

Successfully Navigating Shelf Ready Packaging Disruption

Strategy guide for CPG manufacturers to prepare for collaborative response to retailer requirements



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June 16, 2017

With the perspective of passing time, certain dates become significant in retrospect. Friday, June 16, 2017 will be one of those days. It's the day that retail disruption was officially declared as Amazon announced its acquisition of Whole Foods.

While the full integration strategy and platform opportunities which Amazon envisions will take time to become clear, this transaction reverberated because it summarily discounted assurances that e-commerce and traditional retailing would ebb and flow, yet remain parallel channels which would never converge.

It was easy when ordering a book online to appreciate the convenience and efficiency. Ordering jeans, in contrast, meant guessing about the fabric, fit, and comfort - a tougher barrier to overcome. But food...that was something we selected in person. There are emotional and cultural associations with grocery shopping and logistical limitations. After all, "the costs of home delivery (the 'last mile') are still as great as they were when one of the first such start-ups, Webvan, failed in 2001. And the initial partnerships between these new [internet] companies and traditional retailers have primarily been 'no regrets' experiments, largely funded by the start-ups and offering little risk to the incumbents."¹

This transaction didn't appreciably change the landscape; it just made it inescapably obvious that disruption would be more significant than some had predicted. It's made models, like start-up [Brandless](#)² plan to explicitly disintermediate supermarkets and supplant national brands with \$3 "generic" alternatives sold on the internet³, seem a bit more plausible.

Retail disruption didn't start in 2017, however. It's been ongoing, and it's not just attributable to e-commerce.

Club stores and the rise of mass retailers began to change retailing before e-commerce was imagined. CPG manufacturers have become accustomed to package, put-up, configuration, and logistics requirements associated with serving evolving retail models. Skeleton staffed self-serve retail and narrow margins drive retailer demands for easy to stock and easy to shop displays. And CPG manufacturers can't simply demur. The volumes are significant; in 2015 approximately \$10B of P&G's total \$70B in sales came from Wal-Mart alone.³ Gradually compressed margins, however, don't support the format flexible but logistically cumbersome default solution of co-packing. Suppliers have to figure out how to deliver retailer required configurations in order to retain business much less grow.

¹ <https://www.strategy-business.com/article/A-Strategists-Guide-to-the-Digital-Grocery>

² <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-3-toothpaste-club-startup-to-test-the-power-of-brands-1499767201>

³ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/wal-mart-and-p-g-a-10-billion-marriage-under-strain-1465948431>

While Retail is the Theater of Conflict, CPG & Grocery is the Battlefield

It's nearly impossible to identify a category which isn't impacted by this disruption. Self-service big box retailers dominate home improvement, electronics, automotive, pet supply, and other sectors.

Yet grocery has remained local and personal. No longer.

Between 2007-2016 the number of shoppers who chose a supermarket as their primary source for groceries plunged by nearly 27%

(from 67% of shoppers to 49%) according to a 2016 study by the Food Marketing Institute.⁴ Shoppers are opting for supercenters, club stores, and even drug-stores as alternatives. And the range of options is growing.

The recent focus on the US market by German based discount retailers Aldi and Lidl have generated considerable attention as they target established supercenters⁵, hoping to achieve the same domination that they've achieved in the UK market.

Even within the grocery store/supermarket buyer habits, food preferences, and the retail landscape are changing. "America's venerable food brands are struggling,"⁶ as buyers' attention shifts to the "perimeter" of the store.⁷

While much of this context is generally understood, the pace and magnitude are intensifying. That's changing the urgency of CPG adaptation from a defensive perspective, and it's also shaping offensive opportunities for brands and manufacturers which embrace the changes we discuss in the rest of this guide.

