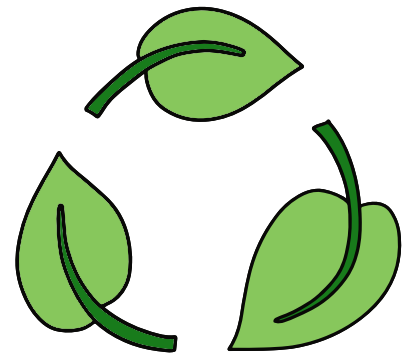


Sustainability

Museum of Brands Self-Guided Worksheet



Sustainability is an important factor for brands when making decisions about their products. Many companies have made commitments to reduce their impact on the planet by 2030. Conscious choices are made about the type of material used for packaging, as well as social sustainability and the ethical sourcing of products.

Use this guided tour to look at how sustainability has changed and how different components of packaging are sustainable.

1. Sustainable Materials

Packaging has evolved as brands work to keep up with both the needs of consumers and technological advancements. In the Victorian and Edwardian eras, brands often chose heavy, sturdy materials like ceramic for packaging to travel long distances by horse and cart without breaking. In contrast, 1970s brands chose lighter-weight packaging to be more convenient for families where adults were busy working and needed easy meals on the go.

For each of the following materials, find an example of a product and note whether you think it can be recycled, reused, repurposed, or is simply rubbish. There can be multiple options for each material.

Material	Product	What can you do with it?
Pottery		
Glass		
Tin		
Cardboard		
Plastic		

If you were to change one of the products above to have a different material, what would you pick and why?

2. WWII

During World War II, food rationing was needed to make sure that everyone had something to eat, but packaging materials were also rationed to reduce waste and prioritise materials for the armed forces. You'll notice smaller, paper labels and, if you look closely, some messages about returning packaging. The public was offered financial incentives to return packaging to the war effort once empty. Go through the 1940s display and look at some examples.

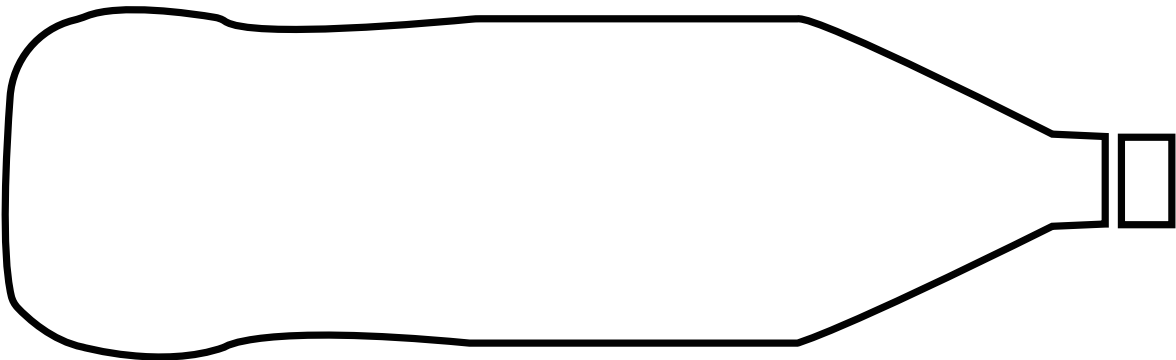
Pick an item and read what's on the label. What do you think is the most important information?

Can you find an example of a rationing message in the cases? What messages do they use to encourage people to participate?

3. Don't Waste. Create

In 2013, Coca-Cola Enterprises launched a campaign called 'Don't Waste. Create.' This was to encourage people to use plastic bottles for crafts after finishing their drink. Nestlé used rocket-shaped packaging to encourage kids to create something new once the packaging was empty. Both brands want to reduce the amount of waste produced by their plastic packaging, whilst inspiring kids to get creative!

Get inventive and turn this bottle into something new!



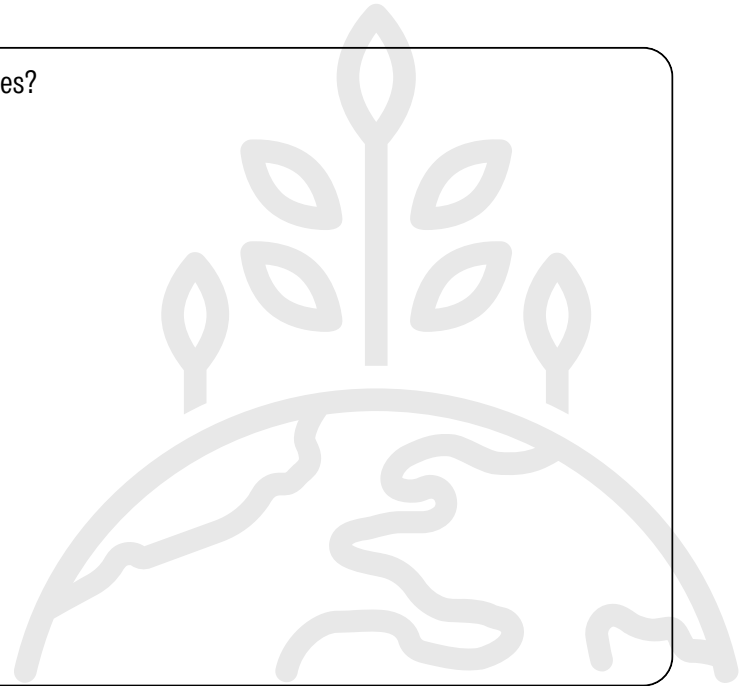
How would you market this new product?

4. Sustainable Promises

Some brands include statements on their packaging about sustainability and the environment. These promises are included on the front of packages for consumers to see when they are purchasing the product. Messages can range from logos showing that the packaging is recyclable, to statements sharing that a product is fair trade, organic or ethically sourced. For some consumers, the sustainability of a product can determine whether they purchase it, or choose a different option. Look in the 2000s displays for some examples.

What are some example or sustainable promises you can find on packages?

What sustainable promise could you make for yourself?



Greenwashing is where brands would include sustainable promises that were inaccurate or oversold the sustainability of a product.

What types of promises do you think might be greenwashing?