CASE | STUDY

Redefining medical device packaging for Dermalux: Sustainable, stylish, and plastic-free

Dermalux, a world leader in designing and manufacturing medical LED phototherapy devices, creates high-value, delicate products designed for both home and professional applications.

Protecting these valuable products during transit is essential, and previously, Dermalux relied on expanded polystyrene (EPS) and plastic in their healthcare packaging.

While this delivered protection, it came at a cost – making recycling difficult and falling short of a premium unboxing experience. With a desire to reduce the use of plastic and elevate their packaging, Dermalux turned to Smurfit Westrock for an innovative, sustainable solution.

A sustainable alternative

While EPS offers good protection, it falls short in other key areas – particularly sustainability. Dermalux knew they needed a recyclable alternative. EPS not only made recycling difficult, but the messy polystyrene detracted from a memorable, positive unboxing experience for customers. Its bulky nature also took up valuable warehouse space.

Seeking a smarter solution, Dermalux worked with packaging experts at Smurfit Westrock Chesterfield to create medical packaging for their clinic-only devices. They needed healthcare packaging that securely packaged all parts of the device during transport and allowed for easy assembly, factoring in the heavy main body of the device. Beyond protection, they wanted to enhance the customer unboxing experience and align with their sustainability goals.

Smart solution for Dermalux

The packaging experts at Smurfit Westrock Chesterfield designed a custom packaging solution that removed the use of EPS by replacing it with corrugated cardboard and Hexacomb. With the high-value nature of the product - Dermalux's devices range from £3,000 to £20,000 - finding a recyclable solution without compromising product protection was key. Plus, with sustainability regulations like the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) reshaping the industry, this switch not only benefits Dermalux's customers but also keeps them ahead of evolving environmental legislation. The new packaging design also improves efficiency – it can now be flattened for easier storage, freeing up valuable warehouse space.

Elevating the unboxing experience

By replacing polystyrene buffers with corrugated Hexacomb, Dermalux has transformed the customer unboxing experience – eliminating the mess of EPS and delivering a cleaner, more sophisticated first impression that reflects the quality of their products. The addition of sleek, printed branding and messaging gives the packaging a more premium, high-end feel.

The thoughtful design ensures that all device components are held securely and professionally displayed, making assembly effortless.

Plus, the new medical equipment packaging is reusable, allowing clinics to safely repackage devices when relocating – an added convenience that makes a huge difference.

Lee Anne Evans at Dermalux, said:

"We feel that this packaging solution has really added value to our product through the printing, which has brought the packaging design in line with our new brand identity. Also, the use of Hexacomb, combined with cardboard parts, has really improved the look and feel of the packaging from the previous version without sacrificing durability. Andy Betton was really helpful throughout the whole design process, particularly with reducing the amount that Dermalux production staff would need to lift the devices when building into the packaging. This is particularly impactful as the Tri - Wave MD device body weighs 50kg."

The new medical device packaging has also been enthusiastically received by other members of the Dermalux team, especially regarding ease of use and the customer unboxing experience, with their digital marketing executive mentioning that it's sure to encourage a lot of unboxing content from customers.

Gerry Maher, Warehouse Manager at Dermalux, said:

"The packaging looks great, easy to put together and it seems to be really sturdy! Really nice touches with the images printed onto the cardboard. Our customers will have an even better experience, without even counting not having to brush up the polystyrene off the floor after unpacking their device. One of our other main drivers was storage costs; polystyrene is very space inefficient and moving to this solution saved us around £6,000 per year in warehouse costs."

Mike Broad, Sales Manager at Smurfit Westrock Chesterfield, said:

"This was a special project for us, considering the value of the medical devices being shipped, and the team went above and beyond to find a medical packaging solution that ticked every box. The result is packaging that's protective and recyclable whilst also appealing to customers."

Smurfit Westrock helped Dermalux replace plastic-heavy polystyrene with a recyclable, eco-conscious, and customer-friendly packaging solution.

If you're looking for sustainable packaging that protects your products while enhancing the customer experience, get in touch with us today.