⁴ <http://www.retaildive.com/news/the-state-of-the-grocery-shopper-in-2017/433815/>

⁵ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/why-wal-mart-is-worried-about-a-german-grocer-14949270>

⁶ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/so-long-hamburger-helper-americas-venerable-food-brands-are-struggling-1499363414>

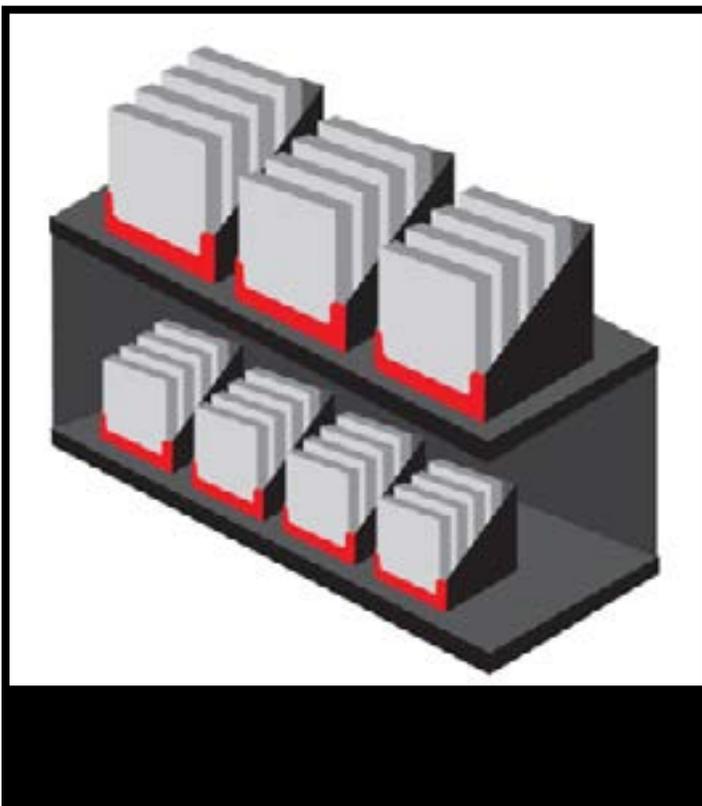
⁷ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/big-name-food-brands-lose-battle-of-the-grocery-aisle-14935968>

Shelf Ready Packaging

Amidst this turmoil, there's a new, urgent, and disruptive retailer requirement. SRP is suddenly bubbling up in conversations with marketing, engineers, sales teams, at trade shows, on factory floors, and with corrugated and primary packaging material and machine vendors.

SRP is sometimes conflated with RRP ([remember those warnings about Wikipedia!](#)) or retail ready packaging/display ready packaging. It's not another term for the same thing, rather SRP is a subset of the longstanding RRP trend of the last couple decades. The club store and mass retailer models created requirements for easy to stock displays such as end caps, pallet wraps or skirts, multi-packs, and more. Retail ready encompasses this wide range of solutions.

Shelf ready packaging (sometimes referred to as PDQ, for the "pretty darn quick" criteria originally established by a Wal-Mart exec) has been common in European markets for many years, and while it began to appear in US retail outlets in the mid-'00s⁸, adoption has recently accelerated.



February 20, 2016

Another of those important dates, February 20, 2016 was the day that Wal-Mart gave 1.2million workers a raise.⁹

The company, with 2017 revenues of \$487 Billion (>50% of which is "groceries"¹⁰) built its "always low prices" model on logistics efficiency and shrewd, volume based negotiations with suppliers. Suddenly, in one day, they faced a cost which couldn't be passed along or engineered around. Creatively reducing labor costs through operational efficiency became critical, and in a retail establishment stocking shelves is a huge portion of the labor cost.

Reducing the labor cost of restocking shelves is the primary advantage of SRP. High labor cost, along with small store, shelf, and kitchen footprints in the EU, and specifically in Germany, led to the early innovation and advances in SRP there. Germany is home to the [EHI Retail Institute](#) which has established early thought leadership around SRP, as well as retailers who were early, enthusiastic adopters including [REWE Group](#), [EDEKA](#), and [Kaufland](#). Collectively they've created an infrastructure for SRP which leverages the indigenous machine building and packaging expertise and capitalizes on other benefits including sustainability and ergonomics for broad success.

While awareness of the benefits and some experimentation had occurred in the US, there was no compelling motivation until February 20, 2016. That was the day SRP became critical for Wal-Mart, and consequently the day it became viable for other retailers, none of whom individually had sufficient volume to demand that CPG suppliers make the potentially disruptive switch for them.

And things are now moving quickly (mid 2017).

