BECOME A GREENER AND MORE PROFITABLE ENTERPRISE WITH SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING

USING A LEVEL-SETTING APPROACH TO STRIKE A BALANCE AND GET A COMPETITIVE EDGE
Become a greener and more profitable enterprise with sustainable packaging

Sustainable packaging is the answer. This is the use of materials, designs, and methods that minimize the environmental impact of packaging products while preserving their functionality and quality. There are a few layers to the concept.

**Primary packaging:** This is the first layer that encloses the product and protects it directly from contamination or damage. Examples include bottles, tubes, and jars.

**Secondary packaging:** This is the outer layer surrounding the primary packaging that protects the product within during handling. Examples include cardboard boxes, plastic containers, shrink wrap, and similar items.

**Tertiary packaging:** The final layer providing additional protection during shipping and handling is known as tertiary packaging. Think of pallets and crates; these are packages that protect everything during transportation and make handling more efficient.

The difficulty for large enterprises in transforming their packaging process is the monumental detail and volume comprising these three layers for all their products, designs, and materials – all of which need to meet regulatory standards.

Without the right approach, the effects can be disastrous. For example, 300 million toothpaste tubes go to landfill in the UK alone every year, a result of poor design that makes recycling difficult. This is the sort of mistake that occurs when trying to optimize one aspect – such as cost – too zealously.

By level setting, companies can carefully examine all these elements to make better decisions and be more focused and effective with sustainable packaging.
Imagine sustainable operations as the destination of a journey. Sustainable packaging is a path forward, but it is shrouded in fog. Level setting clears the way by establishing a standard of what constitutes sustainable packaging, providing needed direction for the business and giving it a competitive edge in the market.

Level setting helps determine the right combination, impact, and use of materials such as paper, plastic, glass, and biopolymer, each having their own set of benefits and drawbacks. It can also identify implementations that make recycling more intuitive for consumers: they should be able to easily segregate waste and not struggle to choose the right bin.

Companies that level-set can navigate complexities and work with their partners effectively to evaluate the sustainability of different materials and designs. However, many players, especially those packaging large volumes, fear that sustainability bears a significant investment. This means that level setting needs to be viable: it must be cost-effective with a clear ROI and not done just for the sake of sustainability.

While revamping the packaging process requires more adjustment than investment and, through our rigorous and data-driven lifecycle assessment, we can pull the right levers to level-set and optimize packaging designs and materials to achieve that careful balance. Together, we can make sustainable packaging and a greener supply chain a reality, positioning the enterprise toward a more sustainable and profitable future.