Symbols - Packaging - 1

Below are a number of symbols often seen on packaging. Each has a specific meaning. The symbols are normally very simple and easy to understand.

1.) The 'Keep Britain Tidy' symbol is regularly seen on packages in the UK. It is there to remind people to place their rubbish in a rubbish bin rather than dropping it on the floor. It is also aimed at making people aware that they have a responsibility to keep the environment around them tidy and litter free. Sometimes the symbol is called the 'be environmentally friendly' symbol.

2.) POLYTHENE TEREPHTHALATE (PET) is a material widely used for packaging, especially drinks containers. It is 90% recyclable and the symbol opposite reminds the consumer of this fact. Hopefully the consumer will place the used packaging in the recycle bin, if he / she can find one.

3.) These are internationally recognisable symbols for recycling. They are seen on many packages. Again, it is to remind the consumer of the potential recycling properties of the package he / she is about to throw away. It is aimed at encouraging the consumer to recycling packaging rather than throwing it into a general rubbish bin.

4.) This symbol also means that the material is recyclable. However, the letters 'alu' mean aluminium. It means the container is manufactured from aluminium and that it can be recycled and used again. Look closely at drinks cans as they are normally manufactured from aluminium and may have this symbol.

5.) A symbol that is occasionally seen on packaging is the Fair Trade symbol. This means that the contents of the package has been produced in the Third World and that the producer (ie. the farmer) has received a fair and realistic price. It also means that the produce is not from countries whose Governments help their industry / agriculture undercut those of much poorer countries by giving them subsidies.

6.) Created in 1988, when the Lion mark is displayed on a product it means that the manufacturer / retailer has agreed to the 'British Toy and Hobby Associations' Code of practice. It is a consumer symbol that represents the manufacturers promise to conform to all relevant safety information. Also, it means that the manufacturer will not counterfeit existing toys and will advertise the product so that advertisements state the truth about the limits regarding the way the toy performs.

7.) The symbols opposite represent that the product inside has been tested to British and European safety standards. These symbols that are normally applied to non-food products such as electronic products or toys. However, they may still be applied to the packaging as a reference to the package itself being safe.

8.) Card packaging with this symbol means that the materials used to make the packaging have been harvested from sustainable forests. This means that the forest is managed in such a way that the trees are replanted so that trees that are cut down are replaced.

9.) Normally found on packaging containing food. The symbols simply means that the contents will serve 10 portions.

10.) This symbol is found on products that originate in Germany or those that are manufactured for the German market. The symbol has the same meaning as the British Standards symbol in that it means that the product inside the packaging has been tested to German safety standards.

11.) This symbol is often found on the packaging for batteries. A dust bin is seen in this symbol. The crossed lines means that the batteries should not be disposed of in a dust bin after they have been used.

12.) This symbol was found on a package for a professional quality torch. The symbol suggests that the product inside the package is 'precision made. This means that all the parts have been precisely manufactured and fit together very accurately.

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Symbols - Packaging - 2

Below are a number of symbols often seen on packaging. Each has a specific meaning. The symbols are normally very simple and easy to understand.

1.) Found on packaging that contains potentially harmful contents. For example, a tin of paint stripper.

2.) This symbol is seen on the packaging that contains flammable products. Paint sprays, hair spray, in fact most types of spray contain potentially flammable contents that could ignite if used near a naked flame.

3.) This symbol reminds those handling the package to keep out of the rain and not to store it in damp conditions. It is normally found on card based packages which would be damaged if placed in contact with water.

4.) The broken wine glass suggests that the product inside the packaging could be easily damaged if dropped or handled without care and attention. The contents are fragile!

5.) The two hands holding or protecting the package is another reminder that the contents should be handled with care.

6.) The symbol showing the thermometer is found mainly on packages containing food and drink. The symbol clearly shows that the contents should be stored at a temperature between 10 and 20 degrees (centigrade).

7.) Customer satisfaction symbol. Seen on some packaging to indicate a satisfaction statement eg. "This product has been prepared for your enjoyment. If you are not completely satisfied please return the product and its packaging to .......

8.) The vegetarian symbol has a ‘tick’ in its centre. This means that the contents are suitable for vegetarians to eat.

9.) This is an alternative vegetarian symbol. In place of a ‘tick’ in its centre it has a symbol that represents leaves. This means that the contents are suitable for vegetarians to eat.

10.) Another alternative ‘suitable for vegetarians’ symbol.

11.) This symbol suggests that the consumer should be aware that the product could contain wheat, gluten, sulphites, traces of nut or it has been made in a factory that uses nut ingredients.

12.) The ‘gluten free’ symbol means that the product inside the packaging does not contain wheat extracts. Some people are sensitive or even allergic to such extracts. Therefore, clear labelling is required.

13.) Ingredients symbol. This is often placed alongside the list of ingredients. It represents a mixing bowl an spoon, with a colourful background to highlight the black and white foreground.

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