
UPPERCUT BOX
..... COMPANY



**THE ESSENTIALS
OF CUSTOM
PRINTED
PACKAGING**

For anyone starting out with a new product looking to design packaging.

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Why should I design custom packaging vs. utilizing standard packaging?

Every product needs to stand out from the crowd. You have invested a significant amount of time, money and effort creating it, so why showcase it in a generic package?

Packaging is your last chance to persuade a prospective customer to put your product in their shopping cart. Done well, it gets your product noticed above your competitors, who often have larger budgets dedicated to developing and manufacturing custom printed brand packaging, using all kinds of high end materials and printing techniques. There are ways to achieve this on a smaller budget at Uppercut Box.

Choosing a bland brown or white box or bag to market your product can appear unprofessional or even untrustworthy, and almost guarantees you'll lose a sale to your competition. You want your packaging to stand out and appeal to consumers, and reflect YOUR unique brand imaging and messaging. Also, when you have an exact, custom designed fit to feature and protect its contents, you could also realize reduced shipping costs by eliminating wasted space.

What do I need to consider when developing my custom packaging?

With just a little thought and effort on the front end, you can make your custom package design experience much easier and less time consuming for all parties involved. Here are a few questions you should be prepared to answer when reaching out to a custom box manufacturer:

1. Timing. When is my busy sales season? How much advance time will I need in order to make my delivery dates?

You never want to wait until the last minute to make a decision on packaging design and production. Too much is at stake. For a new product package, we recommend a minimum of 25 business days before the date you need the packaging. Keep in mind that our repeat print orders can happen in as little as 10-15 business days.



2. What is the selling price of the product?

This is probably the most critical for determining your custom packaging budget. It would not be a prudent financial decision to spend \$5 per custom package if the product only retails for \$2. An industry standard budget for custom package manufacturing is around 10% - 15% of your final selling price. Once you have the costs factored in, this should also help determine if your budget will cover utilizing an experienced branding / packaging designer. This is often a worthwhile investment for maximum impact.

3. How is my product fulfilled?

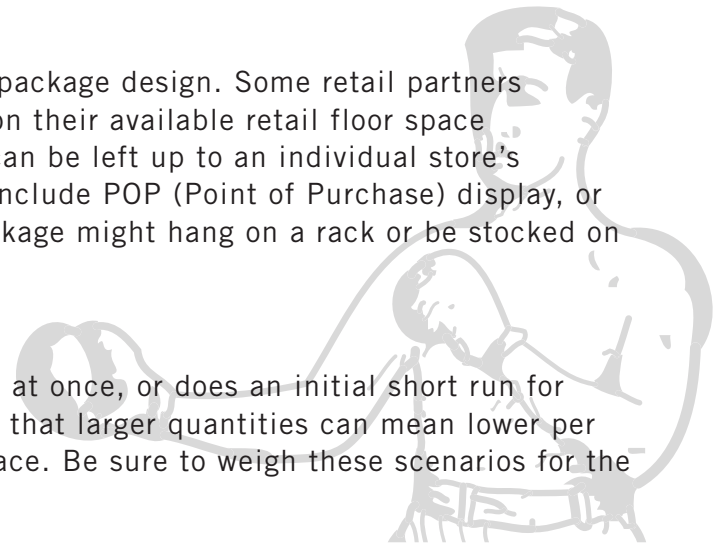
Most customers elect to have their packaging shipped flat, requiring some manual labor hours to assemble and insert their product. Be sure to allocate the necessary lead time for this. If your product is going directly to the distributor or retailer and will not be immediately placed on a shelf or display, you should also plan for a package design that will hold up in storage under the pressures of heat/cold, not to mention having the physical strength for support in the event other products get stacked on top.

4. How do you see your retail product being displayed?

This can be one of the most important components for package design. Some retail partners determine their plans for display ahead of time based on their available retail floor space and warehouse and distribution systems, while others can be left up to an individual store's preferences. The most common types of retail display include POP (Point of Purchase) display, or integrated with similar items or brands, where your package might hang on a rack or be stocked on a shelf.

5. Product quantity.

Should you produce your entire packaging allotment all at once, or does an initial short run for market testing your product make more sense? It's true that larger quantities can mean lower per unit costs, but will require more cash and inventory space. Be sure to weigh these scenarios for the most prudent business decision in your case.



