

Richmond Sausages: Packaging to show off their product

A firm favourite with families across the UK, Kerry-owned Richmond Sausages have been flying off the shelves since 1889.

While the traditional Irish recipe has remained the same for more than a century, the product offering has become more varied. From classic pork to chicken and even meat-free sausages, the brand has adapted to meet diverse consumer needs.

They had a problem, though: their existing shelf-ready packaging (SRP) wasn't showcasing the product in all its pork based glory. Richmond Sausage customers look for high-quality products, but the packaging wasn't portraying this on the supermarket shelves.

Launching a new range of sausage types, Kerry Foods felt that it was time to revamp their packaging, too. They reached out to the Smurfit Kappa Experience Centre in Yate (one of three Experience Centres across the UK) to figure out how they could address the problems with their existing packaging - and the rest is history.

Identifying the problem

One of the key advantages of the Smurfit Kappa Experience Centres is that they are equipped to work with brands at any stage in their development.

To get to work on the Richmond Sausages case, the Experience Centre team suggested that Kerry Foods invite key Richmond Sausage stakeholders to a ShelfSmart workshop. During this workshop, the teams explored a virtual shelf environment to compare Richmond Sausages to competitor brands' packaging.

The verdict? The sausages were getting lost in a sea of brown boxes: there was nothing on the SRP to demonstrate the quality of the sausages inside or draw attention to the products.

Not only did the existing boxes not support Kerry Foods' marketing strategy, but they were also structurally disappointing. They were getting damaged in transit, making them unappealing once they reached stores. On top of that, they were hard to open once they did reach shelves, leading to partially-opened boxes and hidden products.

A very British design

Once it was obvious that the design needed updating, the Experience Centre team put their years of expertise to work.

The Kerry Foods team wanted the new packaging to give a premium feel, as well as performing better on the shelf. It was also crucial that the packaging stayed the same size as their existing SRP - allowing them to continue to work on their production lines.

Working alongside Kerry Foods' marketing team and the design team at SK Stalybridge, the Experience Centre team created packaging that would stand out on the shelf - without compromising on Richmond Sausages' message.

In the new design, two verdant green colours and a contrasting curved front evoke images of Britain's rolling hills, displaying Richmond's proud history. It also causes shelf disruption: in a vast expanse of brown boxes, the grassy hues draw the eye.

The brand logo is clearly visible on the sides of the box, and the type of sausage within - thick, skinless, BBQ - is signposted on the front. This easy-to-read feature means that customers can see at a glance what their options are, reducing frustration and potentially enticing them to try the new varieties on offer.



What's more, using the experience from the SK Stalybridge design team they both helped tackle the problem of tricky-to-open packaging by consulting on the structural aspect of the design and making sure opening the perforation was fumble and fuss-free.

Throughout this process, the Experience Centre team was demonstrating to Richmond Sausages' key stakeholders how the design would look on the shelf - and how that would affect their sales. Using innovative Eye See technology, attendees were able to track where customers looked on the shelf: no wonder an eye-catching design won out.

Structural soundness

Once the aesthetic design had been finalised, it was time to tackle the structural issues of the box.

The team at SK Stalybridge worked to improve the board grade to optimum levels. After several tests, the kraft liner was settled on. Its first advantage was that it improved the opening process, making it a much more seamless and frustration-free experience.

The second benefit of the new board grade was that it was more robust, and could withstand the transit process much more easily. In the stringent tests for both stacking and pallet transit, the new box passed with flying colours. This was true for both the machine- and hand-erected iterations - so Kerry Foods were able to choose which would suit them better.

An on-shelf success

Thanks to Smurfit Kappa's Experience Centre team and SK Stalybridge design team, combining the revised structural elements with the new vibrant design was simple - and a complete success.

Richmond Sausages saw a 5.8% increase in brand penetration throughout stores, and are delighted with the results. The Experience Centre offers expertise and years of knowledge incorporated with cutting-edge technology that allows teams to see how their products perform.

“ShelfSmart gave us loads of opportunities and lots of options. It has had a really positive effect.” - Julie Ann Twomey, Kerry Foods.

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