Now in its seventh year, the essential aims of the Pro Carton / ECMA Carton of the Year award remain as they have been since its inception. To illustrate to the widest possible audience, the huge variety, quality, branding opportunities, functionality and overall appeal of carton packaging.

Each year we never cease to be amazed at the level of quality and innovation of the carton industry and this year, as well as illustrating those aspects, we have seen an increase in the number of entries for the Awards of over 50%. This truly reflects the fact that each year the invention and appeal of cartons is increasing as more and more packaging buyers see the value in using cartons. This value is not simply related to cost but to heightening brand value, improving the recognition of a product, offering a sustainable and socially responsible material whilst at the same time using the packaging as an ideal “advertisement” for the product in a market crowded with alternative products.

The judges had an extremely difficult task this year and I am most grateful to them for all they did. It involved many lengthy discussions and reaching their final conclusions was not at all easy in any category. They asked specifically if they could award a special prize this year as there was one outstanding entry which, whilst not complying with the rule that all entries should be made of a minimum of 80% cartonboard, nonetheless showed a level of innovation, flair and functionality that they felt should be rewarded. We were happy to accede to their request and next year plan an additional category aimed at cartons made from a combination of cartonboard and fluted materials.

In 2002 as well as distributing over 12,000 copies of the Jury report, we also published another booklet looking back through the previous awards to illustrate the best in carton packaging. In addition we gave extensive coverage on our website and I am pleased to report that the award pages are amongst the most visited part of our website. As a result of this as well as publishing and distributing this report and putting them on the www.procarton.com website, we will also be starting a new website dedicated to these awards that will offer a simple and effective way for visitors to look through the best of carton packaging. This new website will be operational before the end of the year at www.cartonawards.com.

Can I finally thank the judges once again and also ECMA for their support with these awards. Most importantly however, I would like to thank all our members who supported us and entered this year to make this the most successful award competition we have had to date.

Richard Dalgleish
Managing Director - Pro Carton
Brussels, August 2003
The Jury

ASSESMENT BY THE JURY

In taking over the Chairmanship of the jury this year, I confess to being apprehensive over the challenges – firstly about maintaining the highest standards set by the jury chaired by my predecessor Hans Dirken, and secondly about the intimidating quantity, quality and variety of the Competition submissions overall.

Once into the judging process, I made a number of “discoveries”, which I’d like to share with you.

The number of entries was up by 50% over 2002! The confectionery category, whose success relies heavily on impulse and gifting purchases, in fact created a major problem for the jury by offering such a richness of content, and so many potential winners. Regrettably, numbers don’t always help, because a couple of other categories did not match quality with quantity. It is not that they were in any sense “bad”. Rather they were lacking in imagination and differentiation, two essential characteristics to cut through the competitive clutter. In fact, looking at the number of really interesting packages from those categories in retail stores currently, it seemed to the jury that the variety of submissions was not really representative, which is a pity.

The enemy of sales growth is banality and predictability. Be relevant, but above all be daring and be different. These key success factors you will find in the choice of the overall and category winners.

To reinforce an important point already made by Richard Dalgleish, a pack with a simple, powerful concept is preferable to one which is complex and difficult to decode by the consumer. We need to remind ourselves of the challenge that FMCG packages meet in retail. All the functional and communication elements need to be maximised and balanced. Material, construction, form, graphics and serviceability are vital to be present in a holistic way, so that the consumer feels that the product has been packaged “specially for them”, and the...
brand experience is thus enhanced. Above all, the consumer has “to get it”, and quickly. That is, the reason to buy must be clear.

The jury found some difficulty in visualising some “incomplete” packs. To help judging, the pack, including product should always be available. If this is not possible, a series of photographs showing the product in context is going to help understanding of the role of the pack, and thus increase the possibility of winning an award.

On a point of the Competition rules, it is a great pity if an otherwise excellent pack is not in compliance. This happened in this year’s competition and, of course, the entry was automatically excluded from the main competition. However, the Judges asked if a special award could be given to reflect excellence in a pack that fell outside the competition rules. The jury regards transparent fairness as a basic credo, so please help us in this respect.

