

**E&SBUSINESSNEWS**

Packaging has grown into a multi-billion pound UK business, says Josh Brooks

# Industry's vital role in the modern world

When you think about packaging, what comes to mind? Perhaps it's an iconic design like the Coca-Cola bottle or the Marmite jar. Perhaps it's a crisp packet, a pizza box or a metal biscuit tin. You may think of recycling. Or you may think of the headlines that appear from time to time about "excess" packaging.

Whatever you think of, I would bet that many readers don't know much about the industry behind the packs that put food on their table.

For a start, it's a major employer in the UK that is right in the sweet spot of the current government's plans to promote manufacturing; around 85,000 people work in manufacturing companies producing bottles, cans, boxes, sleeves, bags, labels and more.

Put together, those companies are estimated to have sales of around £11bn every year. And none of those figures count the many thousands more who work in design agencies, recycling companies, supermarkets and any other business that makes anything that is sold in a pack - which is to say, pretty much everything.

What's more, it's a hugely



Industry expert Josh Brooks, Editor of Packaging News creative and technically innovative industry that makes products which enhance people's lives.

Let me share a few examples that my magazine, Packaging News, has reported on in recent months.

Cadbury's, for instance, has launched chocolate bar packaging that turns into an interactive game when you point an iPhone at it.

Pharmaceutical companies are developing interactive packaging which reminds you to take your medication. And beer companies have brought out drinks whose packaging changes colour when it reaches the optimum temperature for drinking. It's all really clever stuff.

food going to landfill is estimated to have a carbon footprint that is ten times bigger than the equivalent amount of packaging.

More importantly, packaging is the very technology that allows that food to get to us in the first place. In some parts of the developing world, meanwhile, as much as half of the food that is grown is lost at the time it is harvested. It goes bad because there is no effective packaging system in place to protect and preserve the product.

### Preserve

According to a United Nations study this year, no less than a third of all food that is grown in the world is wasted somewhere on the journey from the field to the fork. At a time when parts of the world are facing food shortages and even famine, just think what a bit more packaging could do to help.

I'm not saying that packaging cannot improve; it can. But the point is that packaging is improving, constantly, and has been for years, in many ways that improve all our lives. That is all thanks to the incredible and often unnoticed work of the packaging industry.

So next time you think of packaging, what will you think of?

Josh Brooks is editor of Packaging News, the UK's leading title for the packaging sector.

For more information, visit [www.packagingnews.co.uk](http://www.packagingnews.co.uk)

Commercial Feature

# Complete packaging solutions from Network

As the most progressive independent packaging materials distributor in the UK, Wolverhampton-based Network Packaging has a wealth of experience in packaging methods and packaging materials, together with a comprehensive portfolio of the most innovative and creative packaging solutions available.

Their range of customers include: pharmaceuticals, e-commerce and third-party logistics companies, leading providers of mobile phones and fashion retailers.

With an unbeatable reputation for high quality packaging and excellent customer service, Network Packaging remain leaders in their field.

### Customer

Sales director Martin Dunn said: "Our strength is being able to respond very quickly to supply and demand situations, when other packaging suppliers often struggle."

"Everything about our service right through to delivery is geared towards the customer, thereby ensuring that packaging is always available."

"Our customers also demand great account management and customer service from day one and we have been highly successful in fulfilling this vital supplier responsibility - that's why the majority of our customers choose to remain with Network Packaging for the long haul."

The company has recently unveiled a new website. The site offers an up-to-date browsing experience for visitors wishing to make decisions on their packaging requirements, or those looking to find out more about the company's capabilities.



The offices of Network Packaging and Network Display in Wolverhampton

As an additional feature, the website includes a collection of case studies, spotlighting Network Packaging's successes in providing innovating packaging solutions for leading brands.

Network Packaging's sister company, Network Display, also based in Wolverhampton, specialise in retail ready solutions for point of sale and merchandise display. Working along-

side suppliers and retailers, the company produces some of the most innovative retail packaging solutions in the marketplace.

For more information on Network Packaging visit [www.networkpack.co.uk](http://www.networkpack.co.uk) or call on 01902 496666.

To find out more about Network Display visit [www.networkdisplay.co.uk](http://www.networkdisplay.co.uk) or call on 01902 493999.



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