⁸ <https://www.foodonline.com/doc/shelf-ready-packaging-gains-foothold-on-u-s-retail-shelves-0001>

⁹ <http://news.walmart.com/news-archive/2016/01/20/more-than-one-million-walmart-associates-receive-pay-increase-in-2016>

¹⁰ <https://www.strategy-business.com/article/A-Strategists-Guide-to-the-Digital-Grocery>

Defining SRP

As Wal-Mart is the prime driver of adoption in the US, with other retailers enthusiastically embracing benefits as they cut the trail, it's sensible to work from their definitions.

According to the 2017 Shelf Ready Guidelines for North America, other retailers like [Kroger](#) offer similar guidelines, Wal-Mart defines SRP as a system comprised of “**5 easies.**”

- **Easy to identify**
easily find the product in distribution centers (DC) and back of store, as well as on the shelf
- **Easy to open**
secondary packaging opens simply and cleanly, quickly, and without knives. Often instructions are provided directly on the packaging itself
- **Easy to stock**
with little labor and no unusual physical exertion a typical retail employee can quickly restock the shelf. A single efficient labor unit delivers multiple retail units to the shelf spacing
- **Easy to shop**
consumers can quickly identify the product, grab a unit, and move on down the aisle
- **Easy disposal**
ideally entirely paper based materials (no shrink film) without staples or excessive tape or glue. Retail recovery rates run from 90-98%

In sum, shelf ready packaging is a configuration which incorporates enough secondary packaging to protect products during shipment but simultaneously serves as a restocking and aesthetic retail display unit.

Common Types of SRP In the US

Common SRP styles include:

Shrink tray
Perforated tray
Delkor's Cabrio Case®
Tray & lid
5 panel RSC

The right solution(s) depends on the product, supply chain, and primary package. As we'll see in more detail below, this set of interrelationships creates complexity but also holds the key to manufacturers' net savings opportunity. Type and thickness of paperboard, primary package style and orientation, shelf facing and depth dimensions, pallet configurations for warehousing, and transport all factor into selecting the right SRP system.

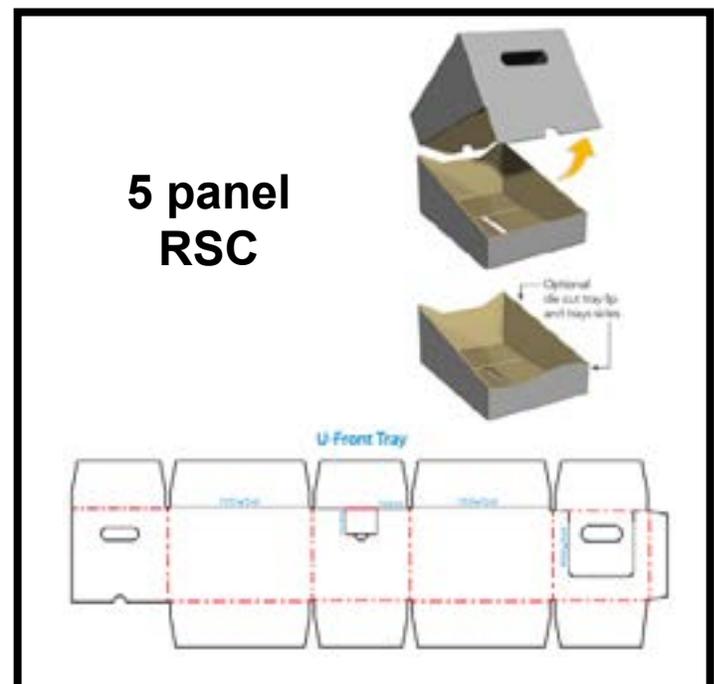


image excerpted from Vanguard Packaging edition of WalMart Shelf Ready Packaging Guide

Benefits - What & Who

There's no doubt about the big winner in a shift to SRP - it's the retailers. Further, the transition creates some challenges and imposes some costs on manufacturers. That's why CPG companies haven't been clamoring for this shift proactively.

Retailers benefit throughout their operations.

