

# Window - a clear consumer benefit

Window cartons may not be new, but they are becoming increasingly popular, containing a variety of products from branded and private-label. In demand by both Elopak customers and consumers alike due to its practical and convenient benefits, we take a look back at the evolution of Elopak's window carton.

## Window secures sugar sales

Elopak's senior project engineer, Peter Adler, was instrumental in the first stages of window development. He says, "It was initially developed in 2006 for an approach to a Spanish sugar customer, Azucarera Ebro, for whom we created a small windows machine."

Spain's number one sugar producer launched Azucarera Brown Sugar in one-litre Standard Pure-Pak® Curve carton with an integral plastic window and Elo-Cap™ UP in May 2006.

Long viewed as a commodity product requiring the most basic packaging possible, Azucarera's brown sugar took a quantum leap into the twenty-first century, with the Pure-Pak® Curve carton with window. Traditionally, new sugar products have been difficult to get off the ground in Spain. This pack was able to transmit important and different values on-shelf. Previously packaged in a 1kg paper bag, which had the potential to split or roll off-shelf, Azucarera Ebro selected the Standard Pure-Pak® Curve carton thanks to its improved functionality and the inclusion of a window for improved consumer visibility.

The new pack contains less sugar compared to the old packaging, (750 grams vs 1kg) but retails at the same price. Despite the higher price per gram,

more frequent repeat purchases are made because of the packaging's new functionality. The window makes today's consumer lean towards convenience at a slightly higher cost, rather than opting for more quantity of product in a less convenient package.



## Complete feature offering

In advance of further customer demand, a project team led by Peter Adler, was set up at Elopak b.v. Terneuzen, in the Netherlands. Peter continues, "In addition to the previous bespoke solutions, it was important to be ready to provide a complete feature option. The project team worked in conjunction with German company Heiber & Schröder, which developed the most advanced technology for the window feature."

## Adding value to gain margin

In 2007, leading Dutch retailer, Albert Heijn, requested a window carton solution for its milk products. The introduction of the window feature was part of the overall upgrade project for the AH basic milk product range, other elements in the project were the implementation of a screw cap and a highly sophisticated design.

Peter Adler comments, "It was a very short time frame and our technology solution was not as advanced as we would have liked to meet Albert Heijn's schedule and volumes. The machine needed



**Kari Mette Gausdal Selle from Q-Meieriene**

to be up to 100% capacity almost immediately, which was difficult, but enabled us to sort out any technical issues and really fine-tune things.”

The window feature raised the bar of product design and made the item more attractive to the consumer. The result is that volume expectations also for 2009 look promising. “

Further fine-tuning of the technology followed the developments for Albert Heijn and a second machine was ordered in 2007 to cope with the demand for window cartons.

Importantly in today’s greener times, the addition of a plastic window does not make the carton environmentally unsound. The actual amount of plastic employed is a small amount compared to the overall surface area of the carton, which can still be recycled.

### **Milk measure**

The latest customer to reap the benefits of the window feature is Norwegian dairy Q-Meieriene AS, which launched its milk brand Q Melk in September 2008. Consumers can use the window on the

one-litre Pure-Pak® cartons as a measuring device. Kari Mette Gausdal Selle from Q-Meieriene says, “Research showed 53 out of 200 Norwegians were throwing milk away weekly and that food wastage had doubled in ten years. The window feature will help consumers reduce waste as it is easy to see how much milk is left. Being able to see the product is a positive benefit for consumers. This is a new way to package daily milk and protect its quality.”

Peter Adler concludes, “Today we can produce up to 200 million cartons a year. The window tends to be standardized now in terms of size, shape and location but any type of window can be configured. As manufacturers look to appeal to consumer preferences for convenience and premium packaging solutions, we will continue to see a great increase in demand for the window feature.”

For more information about a window solution for your packaging – please take contact with any of our sales offices.