



Packaging Process Enhancements Improve Efficiencies

A comprehensive assessment resulting in prioritized, actionable recommendations across process, roles, and technology to improve packaging development efficiencies and support the client's branding strategy



The Client

An American big box retail chain carrying over 50,000 unique SKUs across furniture, seasonal, and home décor products throughout 235 retail stores in 40 states as well as online.

The Challenge

The client is experiencing significant growth through new store openings, expansion of its private-label in-house brands, and the introduction of several new product categories. Elevated levels of seasonal new items require specific packaging to support the company's branding and growth strategies. The packaging generates a common brand visual and drives sales by highlighting product value to customers on a largely self-service sales floor.

Supported by a small internal team, each new packaging project involved highly manual templates and spreadsheets from initial concept design through final production. The packaging team often struggled to identify new packaging projects early enough to follow required development deadlines. They regularly faced late and incorrect packaging information, product-related data, and packaging design submissions from the internal merchandising team as well as their vendor partners.

Further, the client's new merchandising organization was unaware of the criticality of their role in the process, the process itself, and the role packaging plays in the shopping experience. The client recognized that the long-term viability of their existing packaging processes, roles, and toolset severely hampered their growth and branding objectives.

The Parker Avery Solution

The Parker Avery team assessed the current state process and challenges and outlined specific, prioritized, and actionable packaging process enhancements. Parker Avery provided retail industry expertise, leading the following key activities:

- Reviewed the current packaging process for inefficiencies across inputs, outputs, activities, and supporting tools
- Interviewed key functions involved in the packaging process to better understand each area's involvement and related challenges
- Assessed each packaging tool's contribution to the process and identified pain areas that could be quickly improved
- Produced a prioritized list of process, data, technology, role, and training gaps as well as short and long-term initiatives that would deliver value quickly and help overcome the largest pain points

- Reviewed proposed initiatives in detail with merchandising and packaging leadership to obtain alignment

Parker Avery's solutions included:

- Clarification of existing roles and responsibilities and creation of new roles
- Packaging development process alignment with key merchandising milestones
- New internal packaging project management tool
- Improved packaging project templates
- Revised and streamlined packaging guide
- Technological recommendations covering data collection to collaborative proofing requirements
- Packaging e-learning training module and quick reference guide

The Result

The client immediately deployed the recommended short-term initiatives and integrated the new packaging training module into their learning curriculum. The new process, roles, and tools will enable the packaging team to efficiently manage assortment growth and ensure that the packaging development process is executed consistently, timely, and accurately. Client leadership is confident that the packaging process enhancements will lead to enhanced packaging quality across all product categories and ultimately better branding consistency in the customer experience.