For example:

- Items are more easily identified in warehouses, making the process of pulling orders in DCs more efficient.
- It's faster to locate items in back of store, reducing out-of stocks and minimizing the labor cost of restocking.
- The process of restocking is substantially faster; entire case lots are stocked in one motion instead of pegging or individually stacking primary packages.
- Ergonomics are improved by reducing case/unit weights.
- More facing revenue can be generated. In some cases, up to 20% more facings can be created on a given shelf space.
- Higher waste recapture reduces disposal costs and often boosts paperboard recycling revenue.

But manufacturers can win too.

- The sales lift realized through reducing out-of-stocks is frequently in the 3-5% range. That's a big gain with no incremental cost of sales. This is achieved with a combination of faster, cheaper restocking (from back of store to shelf) which allows retailers to find product they have and restock during the day. It's also helped by standardized configurations which enable backup units to be pre-stocked on shelves. Market brands have an opportunity to recapture sales which they're losing to "always" brands.
- There are aesthetic merchandising benefits which can increase shelf appeal and boost sales. Incorporating complementary graphics between the primary and secondary packaging provides additional messaging opportunities, and transitions to popular package types, such as stand-up pouches with reclosable convenience, contribute value to end users.
- As SRP evolves in the US, CPG manufacturers will have an opportunity to establish optimized unit put-ups and shelf footprints for consistency, yet deliver retailer specific appearance with graphics and labels. This has the potential to substantially simplify end-of-line packaging.
- Making the SRP transition requires some work up front but can substantially reduce reliance and both direct and indirect costs associated with co-packing.
- Perhaps most importantly, this will quickly become a competitive differentiator. The companies that quickly adopt an SRP mindset will stand to gain substantial volume from laggards.

Target Product Categories

Target product categories is a trend across retail. Approaches will depend on product categories, brand positioning, and display requirements. Natural emphasis is on products which are particularly labor intensive for restocking

(e.g. pegged displays and small units like spices).

The easiest targets are high volume, low weight. Dry goods grocery items (e.g. rice and pasta meals) are often easy to adapt, changing cartons packed in cases to pouches packed with a tray & lid. Gradually other grocery categories are joining in with more attention recently on refrigerated and frozen products (e.g. shredded cheese and frozen vegetables).

Pet treats are growing quickly as a product category and rapidly shifting to SRP configurations. Also, tall and skinny products in health and beauty (e.g. deodorant sticks) which often use mechanical shelf fixtures can yield huge restocking labor savings.

Automotive and lawn and garden categories are also moving toward SRP. Two factors are driving this. The first, like with HBA, is the common tall, skinny can or bottle which is labor intensive to restock and prone to falling like dominos when bumped in a display. The second is awareness of demographics and ergonomics. Pet food and litter, pesticides, and other bulk products are often packed in small stand-up pouches now as convenient easy to shop alternatives to the 50lb bulk bags which are displayed in traditional RRP pallet put-ups.

Finally, it's not all scientific. People are making these decisions and prioritizations. Some buyers are more proactive about driving the shift among their suppliers.



Managing the Transition

Complex, Integrated System

For CPG manufacturers, SRP is a complex transition. Potential potholes are numerous.

There is one factor that distinguishes successful transitions from the others based on our cumulative experience over hundreds of implementations.

Successful SRP projects involve stakeholders from sales, marketing, merchandising, process engineering, package engineering, plant operations, logistics, and traffic.

The entire complex ecosystem is considered in integrated approaches for an SRP initiative. Further, given the significance of revenue at stake and the offensive/defensive nature of this transition, it's viewed as a corporate strategic initiative rather than simply a tactical customer response. (And why this guide generally cites business press rather than trade press.)

In contrast, projects which fail to deliver net positive results to manufacturers, tend to limit focus to one packaging process and treat the transition as a stand-alone format change.

Phased Implementation

In many cases, CPG manufacturers can gradually adapt.

Short Term Solutions

There are often some short-term approaches (e.g. simple design changes - maybe from a standard RSC to a 5 panel) which can run on existing secondary packaging equipment.

These won't create systemic value, but can often be achieved within a calendar quarter.

They demonstrate flexibility and buy time for more comprehensive approaches while incurring minimal additional cost.

Intermediate Solutions

Intermediate solutions (typically 2-4 calendar quarters) often involve changing parts and/or modifications to existing machines (e.g. forming shoes, filling heads, and product transfers).

