Packaging requirements of the over 60's

Pro Carton







What are the Needs and Wishes of Consumers in the 60+ Age Group in Terms of Packaging?

Results of a market research study carried out by facit Marketing-Forschung, Munich





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Packaging requirements of the over 60's



"We want to be tempted!"

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"Anyone claiming that today's packaging is perfectly tailored to meet the needs of the older generation is mistaken." (Statement from the "60+ study" by facit)















Foreword / Editorials

To what Degree is Packaging suited to the over 60's?

You're as old as you feel, they say, but in the world of packaging this familiar maxim is all too often ignored. Insufficiently thought-out packaging designs can make people in the over 60's target group feel quite literally old — and therefore much more likely to turn to alternatives that don't give them that feeling. The study results presented here reveal how such alternatives should actually look (and feel).

Packaging doesn't just hold things – it's also an experience. And the experience that customers have of packaging can have a negative or positive effect: on their enjoyment of the product and their purchasing decisions, on their levels of product and brand loyalty, and even on their mood and state of health.

Research into packaging is therefore important in many different ways, since packaging is used for more than just protecting and marketing products. It's also a means of guiding customers in the decisions they make. Research data allows marketing people to respond to the wishes of changing target groups in a better and more focused way, and to optimise both market success and customer service.

A particularly important target group here consists of the over 60's, whose special wishes and particular requirements have been given too little consideration in the past. A lot more could – and should – be done in this area.

For the sake of this important group of consumers and their quality of life and, of course, for the sake of your business success.



Richard Dalgleish, Managing Director Pro Carton International

Brussels, May 2006

The fact that "there is no greater constant in the history of life than change," was one of the great naturalist Charles Darwin's key discoveries. This also holds true for the history and the present of our society in Western Europe. At the current time, we're experiencing a major change in the age profile of our society and in people's lifestyles. This is bringing a whole host of new challenges with it. One of the fundamental strategies for coping with the future therefore involves recognising and describing these

new developments, capturing these trends, researching people's desires, and then utilising and implementing the results obtained. The most recent Pro Carton study focused on the potentials - largely unrealised up till now - that are arising as a result of the changes in society. The reason: the steadily growing market segment of older consumers in Europe has a fundamentally different relationship with packaging from younger consumer groups, which have been the focus of most of the previous research carried out.



Dr Otto Maran, Managing Partner, facit Marketing-Forschung















The Older Generation wields new Power

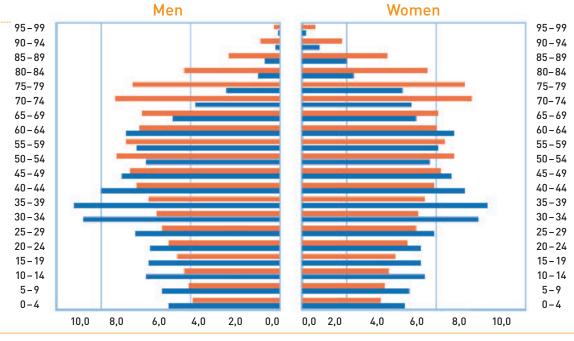
Life expectancy is rising, the birth rate is falling. Society, in fact, is getting older every year. Back in 1950, the number of people under 20 was approximately twice as high as the number of those aged 60 or above.

By 2050, however, this ratio will have been reversed. By then there will be more than twice as many over 60's as young people. Even now, the number of over 60's in Germany, for example, has reached 18 million. That means 18 million discerning men and women with a good deal of purchasing power and their own sets of needs and desires. People who don't want to be classified as "the elderly" by advertisers and

marketing specialists but instead expect to be allowed to maintain, wherever possible, the consumption and lifestyle habits of their middle years. And this includes being offered packaging that meets their needs. Packaging, as the medium with which the consumer comes into the closest contact, can have a unique and long-lasting impact thanks to its mix of function and information, handling, comfort and convenience, and aesthetics and design. It's time for marketing specialists to adjust to the new power of the older generation and recognise the dynamic potential for innovation offered by the reversal in society's age profile.

Changes in the Age Profile between 2000 and 2040 (in Percent)

Forecast: Within a few decades, there will be more than twice as many over 60's as young people.







