

thinking inside the box



Boenke: 'Our company will apply its creative thinking to almost any brief where space-saving is of importance'

WITH CLIENTS INCLUDING CONFECTIONER ICON THORNTONS, WE ARE MAKING STRIDES IN COLLAPSIBLE PACK INNOVATIONS

by Steve Boenke, account manager, SynYang

These are resulting in significant environmental and financial benefits.

Collapsible boxes have their limitations in the wider world of packaging, the main one being complex shapes.

However, the team here at SynYang relishes a challenge, and will apply creative thinking to almost any brief where space-saving is important.

While the quality of Thorntons' chocolate will always be paramount, the packaging is a very important ingredient in its business strategy.

Like any retailer in an increasingly-competitive market, this company strives to differentiate itself. Our role as a packaging solutions provider is to find new tactics to help it maintain and extend its market share whilst managing costs.

One of Thorntons' key product lines is the Premium Collection, a special-occasion gift box. This has recently been instrumental in Thorntons extending its routes to market via shops and supermarkets, and simultaneously raising its profile throughout the UK.

A fundamental part of this strategy was the redesign of the line's packaging, resulting in Thorntons' first-ever rigid, collapsible box – quite a demanding brief.

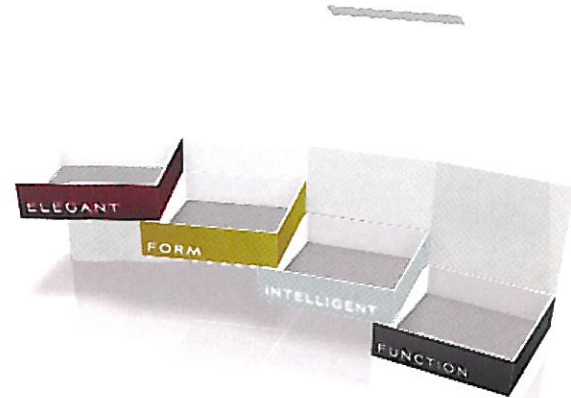
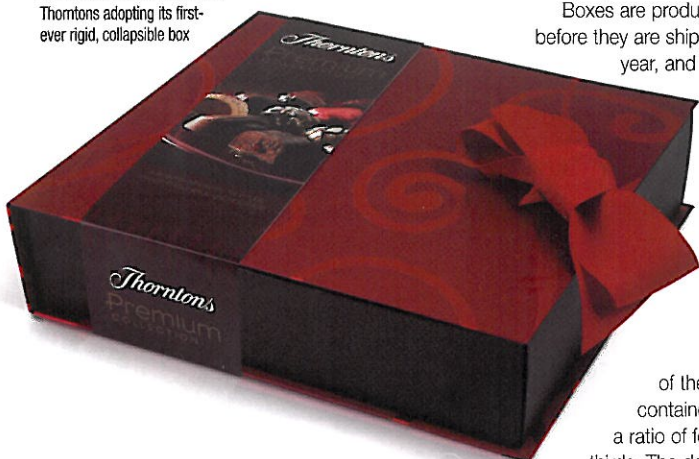
The result was an identical replica of the original design, with the added advantages of environmental and financial savings associated to freight, transport, and storage.

Our Leicester-based company is one of several packaging solutions providers that works with Thorntons. Over our three-year relationship, we've mainly been involved in rigid packaging solutions, with some additional input into wrapping paper.

We work closely with the confectionery supplier to develop new packaging; we provide the company with initial concepts and construction design, and together we decide what to take forward depending on the objectives.

The new design of the Premium Collection took 12 months in development but became an integral part of the production process within just three months once approved.

Packaging redesign for Premium Collection resulted in Thorntons adopting its first-ever rigid, collapsible box



Collapsible board container innovations by SynYang and its clients can result in big 'green' and financial benefits



'Unique' box construction has produced with it some significant savings in the areas of storage and packing

The key feature of this collapsible box design is the way in which the sides fold over and tuck in on themselves.

Other flat-pack designs utilise double-sided tape, which is protected by a strip of paper that has to be removed. However, this wasn't suitable to use in a chocolate factory as it presents potential hazards in a process that needs to be quick, efficient, and cross-infection-free.

SETTING FRESH STANDARDS

One of the main advantages of working with SynYang is our office in Shenzhen, China, where there's a team of 15 people on the ground on a day-to-day basis.

Boxes are produced under close supervision before they are shipped to the UK four times a year, and stored prior to packing and distribution.

The factories selected work to British Retail Consortium standards, including the use of odour-free glues and regular auditing for social responsibility via SEDEX – the Social and Ethical Data Exchange.

The new, unique construction of the box has reduced the number of containers being shipped from China by a ratio of four-to-one, and storage by two-thirds. The design has also been well received

on the packing lines, as it can be assembled simply and quickly and causes less clutter.

As the new design is packed flat, it has also removed the requirement for odour-absorption sachets. This has resulted in savings in both cost and time because operatives don't have to remove and discard these sachets.

Although the design employs slightly more material overall, the impact on the amount of storage capacity needed has brought significant cost savings.

'UNIQUE AND PATENTED'

SynYang has created another innovative, collapsible box solution, which is a unique and patented design. Developed in a rectangular shape, this is a high-quality pack that opens up to unveil a four-tier cantilever box system.

The number of drawers can be changed, making it a striking point-of-sale tool – and offering unique packaging and storage for high-end gift goods such as perfumes, jewellery, watches, and mobile phones.

This container can be finished with indented foam or a lining to suit the product, and the bottom tray can be used to accommodate literature or associated items.

The box can be made from FSC-certified, 1.5mm greyboard and, being collapsible to a quarter of its size, can be shipped and stored easily at minimal cost by reducing the amount of space and containers needed.

Responsibly-sourced and recycled materials are used whenever possible, contributing to sustainability. Being high quality, end consumers find it aesthetically pleasing; and should the graphics be subtle, they are able to reuse the pack – keeping the brand both visible and front of mind.

The cost of a new design is fundamental, and we work within strict formulae as agreed with each client. As there are a growing number of environmental concerns associated with packaging, it's worth considering the bigger picture.

Similar redesigns would nonetheless be limited, as flat-pack constructions are restricted to square-shaped boxes; but it would still offer the opportunity of investigation to many other retailers.