Lastly, as I stated emphatically in Crete, packaging has indeed finally gained the respect of the media planners. Because of its unique characteristics and ability to guarantee a contact with the consumer, it is a medium worthy of investment within a marketing plan.

The question is this. Of all the packaging materials available to brand owners, is carton board seen as one of the preferred ones?

As is clear in the Competition, carton is highly creative functionally and communicatively. Some categories are in advance of others, but all have the same potential.

Let the winners inspire us all to do more, go further. For those who didn’t win, keep trying! Let’s have another 50% increase in entries in 2004. The jury would love the challenge!

Allan Boyle, Vevey, September 2003
**Kitzbühler Horn  Carton of the year**

**Comments by the jury:**
Sometimes simplicity beats everything. The jury was greatly impressed by the effective combination of the pyramid shape and the variety of high quality printing and finishing techniques which add up to the composition of a mountain. The jury liked the multitude of embossed textures and the graphics that were printed in only one colour.

**Brief description of the entry:**
The combination of UV varnish and matt embossing illustrates the contrast between the smoothness of the snow and the roughness of the rocky Alps. As such, the entry illustrates very well the versatility of folding cartons as packaging and marketing medium.

**Official name of the entry:** Kitzbühler Horn

**End-user:** Confiserie Manfred Wiegand

**Package designer:** Mayr-Melnhof Packaging Austria GmbH

**Carton maker:** Mayr-Melnhof Packaging Austria GmbH

**Cartonboard supplier:** Iggesund Paperboard Europe

The package was manufactured in 1-colour offset, matt varnish as well as partial UV varnish and textured embossing. The package is easy to open and re-close. The confectionery inside is protected by using trays for three separate layers. The packages are delivered flat to the end user and filled manually. The cartonboard used for this carton was Invercote.
Comments by the jury:
The judges awarded this entry the prize for the most interesting shape, its functionality and the high quality brand image. The butterfly wrapped shape of the package reflects the brand name ‘Papillon’ (Butterfly), as do the wrapped chocolates inside. The package can be opened easily using an excellent tear strip, and the whole carton then opens up to form a serving tray for home consumption. The colourful appearance and use of gold blocking adds to the image of a seasonal happy family product.

Brief description of the entry:
The product was printed in 5-colour offset plus dispersion lacquer with gold foil blocking used to create the special effects. The carton and carton tray were delivered flat and assembled at a home for the disabled. The package is easily stackable at the point of sale. Invercote G 330 gsm was used for this carton.

Official name of the entry:
Papillon Crisp

Carton maker:
Model PrimePac AG (CH)

End-user:
Kraft Foods Schweiz AG

Cartonboard supplier:
Iggesund Paperboard Europe

Package designer:
Kraft Foods Schweiz AG
Comments by the jury:

After long deliberation the Jury felt that it should honour this entry with a special award. The display package stood out because of its contemporary design. The construction fits all wines of the same brand family. Its dark blue design with gold embossing harmonises with the gold-coloured frosted glass bottle and as such enhances the visibility of the brand on the bottle. At the same time, it also protects the bottles from touching each other during transport. The integrated handle allows easy and safe transport.

Brief description of the entry:

The package was printed on cartonboard laminated to e-flute. The outside was printed in 2-colour offset plus matt gloss and gold embossing. The inside of the box was printed in 1-colour flexo. The carton is erected manually by the packer-filler and is held together with ‘clips’ of e-flute.

Official name of the entry: Moselland Display Packaging
End-user: Moselland Winzergenossenschaft e.g.
Package designer: Moselland Winzergenossenschaft e.g.
Carton maker: J. Langenbach AG (CH)
Cartonboard supplier: Mayr-Melnhof Karton Deisswil AG – Roman Bauernfeind Papierfabrik AG
Comments by the jury:
The judges rewarded this entry because of the convenience and the apparent simplicity of the design. The concertina shaped base expands when the lid is removed, thereby separating the individual mints so making it simpler to select an individual mint. The colours used are instantly recognisable for this brand.