6. Product weight.

This helps determine what type of packaging material will be necessary. Paperboard is ideal for lighter items, corrugated is best for packaging that will need more protection and strength. Each has its benefits, but the determining factor will typically start with weight.

7. Product dimensions.

You want to ensure your product fits precisely in the package for retail and shipping protection, while presenting a professional look that will encourage the buyer to purchase. Dimensions will also be a significant factor in determining your packaging costs.

8. Who is my target audience?

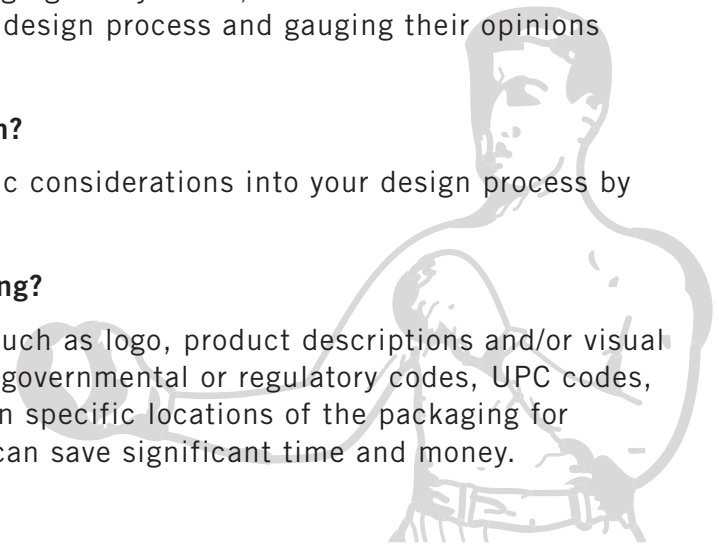
The first rule of design is to always view your packaging from the standpoint of your customers. In addition to being appealing, you also want to ensure all of their questions when making a purchasing decision are already answered on your packaging. Many times, owners are too close to their product, so surveying potential buyers early in the design process and gauging their opinions can reap huge rewards.

9. What are the types of stores I'm selling my product in?

Make sure you incorporate geographical and demographic considerations into your design process by knowing who encompasses your retail audience.

10. What elements need to be included on your packaging?

You obviously want to have traditional design branding such as logo, product descriptions and/or visual aids. But depending on product, some may also require governmental or regulatory codes, UPC codes, nutrition labels or ingredient lists that must be placed in specific locations of the packaging for compliance. Knowing and gathering this ahead of time can save significant time and money.



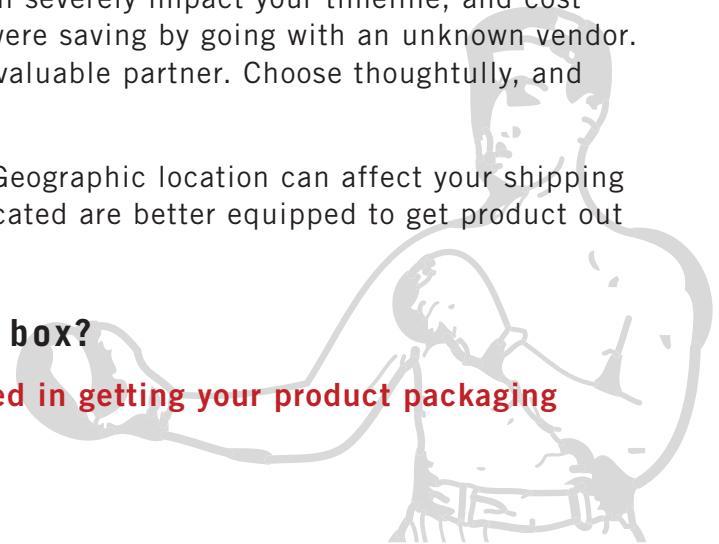
What should I look for when choosing a custom box manufacturer?

Now that you have determined custom packaging is the way to go, how do you find a quality vendor to produce it?