2040

2000











Target Group-Friendly Packaging Design: Procedures and Objectives of the Study

Advertisers have long recognised the need to avoid producing "elderly people's advertising" for "elderly people's products". It's well known that older consumers expect to be appreciated rather than discriminated against, and to be offered friendly products rather than products that confront them with negative stereotypes.

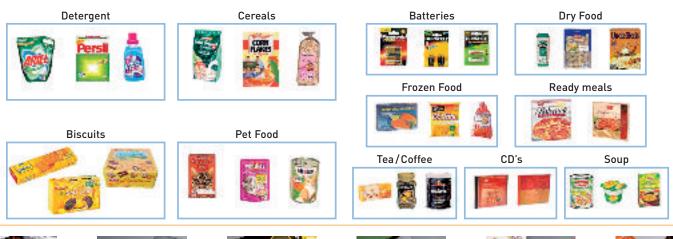
So what role can packaging play here? And are today's standard packaging designs really good enough for the over 60's? Such important questions, which have been neglected in other research, are the subject of this Pro Carton study into the wishes and requirements of the 60+ target group. For the purposes of the study, a sociologically balanced group of 163 subjects from Germany, the UK, Italy, Spain, France, the Netherlands and Belgium were interviewed in two hour group discussions conducted using qualitative principles from the

field of psychology. This was a particularly intensive and revealing procedure, which also involved a review of the data by means of a comparison with a younger control group.

The range of topics covered included the importance of packaging for the target group, satisfaction with standard packaging designs, assessments and wishes in terms of information content, issues of handling, design, brand presence, and packaging materials.

In addition, 31 packages from eleven different product categories were tested. The results of the study provided brand managers, marketing decision-makers and designers with empirical data on the target segment's notions of an "ideal" packaging design – and on the market opportunities provided by packaging designs that fulfil the needs of the over 60 age group.

The participants tested and evaluated 31 packaging designs from eleven different product categories.

















Older Consumers have never felt so young

The Pro Carton 60+ study clearly reveals that this segment has a particular profile, consisting as it does of highly self-aware and discriminating consumers. "The expectations of the over 60's target group are at least as high as those of the younger generation – and when it comes to handling, information content and environmental protection, even higher."

The traditional view of the older generation is out of date, with people leading an active retirement and enjoying their later years to a much greater extent. As a quality and service-aware generation, these new "third agers" have both time and purchasing power – and use these discerningly in the market. What's more, older consumers put more effort into the purchasing process than youngsters do and, in a similar

way, have more time to consider and weigh up their decisions when comparing and evaluating products and packaging. This target group also has particular requirements with regard to clear branding – and to the company behind the branding.

The over 60's attach value to having a deep relationship with a brand and to being treated as premium customers. They show more loyalty to companies and especially to brands than their younger counterparts. And in terms of friendliness and clarity in communication, older consumers are also more demanding. Just as they expect a pleasant, competent tone from salespeople, they expect similar values in product packaging. For older customer segments, packaging is an effective form of customer care.

Playing on the Strengths of the Target Group

Here in Europe, too, the purchasing power of the over 50's is significantly higher than that of the younger generation: in Germany, for instance, they are responsible for more than 50% of monetary assets.

In the US, marketing experts regularly use the term "grampies". This acronym stands for "growing retired active moneyed people in an excellent state", a group that represents a growing market segment.

These "third agers", though, don't just wield power from a financial point of view – they also possess a great deal of cultural and social capital, exert considerable influence, contribute to opinion-forming, and act as "multipliers" in the market.

And they set new market trends and new patterns of consumption. And since older consumers tend to pay more attention to quality than price, branded and premium items have above average appeal for them, whatever the product segment. It's no wonder that "future gurus", such as Oliver Schwarzmann, offer the following advice: "In a few years, the over 60's will be decisive in a large number of markets. Any business that's not adjusting to that fact will lose out."















Service and Sensibility: Packaging as an Emotional Marketing Tool

One central concern ran consistently through the responses given in the 60+ study: that older consumers, much more than younger people, expect to have their needs fulfilled in a targeted and considered way. If this is not done, then this can even lead to stress. Their needs range from a wish for packaging that's pleasant to handle, to a desire for the packaging to communicate product values clearly – a requirement that on an indirect level also expresses a wish to be appreciated as a consumer.

While marketing specialists were madly chasing after the "youth market", they simply forgot about the 50+ age groups.

