

Unboxing survey

2019



Nearly 40% of packaging is not environmentally friendly

The results from our fourth unboxing survey found that close to 40% of consumers thought that their packaging was not environmentally friendly.

Over 200 surveys were completed with 81% of them covering the Fashion, Health & Beauty, Home & Garden and Food & Drink industries.

Encouragingly, we found that over 50% of packaging was completely (100%) recyclable and almost a third (29%) of consumers said that they were likely to pay more for environmentally friendly packaging.

50%

of packaging was completely (100%) recyclable

2019 results

As with previous years, overpacking is still a concern and finding the right balance between protecting items in an efficient and sustainable way is proving to be a challenge for retailers.

The impact of the choices that retailers make when it comes to using sustainable packaging cannot be underestimated in 2019 and beyond.

Although using sustainable packaging may be an additional cost for retailers, we found that 29% of consumers are likely to pay more for environmentally friendly packaging.

29%

of consumers are likely to pay more for environmentally friendly packaging



The main findings of our unboxing survey [>](#)

Unboxing Fashion

This year's survey found that fashion retailers are meeting consumer expectation, particularly when it comes to the amount of packaging being used.

Although the amount of packaging used was relatively low, 54% of customers perceived that packaging within this sector was not environmentally friendly.

This clearly proves that the fashion industry needs to adopt a sustainable packaging model in order to further, meet and exceed consumer expectations.

We also found that 24% of respondents are willing to pay more for fashion items with environmentally friendly packaging. With such a significant focus on sustainable packaging in 2019, this number is likely to rise as time goes on. Therefore, any fashion retailers that adopt an early approach to sustainable packaging are likely to benefit in the longer term.

54%

of customers perceived that packaging within this sector was not environmentally friendly



24% of respondents are willing to pay more for fashion items with environmentally friendly packaging



Unboxing

Home and Garden

37% of respondents found that Home & Garden retailers used too much packaging. Although this number is slightly lower than previous years, retailers still need to make some improvements when using protective packaging.

Furthermore, our survey found that 40% of people perceived that packaging within the Home & Garden industry was not environmentally friendly. Retailers in this sector need to improve on the user of sustainable packaging materials.

Interestingly, the highest number of respondents across all sectors said that they are more likely to pay more for environmentally friendly packaging. This presents an opportunity for Home & Garden retailers to meet the optimum level of customer experience.



Finding the right balance between using too much packaging and using packaging that is environmentally friendly will bring many benefits to the Home & Garden sector.

34%

of Home and Garden customers thought the packaging was too big for the item



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It's important that retailers in this sector improve the use of sustainable packaging materials

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Unboxing

Health and Beauty



60%

of respondents found that Health & Beauty packaging was 100% recyclable

43% of respondents believed that Health & Beauty retailers used too much packaging and 53% thought the packaging was too big for the items, the highest across all four sectors. This is because Health & Beauty retailers often use postal boxes that are too big to ship their products.

In comparison, over 60% of respondents found that Health & Beauty packaging was 100% recyclable, also the highest across all four industries. We also found that the highest number of respondents across all sectors are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly packaging.

Overall, retailers in the Health & Beauty industry are leading the way in the use of recyclable packaging materials.



Unboxing

Food and Drink



Innovative packaging solutions such as Flexi-Hex have been released to the market specifically to combat the use plastic packaging within the Food & Drink industry.

The Food & Drink sector was a growth area in this years' unboxing survey. Food & Drink retailers need to work on improving the amount of packaging they use, we found that 50% of Food & Drink goods were identified as using packaging that was too big for the product.

When it comes to using recyclable packaging materials, 33% of respondents believed that packaging within the Food & Drink sector was not environmentally friendly. This may be down to the fact that the development of effective alternatives to single use plastics for the sector has been slow. Innovative packaging solutions such as Flexi-Hex are starting to change the picture.

60%

of respondents believed that packaging within the Food & Drink sector was not environmentally friendly



Conclusions

The results from our unboxing survey show how respondents feel about environmentally friendly packaging and how most sectors involved have plenty of room for improvement.

Although some industries perform better than others, the key findings we can take away from this year's survey is that retailers need to be working towards a sustainable packaging model.

Packaging that is environmentally friendly and offers the same level of protection is positively perceived by customers and in some cases retailers can charge a premium price for such packaging.

At Macfarlane Packaging, we work closely with retailers and manufacturers across various industries to help them find suitable environmentally friendly packaging.

Contact us to speak with one of our packaging experts.

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To find out more about how Macfarlane Packaging can help you, please call **0800 2888 444** or email **response@macfarlanepackaging.com**