- 1. Look for a company who specializes in producing custom packaging.** Many will say they are custom manufacturing experts, but really just act as a middleman and outsource it, which increases your cost. Ensure they do the actual manufacturing onsite and have experience in custom, and not just standard packaging design and manufacturing.
- 2. Choose a company that is the right size for you.** Custom packaging is a multi-billion dollar industry, with some companies specializing in huge production runs. If you have 100,000 boxes to print, this is great. But if you are a smaller, short run customer, you run the risk of being marginalized while they devote their time and resources to service the bigger orders.
- 3. Look for a vendor partner, not just a vendor.** You want someone who will share your enthusiasm for service and expectations. A missed delivery date can severely impact your timeline, and cost you more than a few pennies per box you thought you were saving by going with an unknown vendor. Your custom box manufacturer should be considered a valuable partner. Choose thoughtfully, and don't be afraid to ask for references and samples.
- 4. Find one centrally located for your shipping needs.** Geographic location can affect your shipping costs and timelines. Vendors who are more centrally located are better equipped to get product out quicker and can help save on transit costs.

What is the process of creating a custom box?

Learn in more detail the phases and steps involved in getting your product packaging produced:



Phase One: Exploratory

1. Client outlines vision for packaging with the manufacturer

Timeline: Business days 1-2

2. Based on the vision, a detailed specification document is created by the manufacturer and priced out in the form of a quote

Timeline: Business days 3 - 6

3. Once the price and terms of the quote have been agreed to, a purchase order will be created and executed by both parties

Timeline: Business days 5 – 10

Phase Two: Pre Production

4. Product samples are sent by the client to the packaging manufacturer

Timeline: Business days 8 -16

5. A CAD (computer animated design) packaging sample will be produced and sent back to the client for approval

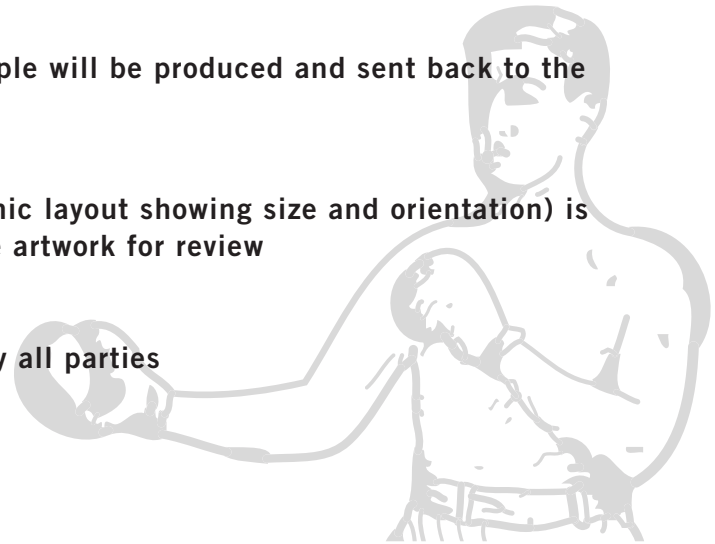
Timeline: Business Days 10 - 20

6. Upon CAD approval, a 2 dimensional dieline (graphic layout showing size and orientation) is provided, so the graphic artist can layout the package artwork for review

Timeline: Business Days 12 - 24

7. Final packaging copy and placement is approved by all parties

Timeline: Business days 13 – 30



Phase Four: Inventory and Delivery

10. Delivery to client, distributor or retail partner

Even though there are many moving parts, the process is fairly standardized and the entire timeline can be accomplished under normal situations within **25-35 business days** for new packaging, and 10-15 business days for reorders.

What else do I need to know?

Here are a few closing points to consider when going through your decision process:

Do not wait until the last minute. It is a rare occasion when rushing to get something done will give you a desired outcome. With just a little planning ahead, you can eliminate the stress and worry and end up with the packaging of your dreams, not something thrown together in a rush.

Communication is key. Make sure your custom box manufacturer has been active in their communications and follow ups, and that you can sense they genuinely feel they would like to have your business—not just for this one order, but for all future opportunities.

Look for an experienced, long term partner. One who will suggest ideas to make your packaging more impactful, or even offer creative ways to help manage your product packaging budget. At Uppercut Box, we strive to make your product rollout to be a success, and to become your long term partner for all your packaging needs.

We hope you have found this document helpful. The world of custom packaging is a key component to the overall success of the product you have worked so hard to develop. Even if you decide not to choose Uppercut Box to manufacture your packaging, we wish you the best in all of your endeavors!