Brief description of the entry:
The carton was produced in 6-colour offset using UV gloss varnish on 280 Micron 280 gsm Sim White cartonboard. Special attention was paid to the neatness of the pleats. The pre-erected bases are supplied to a hand packing line (soon to be moved to semi-automatic). For production, special equipment was designed to form the pleats in a timed mechanism, using individual ‘fingers’ as tools to form base and side pleats as the side walls are erected. It took less than 5 months to move from the initial concept to commercial distribution.
Comments by the jury:
The jury awarded the prize for the coherence of this packaging range, which consists of 4 separate cartons. In today’s growing market for medical products sold ‘over the counter’, the concept allows easy recognition on the shelf through its eye catching shape, thereby enhancing the familiar brand colours. Whilst the outer pack performs a display function at the point of sale, the small pocket versions offer consumers the convenience of easy portability and simple use.

Brief description of the entry:
The display pack was produced in 4-colour offset plus dispersion lacquer. All other packs in the range were produced in 3-colour offset on the outside and 1-colour on the inside for the user instructions. The range of packages is pre-glued and automatically filled. After opening, the lid of the display package is it can be folded and tucked in the back to become a point-of-sale display. The individual packs offer convenience and easy re-closure. The cartonboard used to make these cartons was Neocard 270gsm and GC2 Neocard 250gsm made by Stora Enso.
Comments by the jury:

The jury awarded this entry for the role the package and surrounding display plays in the total product concept. The graphic design of the individual portion pack refers to the country of origin; the colours chosen highlight the thrill of danger. Its octagonal shape resembles the cylinder of a Colt revolver holding the ‘bullet’.

According to the jury, the carton strongly reinforces the ‘fun’ element of the product. Each ‘cylinder’ contains four small bottles of vodka. One of them however causes the tongue to discolour. The ‘victim’ has to perform a forfeit, which is printed on the base of each carton.

Brief description of the entry:

The package was printed in 5-colour offset with dispersion lacquer on Hansaboard made by Europa Carton AG

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<th>Official name of the entry:</th>
<th>Carton maker:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Russian Roulette Box</td>
<td>Acket Drukkerij - Kartonnage BV (NL)</td>
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<th>End-user:</th>
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<td>Russian Roulette BV</td>
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<th>Package designer:</th>
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<td>Acket Drukkerij - Kartonnage BV</td>
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<th>Cartonboard supplier:</th>
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<td>Europa Carton AG</td>
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Comments by the jury:
The Jury was delighted by the ‘WYSIWYG’ concept of this packaging: what you see is what you get. Whereas traditionally, bonus products are either attached to the main product or provided separately, this ‘twin’ package is made of one piece of cartonboard containing two separate products. The design of the package makes both the original product and the extra gift highly visible. The Jury was pleased to see that no concessions were made to the quality of the overall package so that it retained its overall image.

Brief description of the entry:
To produce the carton, 6-colour offset and UV varnish was used on Avanta Ultra 315 gsm cartonboard. The package is machine formed and hand loaded. This design can also be used for other product combinations in the same range, it is stable on the shelf at the point of sale and is also easy stackable.
Comments by the jury:

The judges felt that this entry complements the high quality of the cheese it contains. This unconventional cheese package upgrades the cheese to a premium product. The gold printing on the carton is of high quality and stands out well against the blue background.

Brief description of the entry:

The cheese is hand made and thus can vary in size. The special construction locks so that every different size can be accommodated. The package is prepared for automatic filling. The carton was produced on SUS board in 1-colour offset plus gold foil and dispersion lacquer. The cheese is held in the package with a label, which is applied as a band.
Comments by the jury:
In the eyes of the jury, functionality and convenience were the most outstanding qualities of this carton. The structural design of the pack ensures the correct dosage of its contents (dishwasher salt) at all times. The well thought out positioning and direction of the illustrations and instructions, as well as the funnel-like shape, cleverly inform the consumer how to hold and use the product. A well thought out and engineered integrated concept.

Brief description of the entry:
The package was designed in such a way that the salt could be put in the reservoir of the dishwasher without touching the actual product. The package can be used for all types of dishwashers. The package consists of two elements: the box and the inner funnel. They are folded and glued which provides the necessary rigidity and easy opening. The package was printed in 4-colour offset on 370 gsm Frövi Light Kraft cartonboard.