

Sustainable Packaging for Paula's Choice - On Time, On Budget and On Brand

Paula's Choice have been disrupting the beauty industry for years, boasting smart, results-driven formulas and transparency throughout the brand to ensure that customers are well-informed about their choices.

It's no wonder, then, that they're at the forefront of more sustainable packaging - that still ensures their customers get the best of the best.

Our first contact

For the past few years, Paula's Choice has been trading with Smurfit Kappa Benelux, with excellent results. In February 2021, they partnered with third-party logistics provider Walker's Logistics, who helped them to navigate their UK sales - both from the Paula's Choice website and from beauty retailers like Cult Beauty and SpaceNK.

However, Brexit has put a spanner in the works, and due to shipping increases and border issues, it was no longer feasible to keep importing these boxes from SK Benelux to the UK.

Naturally, due to the Paula's Choice team's great working relationship with SK Benelux, the first-choice solution was Smurfit Kappa UK. Martin Hop, SK Benelux's Account Manager, passed along the contact details and set up an introduction - and the rest is history!

The first challenge: turnaround speed

Because of Brexit's rather temperamental and unpredictable nature, Paula's Choice had a dilemma: they wanted their new boxes to be produced urgently - some within just two weeks!

Smurfit Kappa UK rose to the challenge: not only did Smurfit Kappa Chelmsford fulfil the order for 100,000 medium boxes within the time frame - despite a machine breakdown! - but the company also managed to develop packaging that was exactly what Paula's Choice needed.

Their brief was for three different sized boxes: a small, a medium, and a large. By working with Smurfit Kappa UK their box designs were slightly adjusted to enable optimal speed of manufacturing without impacting their CO2 footprint.

The second challenge: designing a sustainable packaging solution

Size aside, the team wanted their boxes to show off their sustainable ethos fully. Part of that meant sourcing the boxes locally, hence the switch from SK Benelux to SK UK.

Paula's Choice worked with the team at Smurfit Kappa Chelmsford on creating boxes made out of 100% FSC-certified materials. This assurance means that the materials will only ever be sourced from forests planted for the purpose, or recycled themselves, rather than supporting deforestation.

Staying with the FEFCO 0427 design, which consists of a single piece of self-locking material, reduces the need for extra waste in terms of tape and makes the box easily deconstructed for recycling. Plus, it's a strong and sturdy design, making sure that the products inside arrive at their destination intact.

Of course, the boxes are also 100% recyclable, which Paula's Choice hopes will help to encourage their customers to be more eco-friendly.



The third challenge: aesthetics

Sustainability wasn't the only target, though. Working within the famously aesthetic-driven beauty industry, Paula's Choice wanted their boxes to stand out, and to be effortlessly Instagrammable to turn everyday customers into brand advocates and organically spread brand awareness.

Working together, Smurfit Kappa UK and Paula's Choice took forward the perfect packaging solution that had been created at SK Benelux, making only minor tweaks for machinery purposes. The boxes would continue to be printed with two colours on the outside and one inside, making them picture perfect.

The flexographic printing method that was decided upon had several benefits: it can be used on almost any surface without losing vibrancy, so the recycled materials weren't a problem. And crucially, the inks require very little drying time - which meant that Smurfit Kappa Chelmsford were able to pull off a very quick turnaround, as requested.

An ongoing partnership

Ultimately, Smurfit Kappa UK were able to fulfil the initial brief from Paula's Choice of 14,000 large, 100,000 medium and 30,000 small boxes, within the tight time frame but without sacrificing quality or the brand's overarching goals. Sustainability and aesthetics were still key factors, and both were accomplished.

“We are so excited to have these boxes out in circulation! Several of our customers have been sharing their snaps and showing off the new design on social media. Our commitment to the environment and to our customers has been showcased so well. The team at both SK Benelux and SK Chelmsford have been so nice and helpful, we've really enjoyed working with them and look forward to continuing this partnership”

Anouk Terlouw, Senior Supply Planner at Paula's Choice.

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