Now, however, today's older people are aware of their rights and are

justifiably demanding to be noticed,

respected and considered. They place feelings above fun. Their wish? For products and services that make them feel good, that make them feel happy in their lives.

Emotional requirements of this type are fulfilled by products and packaging designs that bring an experience benefit, that indicate an awareness of service to the customer, that appear to solve a particular problem. The objective of "solving the problem" is now the key task facing development departments - both for brand manufacturers and packaging designers. The following pages describe the shortfalls of past packaging designs as identified by the study, and also the areas of potential it reveals for the future.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Self-Actualisation

Social Recognition

Social Relationships

Security

Basic Needs

At every level of the hierarchy of needs, the older generation has its own specific requirements.
Self respect, being treated as an individual, and self actualisation are particularly important. And at every level, packaging can play a role in enhancing quality of life.















Quality of Life, not "Lifestyle"

Knowing what's important and choosing things of value – these are fundamental strategies deployed by older consumers in their decision making strategies that also impact on their view of packaging.

Speed and ease of recognition at the point of sale are particularly important for 63% of the over 60's surveyed. And 44% expect that packaging should transmit high product quality. This represents a clear contrast to the preferences of younger consumers, who place more emphasis on an appealing design (78%) and originality (93%). Younger target groups prefer values of novelty, lifestyle and surprise, while older ones go for continuity, ease of recognition, and quality of life. The latter group expects a limited amount of clear information, appreciating the art of using few words in a skilful way.

An important aspect is that, while packaging designs may certainly give an explicitly "young" impression, they

should otherwise be "ageneutral". Anything, on the other hand, that appears explicitly "old", receives only low levels of acceptance. Consumers in the 60+ bracket feel young and wish to be treated that way. They appreciate packaging that creates an up-to-date, modern impression and don't want to be reminded by complicated packaging of age-related limitations, such as reduced physical capabilities or diminishing eyesight. For these reasons, 76% appreciate clearly legible writing, 72% value ease of opening, and 55% specify ease of disposal. This shows a marked contrast with the younger consumers. Of them, only 5% care about legibility, 11% are concerned with easily opened packaging, and only 7% specify disposal as a factor.

User-Friendliness: a Prime Concern

The German federation of organisations for the elderly (the "Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Senioren-Organisationen") has identified that problems related to the use of those products important for every day activities can hinder a person's ability to lead a long term independent life. Appropriate packaging for this target group is therefore of vital importance for customers' quality of life. What's more, it's also of benefit to consumers of every generation.

Every age group can benefit from improvements that take into account the requirement for more rapid information and that satisfy needs in terms of aesthetics and handling. Design and ergonomics experts have recognised this fact and are therefore focusing increasingly on what they term "barrier-free design". This can lead to packaging designs that are especially appealing to older consumers while also being user-friendly for people of any age.















1st result

If we don't like it, then it's back on the Shelf: the over 60's as Discerning Consumers

Packaging plays a fundamental role in the purchasing decisions of the 60+ target group, with 85% of people in that segment rating it as either a fairly important or very important factor. These older consumers have a significantly different relationship to packaging from their younger counterparts, being more discerning and inspecting the packaging more thoroughly. This attitude has clear financial implications. The point of sale becomes a place of inspection.

Unlike younger consumers, the older generation is quick to impose its

long term punishment on packaging that's defective or inadequately persuasive in its design – by simply putting the product back on the shelf.

Expectations are high, and failing to meet these can have a number of consequences. A particularly important aspect lies in packaging's explanatory role: it gives a feel of control over the product and compensates for the reduced willingness of older consumers to take risks, giving them confidence in the product.



For older consumers in particular, packaging can play a major role in purchasing decisions.

















2nd result

Constructive Criticism as a Spur to New Design

Fewer than one-fifth of older consumers are completely satisfied with the packaging designs that are commonly in use today. A full 81%, meanwhile, are either satisfied only to some degree or else are completely dissatisfied.

They are especially critical of:

 Product information that is too hard to read, vague or even missing;

- Irrelevant information, which they find annoying;
- Opening mechanisms that are incomprehensible;
- Packaging that is difficult to open and difficult to re-close;
- Packaging designs that do not allow the contents to be served in portions;
- Packaging that does not allow the product to be stored for an appropriate length of time;
- Unattractive designs, which are often inadequate for the product;
- A lack of a sense of value;
- A lack of "realism", with exaggerations often perceived as an attempt to deceive;
- A poor display of the brand, acting a barrier to product recognition.

