. With the passage of time and continual technological growth, system has undergone changes and along with it grew the packaging scene, though at a much slower pace. But, today packaging no more is considered in isolation. It has been considered as an integral part of production, marketing and distribution. In other words we can say, if packaging is to perform its function properly, its requirement should be considered at as early a stage as possible i.e. at the design /formulation stage of the product itself.

Packaging is the art, science and technology of enclosing or protecting product for distribution, storage, sales and usages. Packaging also refers to the process of design, evaluation and production of packages. Packaging can be described as a coordinated system of preparing goods for transport, warehousing logistic, sales and end use. Packaging contains, protects, presence, transport, inform and sells.

The packaging is an important component of the total product personality (identity). It involves designing and producing the container or wrapper for a product. The development of packaging is the sum total of the talents of the designer, the researcher, the technician, the advertising man, the marketing expert, the sales department and the top management.

Packaging may be defined as a means of ensuring the safe delivery of a product to the ultimate consumer in a sound condition at the minimum overall cost.

Package development is based on and influenced by many entities and could be broadly classified into five criteria groups:

- (i) Appearance
 - (ii) Protection
 - (iii) Function
 - (iv) Cost
 - (v) Disposability
- (i) **Appearance** - The appearance of a package is important from many angles and this aspect gains greater and greater importance with the growing super – markets and cash carry system of marketing distribution. It helps to
- (a) identify the product through the distribution channel.
 - (b) carry instruction for use and disposal
 - (c) carry information about contents and satisfy legal requirement
 - (d) carry Brand name/manufacture's name
 - (e) act as an important sales aid.

The appearance of a package is dependent on shape and surface decoration while the shape relates to the mechanical aspect proving a physical contribution, surface decoration is mainly a marketing tool.

- (ii) **Protection** : The protection required by the product will vary enormously with the nature of the product itself, the final destination, the distribution system and the total time that protection is required. The nature of protection expected of

the package also vary with the package system. Protection is normally required from environmental and physical hazards.

(iii) Function : - The function that a package are expected to perform will depend on the end use requirements and the requirements to suit the packaging line/system. End use performance is important because any defects and limitation will adversely affect the customer

satisfaction resulting in a reduction in sales. End use package function includes display. Here, display includes surface decoration for sales appeal and impulses buying and has been dealt with later. The second factor is product visibility as many products need protection from direct exposure to environmental conditions.

When visibility is required, it is usually an aid to identification or to add sales appeal to the finished pack.

(iv) Cost : The factor contributing to overall cost of packaging a particular are :

- package cost (material purchased)
- storage and handling cost of empties
- quality control cost
- packaging line operation cost
- storage cost of filled packages
- distribution and insurance cost
- cost due to package/product loss/spoilage
- cost due to loss of goodwill affecting sales
- effect of package on the sales

- (v) **Disposability** – The packaging industry is now bound to use hi-tech in the disposal of packaging material because of protection from environmental pollution.

Packaging of Pharma – Products :

Packaging varies from product to product on the basis of nature, quality, quantity and unlimited marketing strategy. The packaging for pharmaceutical product is somewhat different from general packaging of FMCG.

Pharmaceutical packaging has to be carried out for the purpose of the safety of the pharmaceutical preparations in order to keep them free from contamination, hinder microbial growth and ensure product safety through the intended shelf life for the pharmaceutical.

Packaging is the critical tool in the pharma industry for product delivery and regulatory compliance, many pharmaceutical companies do all their packaging within a contamination free environment or clean room. Some common pharmaceutical packaging techniques include foil and heat seating, polyester and olefin packaging, printing, polythene and poly propylene printing as flat bed cutting.

Whenever the word 'PACKAGING' is used, it directly reflect two relevant field of approach, one is technology and second commercial. Here commercial means same product with different packaging makes different in commercial value. It means packaging has a role in the sales promotion. Normally, pharmaceutical products packaging was given stress for the product safety and maintenance in quality. But in this

modern era pharma packaging has taken in form of various dimensions. As marketing strategy changes day to day, same with pharmaceutical marketing.

Pharmaceutical marketing, sometimes called medico marketing, is the business of advertising or otherwise promoting the sales of pharmaceutical products or drugs.

Pharmaceutical Marketing applies cutting – edge marketing concepts and tools to the real – world intricacies of marketing a heavily regulated product whose success is determined not by the actual end user, but by various industry stake holders.

Pharmaceutical packaging plays an important role in pharmaceutical marketing by following ways:-

- (a) Name of product highlighted on the outer pack.
- (b) Broad purpose of product and likely routes of administration.
- (c) Dosage form and likely dosage required.
- (d) Pack size or sizes.
- (e) Type of pack preference (s).
- (f) Territories of launch outline.
- (g) Product qualities per territory for launch and follow up sales.
- (h) Competitive products with list of main features including costs.
- (i) Any relevant cost restraints.
- (j) Any quality factors.
- (k) Legal aspects and implications.

- (l) Distribution factors.

(m) Any environmental - related issues.

SALES PROMOTION OF PHARMA. PRODUCTS

The sales promotion of pharmaceutical products also varies from product to product on the theory of marketing strategy like-

- (a) Ethical marketing (product to be prescribed by medical practitioners.
- (b) OTC products (over the counter, sold directly by pharmacists/ Chemists/retailers.
- (c) Institutional sales (bulk pack).

The products which have to be sold ethically play less role in sales promotions while OTC products are mainly based on attractive packaging. Again less emphasis is given on attractive packaging for institutional sales.

Various forms of pharmaceutical products like tablets, capsules, liquid (syrup and suspensions), injections, ointments, sprays, lounzes etc. needs different types of packaging. It may be considered as three types of packaging

- I. Primary pack – just cover to product
- II. Secondary pack – intermediary pack
- III. Tertiary pack – outer pack, may be labels or cartoons or container itself.

In all cases the sales promotion of pharmaceutical products is different with compare to product packaging. As per Mr. N C Saha, Director Indian Institute of Packaging, Mumbai “A new package can become a major factor in a new marketing strategy, significantly improving the total value of the product”. He further adds that

packaging offers unique advantages in brand communications. It plays an active role at the point of sales.

The modern pharmaceutical packaging is an important component of the product mix, contributing to the positioning of a product in the market, the presentation to the consumer and quite often, also the tools to use a product. So we can say packaging as a marketing tool or instrument. Packaging – the silent sales man speaks – pick me, use me, buy me.

Indian Scenario :

Indian Pharmaceutical Industry consists of Allopath, Ayurvedic, Homeopathic, Unani and others. Still, Allopath Drugs take shares of approx 80% of Indian market.

In case of Pharmaceutical Packaging, India accounts only 3% of global packaging and 11% of Asian packaging market while India's Population is 16.6% of the world population. A lot of innovation and research is needed in Pharma Packaging to compete globally.

As per the Indian Institute of packaging, Mumbai data available with pharmaceutical packaging material is as follow:

Paper – 36%	Glass – 10%
Plastic – 34%	Others – 3%
Metals – 17%	