The goal is obviously minimal investment and disruption, yet a solid production solution.

Longer-Term Solutions

One to three year planning cycles accommodate longer-term approaches which often involve extensive systems engineering focused on replacing lines as part of routine capital equipment replacement and capacity increase.

Cost vs. Investment

When a sales rep leaves a meeting in Bentonville (or Minneapolis, or any major retailer HQ) and calls the office with a frantic, “We’ve got to get this done by XYZ date!” it often triggers a series of reactions within a company - most of which are unproductive.

Thoughts turn quickly to aggressively negotiated unit material costs, disrupting carefully tuned manufacturing lines, and obsoleting perfectly good primary and secondary packaging lines. In other words, the first reaction is some form of cost consideration and, typically consternation.

It’s true that primary and secondary materials may be a bit more expensive and that there is often a cost for engineering and machinery in a full-scale transition. However, experience indicates that two approaches can mitigate the impact.

Comprehensive “Net” Analysis

Companies can start to satisfy customer requirements and position themselves as SRP capable suppliers quickly using a phased approach, as outlined above. The big potential savings, however, are generally realized through a multi-disciplinary, integrated project.

In successful projects (those that meet retailer expectations, boost sell through for mutual benefit, AND yield net savings despite common marginal increases in unit package costs) teams consider:

- Primary package style (often transitioning from bag-in-box to stand-up pouches)
- Primary package filling and size (increasing package height while reducing footprint, for instance, often provides opportunity for optimizing SRP unit counts and footprint)
- Primary package material (cost, aesthetics, sustainability, shelf life, and resealability/ convenience)
- Secondary package style (often transitioning from RSC to tray and lid of 5-panel configurations)
- Secondary package material and appearance (careful attention to paperboard weight and style, SRP function, on-the-shelf appearance, instructions for restocker, and marketing/sales graphics alone and in conjunction with primary packages)
- Pallet load configuration (considering impact of secondary packaging material and style change on strength and stability in transit, efficiency in warehousing and transit, and potential increase or decrease in unsalable products)

This isn’t easy. It takes creativity, time, brainstorming, prototyping, shipping tests, discussions with retail stakeholders, and, importantly, intense cross silo collaboration within CPG manufacturers and with their external supply chain partners.

Likely increases in package material costs can often be more than offset with systemic savings, but only when a collaborative, systemic approach is taken.

Solutions

Short>

Intermediate>

Long-Term



Design & Execution Consideration

Every product is different, and every project has a couple of decent solutions. Based on our experience we've found that "design thinking" provides a framework for planning SRP projects. We've broken it down, somewhat arbitrarily, into three categories.

Graphic Design

We used to think of secondary packaging as a utilitarian product with an industrial task - to unitize and protect product in transit. Many still view it that way, but SRP provides an impetus and opportunity to broaden the thinking.

Graphic design considerations, which can be achieved with printing and labeling, include:

- Wal-Mart's **Easy to Identify** criteria (brand and product details) visible on a minimum of four sides
- "Clear and Simple" opening instructions for restocking personnel must be provided on the box as an element of **Easy to Open** compliance
- Success requires design teams overcoming the stigma which has traditionally accompanied corrugated on retail shelves
- Shelf appeal and merchandising stand to gain from supportive graphics on the master package, and some creative teams are using the opportunity to create complimentary graphics between the primary and secondary package
- Retailer specific and market specific designs could be easily adapted with material changes while retaining consistent operational and packaging formats

Packaging Design

This is the natural focus of many SRP initiatives. The default starting point for many is the assumption that simply changing the primary package to a stand-up pouch and putting them in a tray is all that's required. As outlined throughout this guide the considerations and opportunities for systemic savings and efficiency extend up and downstream. Nevertheless, package design is a big focus of these initiatives, and it's the likely focus of specific guidance which manufacturers receive from retailers.

