



Paper Bottle Innovation Brings Sustainable Packaging to the Forefront

by The IWSR, www.theiwsr.com

Sustainable packaging solutions have been at the top of corporate and social responsibility agendas in the drinks industry for many years. Whether relating to recyclable materials, responsible sourcing, water use or weight, brands are continually exploring new ways to enhance the green credentials of their bottles, boxes and cans — or, indeed, the liquid itself.

IWSR research shows that environmental concerns are having an increasing influence on consumer purchasing decisions. As such, the motive for distillers, winemakers and brewers to adopt sustainable packaging innovations has become more than ethical — it's in their commercial interests, too.

"All consumer goods companies today know that the impact of their packaging on the environment is very visible to their consumers, and that in order to protect and grow their business in the future, having a sustainable packaging strategy is essential," said Emily Neill, COO, research and operations at IWSR.

The paper bottle is one packaging innovation that has been garnering significant attention in recent months.

In October last year, Danish beer giant Carlsberg revealed two prototypes for what it claimed was the world's first paper bottle for beer. Made using sustainably-sourced wood fiber, the prototypes feature an inner barrier made from a thin film of plastic, which still has green credentials — the barrier for one prototype contains recycled polyethylene terephthalate (PET), while the barrier for the other contains 100% bio-based Polyethylene furanoate (PEF).

The showcase of Carlsberg's Green Fiber bottle came nine months after the launch of its 'Snap Pack' innovation, which eliminated the need for plastic rings in multi-pack beers.

Earlier this summer, British sustainable packaging firm Frugalpac unveiled the Frugal Bottle, made from 94% recycled paperboard and plastic food-grade liner designed to hold wine and spirits. The lightweight bottle is said to have a carbon footprint in its production process that is up to six times lower than a glass bottle, and it is said to use up to 77% less plastic than a full-plastic bottle. Italian wine brand Cantina Goccia was the first producer to sell a product in the Frugal Bottle.

It is not surprising to see these innovations drive interest, particularly in the beer and wine categories. According to Thorsten Hartmann, director at IWSR: "Sustainability is much more of an issue for high-turnover, single-strength products, such as wine, beer and RTDs, than for spirits that may sit opened on a shelf for a good while."

Spirits brand owners do, however, need to also be mindful of their sustainability strategy. Just two weeks after the unveiling of the Frugal Bottle, Diageo revealed what it called the "world's first 100% plastic-free paper-based spirits bottle." The bottle is made entirely from sustainably-sourced wood and is "expected to be fully recyclable," according to Diageo. It will debut with Johnnie Walker Scotch whisky in early 2021, most probably as a special edition. Diageo will also work with a consortium of FMCG

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SipSource Issues Third-Quarter Data, Paints Bleak Picture for On-Premise Retail Outlets in 2021

SipSource, a source for spirits and wine distributor depletion data, has issued its quarterly report that identifies spirits and wine trends for the time period from September 2019 to September 2020 and explores commercial and consumer trends during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The situation in the on-premise is nothing short of catastrophic and continues to get worse every day," said SipSource analyst and industry veteran Dale Stratton. "We anticipate on-premise share of total depletions to be around 9.5% for spirits and 7.5% for wine by the end of 2020 — nearly halving pre-Covid numbers."

In February, on-premise accounted for 18.6% of total spirits depletions and 14% for wine. By the end of September, on-premise share was down 12.1% and 9.2%, respectively. Twelve-month rolling trends for spirits and wine combined on-premise dropped from -0.4% in February to -23.4% at the end of June. The continued losses in on-premise have softened over the last four months, ending down at -33.5% in September, but new cases of Covid-19 are rising significantly across the country, which could lead to further restrictions and greater losses.

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DISCUS Forms Environmental Sustainability Working Group

The Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS) has formed the Environmental Sustainability Working Group to collaborate and share effective strategies for maximizing resource utilization and eliminating waste at every step of the production process.

"The distilled spirits industry has been deeply invested in protecting our environment and natural resources," said Chris Swonger, DISCUS president and CEO. "This new working group, consisting of DISCUS member company sustainability experts, will exchange ideas and share best practices on preserving

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