



Grocery Case Study

Waitrose Unpacked

-  Grocery Industry
-  2019
-  6 weeks
-  UK Distribution





The challenge and the background

In the quest for answers to the amount of packaging used in the way that groceries are retailed, Waitrose were looking to convert their Botley Road store into a brand-new shopping concept. Branded Waitrose UnPacked, this store would pioneer a new way to shop with emphasis on customers bringing their own reusable containers to fill up in the store.

There was a challenge around how to deliver some items of fresh produce to the store, and then merchandise. The range included soft fruit (berries), small tomatoes and cherries. They needed plastic free packaging to transport the fruit from the grower to store but look right whilst merchandised and then provide a way for shoppers to practically transport the produce home.

Westpak's solution to the challenge

Westpak designed an intricate, recyclable Kraft cardboard punnet with a separate lid. The lid's unique lattice-effect design and the well positioned sidewall ventilation holes gave maximum visibility to the fruit inside.

The punnet and lid being created as separate components offered a range of logistical and practical benefits. The punnets were able to be sent to the fruit packers for filling, whilst the lids were delivered directly to the Waitrose store. Waitrose then created 'lid dispensers' which were centrally positioned among the fresh fruit displays. This enabled shoppers to pick a punnet of fruit before clipping on the cardboard lid so that the punnets could then be stacked in their shopping bags.





The result

When Unpacked launched in Waitrose Botley Road shop in Oxford in summer 2019 it was originally intended to be an eleven week test, but following its success it has continued there and was added to a further three shops, including Wallingford, Abingdon and Cheltenham. Waitrose is also looking to take the concept one step further by becoming the first national supermarket to integrate unpacked items into its regular aisles within its shop in Wallingford Oxfordshire, rather than having a single unpacked fixture. The announcement comes on the back of a report published by Waitrose today showing that customers were overwhelmingly supportive of the unpacked initiative and that nearly all single-use packaging was eliminated across Unpacked products.

In addition to confirming plans to add more refillable products to the range later this year, it underlines Waitrose's ambition to explore the potential to scale-up Unpacked in the future. The Unpacked initiative helped Waitrose rank first in Greenpeace's annual league table which was unveiled in January 2021 and looks at how supermarkets are reducing use of single-use plastics.

James Bailey, Waitrose Executive Director, said: "Waitrose Unpacked requires a fundamental change in shopping behaviour that has been ingrained for years. This next phase will help us to understand if we can make refillables a routine part of customers' shopping trips that would allow us to roll out Unpacked further in the future."



WAITROSE & PARTNERS

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James Bailey,
Waitrose Executive Director

The Westpak approach

Whether creating bespoke packaging solutions or providing items from our standardised product ranges, we remain committed to working alongside key brands across the grocery and foodservice industries, working to a range of sustainability and business objectives.



Westpak's real expertise is in creating diverse packaging solutions using experience, creativity and product development.



We meet the quick turnaround required by Grocery Retailers and Foodservice Chains, displaying their products at their very best.



We create environmentally sustainable and recyclable products which challenge the status quo.



Our creative packaging helps educate your customers and ensures you stand out from the rest.





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