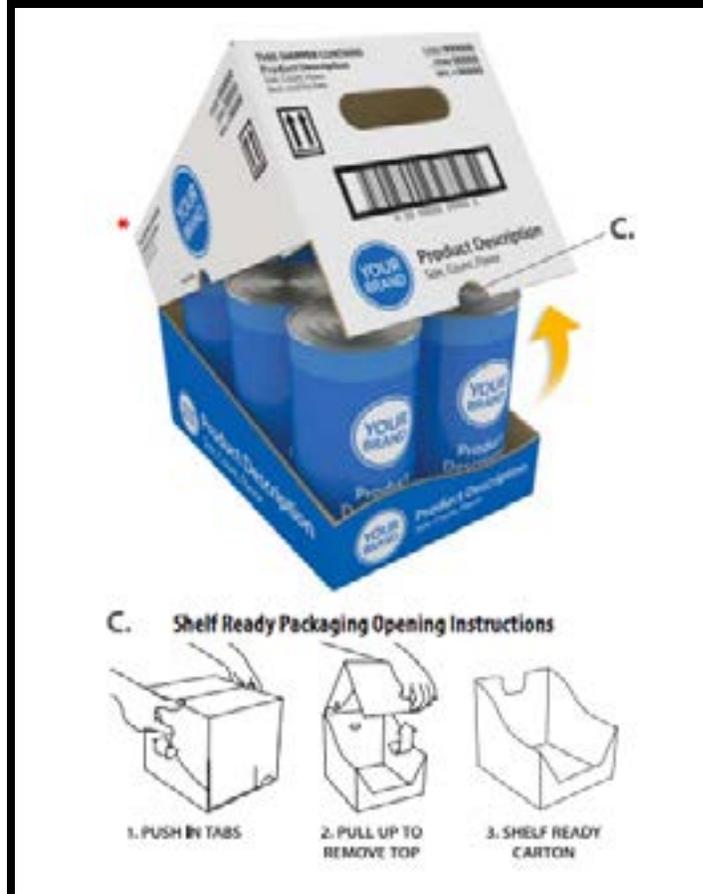


image excerpted from Vanguard Packaging edition of WalMart Shelf Ready Packaging Guide

Package design considerations include:

- Material selection - cartons, bag-in-box, laminate film structures, flute, and paperboard options are all options to consider as elements of an integrated solution
- Graphics - primary packaging graphics will likely change as more cartons transition to stand-up pouches. Options such as true offset linear seal can create full panels for graphics without seals interrupting the layout
- Stand-up pouches are an ideal vehicle for many SRP primary packages - they're visually appealing, structurally stable, offer great end-user flexibility and convenience, and function well as part of SRP systems
- Form factor - simple changes in primary package configuration (e.g. taller and narrower) can be key to achieving better shelf and pallet optimization
- SRP design and function - perforations have to break easily and cleanly. Lids have to be easily removed and broken down. These attributes can't sacrifice stacking strength and damage protection during distribution
- Design considerations must address intermediate objectives (e.g. restocking efficiency) without losing sight of the fundamental shared objective of both manufacturer and retailer - growing sales. **Easy to shop** must be kept paramount as engineering and marketing collaborate on solutions
- Sustainability - Without compromising shelf-life, convenience, and package integrity an SRP initiative provides an excellent opportunity to optimize sustainability from primary package through reclamation of secondary package paperboard

Process Design

There's still a lot left to reimagine and optimize.

Considerations include standardized package footprints, consistent unit counts to satisfy ergonomic constraints, optimizing the packaging process itself, source reduction opportunities, and tweaking pallet counts and pack patterns to maximize warehouse and freight efficiencies.

In the most advanced form, CPG manufacturers could become resources to help retailers improve their SRP integration. That's a far cry from the typical situation today where companies find retailers imposing unwelcome requirements upon them. But for those who seize the strategic growth potential, this is a realistic aspirational goal.

Vendor Selection

Suppliers can play an important role in SRP projects. Subject to NDA constraints, they often have experience with a number of projects and insight into effective solutions and reasons for why some projects succeed while others stumble.

The easiest suppliers to start with are those with whom you already work. It's important to ask for SRP project credentials - and not just one or two. Often a supplier's capabilities will understandably influence their recommendations. For instance, many large integrated paper board packaging suppliers have a limited range of product offerings which reflect their business models based high-volume long-run production runs. Sure they've done some SRP work, but it's often limited. Rather than suggest multiple options, they may warn of very high costs for other package styles which independent corrugators are equipped to produce efficiently and economically in small runs. And human nature plays a role; if your hammer is paperboard cartons, then every packaging problem is a nail. Stand-up pouches, then, are an unwelcome development.