These are critical points that make one thing clear: appropriate packaging for this target group requires attention to detail. Here, product recognition and brand presence, quality messages, informational value, and user friendliness are particularly important factors – in fact, they are prerequisites.

















3rd result

Information stimulates Sales

As a previous Pro Carton study – "The new force at the POS" – indicated, no marketing medium achieves higher levels of consumer trust than packaging. It achieves levels of credibility almost 200% higher than the average for other elements in the marketing mix. However, while packaging is theoretically ideal for transmitting information, it is not yet always used for this purpose as well as it might be.

As an example, they criticised "information overkill" in the form, say, of packaging texts in ten different languages, confusing symbols and colour schemes, a lack of information on ingredients relevant for health, and unclear information. An appeal that might motivate them to purchase was also often missed.

On this point, honesty rather than a clever effect is what people wanted, in line with the well-known motto: what you see is what you get. Information to which the older people in the study attach importance: Transmission of special qualities and product characteristics (type of taste, variety, etc.), information on product use or

preparation (by means of illustrations, for example), size and weight of the product, information of serving the product in portions, details on ingredients (sugar and fat content, for instance), a clearly visible use-by date, and disposal instructions.

Criteria for packaging suitable for the over 60's:

- Appropriate accentuation of the key visual message and high brand visibility;
- Selective and concise information;
- Communication of clearly ordered and easily readable, relevant product features;
- A realistic illustration of the product rather than an artificially set-up scene;
- A safe, user-friendly, and intuitive means of opening and (re-)closing the product;
- Ease of removal for the product, ideally in portions;
- Easily removable secondary packaging;
- Optimum ease of storage on the basis of stability and product protection;
- Safety, with no danger of injury;
- Ease of recycling















Hands up for Ease of Handling

Offering packaging that is pleasant to handle shows real customerorientation. This service is something that is particularly favoured by the 60+ target group. As well as reacting against the "barriers" mentioned, these consumers also appreciate packaging that can be used intuitively, so that "instructions" for using the packaging don't also need to be included with the

product information. A practical approach is welcome here. The over 60's have very strong feelings about packaging. The study concludes that: "The rational aspect of easy handling for a packaging design is also loaded with a high emotional content, something not seen in the same way with younger consumers." These are emotional reactions – factors that play a decisive role in market success.

Sense and Sense Appeal

Design and visual appeal, a pleasant feel for the material used, shapes that fit comfortably in the hand, even in some cases a pleasant noise when the packaging is used (such as an audible click when a seal is re-closed). and/or a nice smell all produce feelings of satisfaction, and stimulate purchases and the consumer's enjoyment of product and brand.

Giving consideration in terms of design to the emotional expectations of older consumers requires both creativity and the use of multiple resources for stimulation and information.

Unlike younger target groups, consumers in the over 60's segment appreciate natural, realistic colour schemes and prefer happy, friendly colours that transmit quality of life and a sense of optimism. Colour effects that have no appreciable connection with the product do not go down well. This target group is particularly fond of being able to see the product – either by appealing, inviting, appetising or tempting illustrations, or more directly using

"windows", for example. An economic design for the packaging is also important: complex designs that use a lot of materials are rejected, and unnecessary packaging irritates these consumers. The older generation is equally dismissive of packaging that cannot be opened or resealed without the use of other tools, such as scissors or knives. This is one of the many reasons why cartonboard is particularly popular among the 60+ age group. And there are two other reasons: the pleasant feel of the material and its prime suitability for printing: Cartonboard is nice to touch, while well-designed folding boxes are considered to be visually appealing.

















Consumers in the over 60's target group particularly favour packaging designs that suggest enjoyment of life and a sense of optimism, especially by means of yellow or orange colour schemes.















Striking Brands are Successful Brands



"Traditional brands that I'm familiar with – those are the ones I also have more confidence in."

