



Two Ears, One Mouth

Have you ever taken a look at the history of Fed-Ex? Many years ago, Fed-ex were known as just another delivery business in the US, delivering packages and parcels to the people and businesses of America within days. Yet after learning that what their customers really wanted was an OVERNIGHT global delivery service, and being able to act on this before any of their competitors, Fed-Ex became the dominant player in global and domestic deliveries. This changed the business to the point where it now has sales of US\$35bn, with operating profits close to US\$2bn. To me, this is a fine example of a business needing to change to improve its offer to the market, and reaping the rewards of this change very quickly. Fed-Ex could have stayed as it was, claiming that an overnight global service was impossible. But it didn't, and the results of this brave thinking are remarkable.

These are, as we all know, tough times. Yet through a combination of hard work and dedication, New Vision Packaging has been able to grow through some of the toughest economic years this country has ever seen, and we hope that this will continue into the future.

However, despite our recent success, 5 years after New Vision was formed, it seemed like a good time for me to conduct a root-and-branch review of our business and the services we offer. The 'rules' of business tell me that we cannot stand still. To do so is to go backwards. This is the reason we undertook an extensive review of, what is, a very simple business. Nonetheless, it was a review that needed to take place so that we could better understand what we need to do to ensure the success of our business in these tough economic times.

This has involved speaking to many of you, our loyal customers, so that we can better understand what you expect from us and this has resulted in us looking at ways in which we can offer an improved service and greater value-for-money.

In the end, I suppose the lesson I have learnt best from this exercise is that any business needs to know it's market, and if it is not fit to serve the requirements of that market, it either has to change, or move into another area of business (otherwise it will fail).

This is why I have been visiting many of our customers over the past few weeks to explain the improvements in our design service that now make us the market-leader in packaging concept design. Our new 3D software system allows us to create 3D images of your packaging that can be emailed to you at short notice, and which you can email on to your colleagues and customers. This means that, during a period where lead-times are increasing due to material availability, New Vision Packaging is the only business actively concentrating on reducing the speed-to-market of our packaging and supporting our customers throughout the entire sales channel to help them secure the orders that they too work so hard to win.

Our design service now includes colour mock-ups of the highest standard that are FREE for existing customers (and potential new customers where we see a fit). This means that our customers never have to present a white box again! Already we've seen the benefit of this by impressing clients with samples that are effectively finished and ready to go into production at a very early stage. This sounds like such a simple change, and yet no other packaging company in the UK offers such extensive design work at such an early stage to help their customers win business. These are not just mocked-up samples; these are samples that have been completely thought through from a production AND design perspective so that our customers can present their products in finished packaging concepts that they have 100% confidence in.

NEW VISION PACKAGING

In my view, this really is a game-changer. For our clients to have a design-led supplier that supports them from the very start of any given development season with effective design and prototypes that are finished to a production standard is remarkable. To have a supplier that offers this free-of-charge is, in my view, simply astounding.

In the end, I felt extremely proud of the feedback we received; our customers were, in the main, pleased with the service that we offered and the standard of packaging that we supply. But we heard, loud and clear, that we need to go further in searching for new solutions, and to improve the offer we already have.

We are fortunate in that we are a business that can react very quickly if we feel that changes are needed. In this case, we knew that these improvements could only enhance our offer and so we have installed these new services very quickly and at some cost, to prove to our customers that our business is unique, and has an offer that is unrivalled.

Ultimately, we're a headache-free packaging partner for our clients; a relentless, hi-service packaging resource. But we're also a business that listens and, when needed, acts on the advice and input of its customers.

To those of you that have helped us in this process; thank you for your input, it is valued more than you could ever know. We're listening and we hear you, loud-and-clear....

Best,

Steve