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BY LISA DAUMEYER



Wal-Mart Wants It How? When?

J&J Packaging delivers unique solutions in response to demands of big-store retailers

Sunman, Indiana, isn't a likely place to be changing the way global manufacturers do business. But this small town's largest citizen, J&J Packaging, is playing a lead role in innovative packaging solutions that make it possible for some of the most recognizable consumer product manufacturers – such as

“...custom SKUs can be like a daily Whack-a-Mole game.”

Duracell, Gillette and Gerber – to efficiently meet the escalating demands of large retail chains.

Big chains and club stores control a growing segment of the retail industry, and their custom packaging requirements are numerous – and challenging. Everyday, for example, J&J packages truckloads of batteries in dozens of combinations

for Duracell as they strive to meet these demands. Club stores need large-quantity packs, other retailers require smaller ones, yet others encourage products packed with promotional items. The result? A headache for consumer product manufacturers as they lose efficiency meeting the demands. J&J removes the headaches and the distractions by producing all packaging components, inventorying the packaging and the product, assembling, packing and shipping shelf-ready orders – on command. Working through J&J to meet retailer demands, manufacturers realize a financial benefit along with increased speed to market and the convenience of Supplier Managed and Owned Inventory (SMOI).

“For our clients, custom SKUs can be like a daily Whack-a-Mole game,” comments Bill Morgan, J&J's VP of Marketing. “Today's retailers request custom packages to a point where custom nearly exceeds stock lines.”

J&J's unique in-house ability lets manufacturers focus on core competencies,

while simultaneously freeing capital and assets. J&J can make all packaging pieces (which saves raw material costs), inventory the parts and the products (saves inventory) and then assemble and ship (which reduces production costs while increasing speed to market). By using a single-source packager

J&J's unique in-house ability...lets manufacturers focus on core competencies.

they are able to go from design to delivery without touching, inventorying or shipping packaging pieces.

It's not easy to go from an idea to a floor display. To help a client get it done, J&J's design engineers respond quickly, providing designs utilizing a variety of packaging materials and processes that reflect their goals. 3-D renderings of paper,

plastic and contract-packed solutions as well as prototypes with graphics bring ideas to life and give a visual – and sometimes a hands-on – model. Then with the product in mind, they provide sourcing, manufacturing and logistics solutions that exceed the cost savings from traditional order-and-ship packaging programs.

J&J Packaging is positioned to react quickly and agilely so clients can meet retailers' demands. That flexibility is reflected in the variety of services from which manufacturers can choose. “Some clients may simply choose a paperboard or thermoformed package to be delivered to their plant, while others, like Duracell, use nearly all of our services for a complete outsourced program,” explains Pete Dawes, VP of Sales at J&J Packaging.

Another such “complete service” customer is Gerber Products Company. “We use J&J as an extension of our own manufacturing internal unit to complement our internal competencies,” remarks Dean Solomos, Associate Director of Contract Manufacturing for Gerber. Solomos explains that he often looks to J&J to use its “streamlined capabilities in thermoforming” which also increase Gerber's speed-to-market capabilities.

“As a single-source producer of nearly all the packaging components, our business plan made perfect sense,” notes Jeff Franks, CEO of J&J Packaging. “We would stock our customers' products and their packaging, and then assemble on demand to complete the full circle.” The plan makes perfect sense to consumer product manufacturers, too. J&J now carries the packaging components for more than 2,000 SKUs and inventories and packs literally billions of products and displays annually. Clients include major manufacturers such as Duracell, Gerber, Beiersdorf and others.

And it's all happening in the quiet community of Sunman, Indiana.

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