The study cast light on the strong wishes of those surveyed for a clear brand presence. That this should be clearly communicated and offer reliability as a constant, was something on which all of the participants agreed. Overall, the interest of the 60+ generation in branding is higher than that of other age groups. "I always pay attention to the brand," noted the older survey respondents. "Traditional brands that I'm familiar with - those are the ones I also have more confidence in." "The packaging should be designed so that it's immediately clear which brand is involved." Infringements of these rules provoke dissatisfaction:

"Sometimes the packaging is changed for a particular brand, and then you can't find it anymore." Older consumers explicitly cite their liking for easily recognisable "colour codes" and for clearly visible logos and typefaces; 83% of the participants attach value to good branding on product packaging and make their purchasing decisions dependent on that. Similarly, brand presentation and presence are important success factors in winning over the 60+ target group. Through appropriately focused packaging, marketing specialists can enjoy particular success in gaining such consumers' brand loyalty.

Product Packaging promotes and increases Branding



Dr. Oetker Ristorante
Salami Pizza
Appealing images of the product:
"You can picture how the pizza will
look when it comes out of the oven."



Uncle Ben's Rice
Different: "Individual colours
allow the packaging to be
recognised even from a distance."



Kellogg's Corn Flakes
Brand recognition:
"Logo, photos, an unchanging design
help the older consumer to develop



Duracell Batteries
Problem-free handling:
"The easy-to-handle packaging avoids stress among consumers in the over 60's age group.
Age-related limitations don't cause a problem."

The study participants gave their responses to the packaging designs shown to them, based on factors such as brand recognition.





trust in the brand."











The Material People like: Cartonboard

It's not just its "warmth", its environmentally friendly qualities and the pleasant, sensual feel of its surfaces that make cartonboard a favourite among materials. The test participants had a lot of praise for the folding carton. It's unbreakable and can't cause injury, it can be easily stacked, it's easy to transport and to open, it keeps the contents fresh, it's hygienic and suitable for both dry products and frozen foods, it's familiar, long-lasting, adaptable to trends, it allows for elegant gift-packaging, it's popular, environmentally friendly, natural,

and it's easy to take apart, crush and to recycle. And even though the study participants had some doubts as to whether this material would be able to keep up with plastic in terms of the future requirements for multiple uses, its ability to be freely combined with other materials, and its sustainability for ongoing innovation, they actually viewed these factors as a plus point: "You should be able to package just about anything in paper and cartonboard." The target group is therefore ready to be convinced by any new developments in the folding cartons!



Cartonboard is especially suitable as a material for creating packaging that fulfils the older generation's needs for comprehensive, easily readable, and attractive illustrated product information.















A winning Feeling: Packaging and Emotion

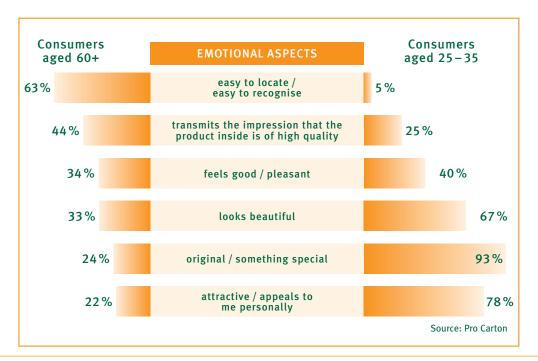
The study results clearly showed that the over 60's have a strong emotional reaction to both positive and negative features of packaging. Inappropriate packaging designs create stress, act as a barrier to daily life, make people aware of problems they might have, and cause annoyance and disappointment.

Such packaging can damage a company's image and lose a company sales. Good, target group oriented packaging, on the other hand, creates a bond with older consumers and brings them closer to the brand to which they attach so much value. It transmits

identification with the product, a sense that the product has value, and the idea that the company pays attention to both value and quality. Above all, however, it transmits information. All of that makes packaging an ideal tool for marketing and for communication, one that increases both customer loyalty and customer service, and one that achieves brand loyalty and brand responsiveness.

This is particularly true for packaging made from cartonboard, the material with the strongest and most multi-faceted emotional impact.

The Emotional Aspects of Product Packaging that are Particularly Important

















Form and Function for Long-Term Appeal

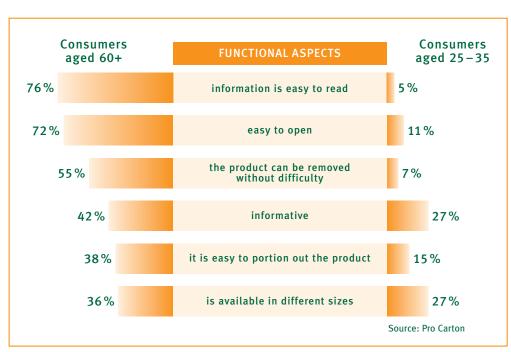
As consumers grow older, their requirements increase in respect of the functionality of packaging. This is where the 60+ segment requires standards that can, if fulfilled, benefit every age group, since the over 60's demand structural and informational clarity, clear brand messages, shapes that are appropriately tailored to the product, brand and consumer, functions that are easy to use, and intuitive handling.