Similar considerations apply on the machine side. Often product transfers and pack patterns become substantially more complex with SRP primary package types like stand-up pouches. Rather than traditional stacking accumulation followed by a right angle push commonly used to case pack carton items, more sophisticated

transfer systems are often required. And these are often more complex in the line context than a simple material handling challenge. Orientations coming from the filler, into the case packer, and on to the palletizer need to be considered. Therefore, experience designing and building complete lines (under one roof rather than in distinct operating units which happen to share a brand) can clarify responsibility for finished line OEE AND substantially reduce commissioning and troubleshooting time and production losses.

In addition to a list of SRP projects and insights, material and machine suppliers should be proactively providing suggestions and approaches for consideration, and probing for up and downstream issues beyond a simple material or machine spec. As a rule of thumb, if they're not asking any questions which your project team can't readily answer then they're probably not providing the depth you need to achieve notable success in your shelf ready project.

SRP & E-commerce

We started this guide discussing disruption in retail, distinguishing between the changes attributable to e-commerce and changing physical retail models, and focusing on grocery.

Because shelf ready packaging has been so widely adopted in Europe, and so extensively researched by Wal-Mart, it's comfortable for us to project likely changes and impacts of SRP on manufacturing and physical retailing.

What's difficult to predict, but certainly merits some brainstorming and planning is the potential implications of e-commerce on SRP. This is perhaps better described as the convergence of packaging styles to support both physical retail and e-commerce fulfillment with common designs.

As the Amazon and Whole Foods integration progresses, we'll likely see indicators of how platforms may converge and complement each other. We don't have to wait to speculate, however.

In the Q2 '17 Earnings Call, Pepsi specifically called out its efforts to blend packaging requirements of retail and e-commerce. "In a nod to the growing importance of online sales... the company's e-commerce-related efforts include developing snack packaging that travels better and the cold delivery of beverages."¹¹ The company understands the disruptive trends to centers of stores packaged goods, having seen its Aunt Jemima and Rice-a-Roni product sales fall as buyers shift their focus to store perimeter.

[Wired's look at the labor intensive process of Amazon fulfillment](#) leaves the impression that perhaps Whole Foods offers coveted cold chain capability and a platform for manually picking grocery orders. The last mile delivery could be quite innovative ([drone hives](#), [robots](#), [store employees delivering on their way home](#), or third party contractors like [Task Rabbit](#)) but Easy to Shop could be a ubiquitous criteria for end user customer access in the store AND "warehouse/logistics" fulfillment workers picking orders from the same retail shelves for e-commerce remote delivery.

Another likely impact will be on corrugated pricing as recapture rates will decline as more brown boxes are used for final mile delivery.

PWC foresees, "collaboration among grocery manufacturers and retailers," as key since, "both sectors are threatened by the same industry dynamics."¹² They further suggest that big data and what they call a "ply model" will allow supermarkets to predict out-of-stocks and use dynamic pricing to optimize profitability by customer history and stock levels. They even paint a "near future scenario" in which geotargeting and mobile marketing, family interaction, purchase history, and social media inferences drive a real-time optimization engine which delivers faster and more satisfying shopping experiences than even the fastest e-commerce solutions which one can envision today.

Of course, this is speculation and we can't predict precisely what will emerge. What we do know is that customer behaviors are shifting, technology is advancing, and retailers of all stripes are moving quickly to adapt.

¹¹ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/pepsico-earnings-and-revenue-top-views-1499770468>

¹² <https://www.strategy-business.com/article/A-Strategists-Guide-to-the-Digital-Grocery>

Conclusion

CPG manufacturers must be on the “balls of their feet” observing market trends and responding in creative and agile ways so they don’t succumb passively to an inexorable decline in sales as some iconic staples have experienced recently. ¹³

Shelf ready packaging is coming. It’s accelerating. It’s reasonable to expect adoption in the US over the next several years approaching adoption rates comparable to those seen in Europe. And sitting here today we already have a line of site to that outcome.

So CPG manufacturers don’t need to guess nor do they need to undertake speculative approaches to prepare. Companies like ours have deep experience in helping engineering, marketing, and logistics teams respond proactively to retain important clients and gain market share from other manufacturers who are slow to respond.

¹³ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/so-long-hamburger-helper-americas-venerable-food-brands-are-struggling-1499363414>

Resources

“Think Tank”

[ECR Europe](#)

[EHI Retail Institut](#)

Retailer SRP Guidelines

[Kroger](#)

Wal-Mart (please contact us)

Paperboard/Corrugated

[Vanguard Packaging RRP solutions gallery](#)

Rovema

[VFFS machines for stand-up pouches](#)

[Guide to improving vertical bagging OEE](#)

[Matrix to compare various VFFS options](#)

[Secondary packaging machine solutions for SRP \(tray & lid, etc.\)](#)

Glossary

- CPG** - consumer packaged goods
(sometimes referred to as FMCG or fast moving consumer goods)
- RRP** - retail ready packaging
- SRP** - shelf ready packaging
- PDQ** - pretty darn quick
(the guideline originally established by Wal-Mart execs for early iterations of SRP)
- DC** - distribution center

Authors



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John, a packaging industry veteran with over 30 years of experience, is CEO of [Rovema North America, Inc.](#) He started his career in machinery sales with an engineering degree and moved into management after earning his MBA. His career has included progressively senior roles at Klockner Bartelt, RA Jones, Multi-Pack, and Oystar. He is known for his success in growing businesses with an unwavering focus on the customer. John works from Rovema's Atlanta area office.

Rovema NA is a fully owned subsidiary of Rovema GmbH, a German manufacturer of primary and secondary packaging equipment. Best known for vertical bagging and stand-up pouch machines, Rovema's engineering teams have extensive experience with shelf ready packaging, transition packages, and a line of equipment from dosing, through bagging, to tray and lid. All are designed, engineered, assembled, and tested/accepted in the same factory under the same roof for real single-source responsibility.



Chet Rutledge
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Chet, former Director of Retail Ready Packaging at Wal-Mart, is Director of Marketing for Retail Ready Packaging at [Vanguard Packaging](#). Prior to his nine years at Wal-Mart, Chet was Corrugated Sourcing Manager for Tyson Foods and Territory Manager for International Paper in addition to time as a Supply Officer in the US Marine Corps. His background in supply chain logistics and paper packaging are extensive, and his perspectives as box manufacturer, CPG supplier, and retailer provide depth and nuance to his SRP expertise. Chet works from Vanguard's Bentonville, AR office.

Vanguard Packaging is an independently-owned and operated manufacturer of point-of-purchase displays, signage, retail packaging, and corrugated boxes. In addition to the corporate headquarters design and manufacturing facility at SubTropolis in Kansas City, Missouri, the company has offices in St. Louis, Missouri, and Bentonville, Arkansas. Vanguard specializes in the creation of high-quality products through the use of sustainable business practices and has become recognized as the most sustainable packaging company in North America.

Rovema North America, Inc.

Rovema NA is a wholly owned subsidiary of Rovema GmbH.

Our operation in Atlanta is the North American sales, service and parts presence for all of Rovema's engineered vertical form/ fill/seal and end-of-line packaging solutions.

With over 1,100 machines installed in North America we're fully committed to the ongoing support of our machines. Although occasionally certain drive or control components are obsoleted by our suppliers, we provide all available parts and ongoing technical support for any operating Rovema machine.

Our team in Norcross is combining German quality & engineering with American market awareness and responsiveness. All our machines are built under a single roof (not a global master brand) and we're aggressively building our staff to meet growing demand.

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Vanguard Packaging

Vanguard Packaging is a full service designer and manufacturer of corrugated displays, retail packaging, signage and industrial packaging. Vanguard is headquartered in a 700,000 square foot underground facility in Kansas City and is known nationally for its leadership role in sustainability previously having earned the Sustainability Innovator of the Year Award for North America.

Vanguard offers a full range of products and services for those retail vendors who require shelf ready packaging. Options will not only include custom designed packaging solutions but case erecting and case fill equipment, testing and licensing of patented shelf

ready designs. Vanguard can also act as a consultant for CPG companies with existing packaging contracts. These services are available nationwide from offices in Bentonville, Kansas City, St Louis and Phoenix.

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