There are still lots of mistakes made in this area — namely too little thought given to the people for

whom packaging should be a useful, pleasant element of their daily life. In future, more thought needs to be given in packaging design and production to the way that products are actually used, to the way the packaging is handled, to practical features, ease of use, and especially to the ways in which the packaging solves a problem. There's still a lot of work to be done. But there are also many opportunities. Not least if marketing specialists exploit the potential offered by cartonboard as an unusually flexible, popular and functional material.

From a purely physical point of view, in fact, packaging is first and foremost something that separates the product from its user - but as well as functionality it can also encapsulate psychological messages, bringing together the product and the user, and tying in people to a particular brand.

The Functional Aspects of Product Packaging that are Particularly Important



A young participant in the study put the findings of the study in a way that everyone might agree with: "Sometimes you notice that the people developing the packaging have had a new idea. I like that!"















Conclusion

Age-Appropriate Packaging as Part of the General Marketing Mix

A previous Pro Carton study demonstrated how powerful packaging can be as marketing tool. It is an excellent component within the communications mix for getting consumers to identify with a product and for motivating them to buy benefits that can, however, easily be lost if the product is insufficiently tailored to the needs of the target group. Emotional appeal, design continuity and functional benefits all tailored to the target group(s) involved should therefore be key criteria in packaging development. This means that - depending on the target audience concerned - as many of the results as possible from the facit 60+ study should be taken into account in future. Indeed, successful marketing to the older generation is becoming a fundamental element of "marketing by packaging". From the product concept stage to design, from the appeal at point of sale through to the after sale effect of the packaging within the target consumers' households, packaging

designs that are tailored to the needs of the older age groups can be an excellent means of achieving market success and reinforcing brand image.

And particularly with today's "third agers", clear branding can have the strongest effect. Marketing specialists need to exploit this potential, by complementing and supplementing the traditional elements of marketing with new ideas. Here, by marketing we mean all "activities carried out in order to meet consumers' needs and investigate the competitive environment for the purposes of developing and creating products and services that, together with accompanying messages, form the public's attitudes and therefore open up opportunities for profit. The principal aim of marketing is to offer products and services to the right target group, at the right price, at the right time, while generating brand loyalty."



Increasing customer loyalty through packaging – by, for instance, providing additional benefits such as a measuring function, a robust mechanism for easy opening, pouring and re-closing, as well as the recipe card for tearing off on the reverse of the packaging for the Riseria Taverna rice brand.















Conclusion

Anti Ageing Packaging

The growing market segment of quality and service aware consumers in the over 60's age group - with a wish for packaging designs that are tailored to the needs and to the age of the people concerned - is confronting the packaging industry with a new challenge. This challenge is not just a technical and creative one, but also an ethical one. It's ultimately, in fact, a matter of being oriented towards the customer in a more serious and sincere way by offering new concepts in packaging, and by demonstrating attentiveness and care to customers' needs.

Particularly for the older generation, packaging works in a variety of ways, affecting as it does the consumer's attitude to life, generating discomfort or – where the design is

properly thought out and implemented – producing a feeling of satisfaction and ease. Packaging can either help consumers to feel their age, or help them to forget it. It can cause bother or else reduce bother, it can inhibit quality of life or else enhance it. Packaging can even be an anti ageing tool. One of the participants in the study made clear how often even the smallest details can have a major effect: "I love bright colours. When I see them I feel happier right away."

And packaging that makes people happy also makes them your friends. Particularly with the older generation, provided that the packaging meets the consumers' needs, brands can be seen as friends. Friends for life, in fact.







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What is Pro Carton?













Pro Carton is the European
Association of Cartonboard and
Carton Manufacturers.
Headquartered in Brussels, it has
offices in 11 countries in Europe
who, through various publications,
activities and events, promote the
use of cartons and cartonboard to a
wide variety of people and groups.

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