

Helping Small Drinks Businesses Grow With Retail Packaging

At Smurfit Kappa, we pride ourselves on being able to support our clients as they grow and develop. So, when Dalston's Soda Company, Dalston's, experienced substantial growth throughout lockdown, it entered a new and exciting chapter and hit the shelves of supermarket giants Waitrose. Our Smurfit Kappa Barnstaple team were on hand to ensure they had powerful packaging solutions to show competing, bigger brands that Dalston's can hold their own on supermarket shelves.

Having worked with Dalston's since 2021, we understood their needs and branding well. Having previously developed their seltzer eCommerce packaging, the multipack retail packaging presented another exciting challenge.

We had to hit the ground running but rose to the challenge to create stand-out, colourful packaging that had a premium feel. Not only did they need packaging ready to send their multipacks to Waitrose, but our brief also included the design of ten bespoke boxes for a stop motion animation for their advertisement - in just four days!

Upgrading to premium packaging

Previously Dalston's had mainly used two-colour flexographic print for their multipack packaging. The new packaging needed to be striking, establish and reinforce brand awareness and incorporate their musical heritage with the vinyl record player featured on the multipack boxes. Plus, as the new packaging would showcase their range of unique flavours, it was agreed that a full six-colour lithographic print option would yield the striking results they were looking for.

Easy close, easy open

The multipack packaging needed to be assembled quickly in their fulfilment centre as they would be hand-assembled there. They also wanted to make sure no secondary packaging materials were needed. We had to ensure the fulfilment partner was happy with the proposed packaging solution as they would be doing the re-packing work, so getting their input was incredibly important.

This is where our 80 years of supporting small and growing businesses helped us provide a seamless solution both for the fulfilment centre and the customer. The retail packaging is frustration-free for the end user as well as easily disposed of in normal household recycling.

Fast and effective advertisement packaging

Dalston's branding is vibrant, punchy and bright and its advertising conveys this perfectly. We were delighted to be able to support their campaign launching the new multipacks into Waitrose, producing ten bespoke boxes that were to be used in an animation that would be shared across their social media channels.



Andrew Richards from Smurfit Kappa Barnstaple, who played a central role in the project, said, "We had just four days to produce the 10 packs for Dalston's animation, which proved an exciting challenge for the team. We promised packs in four days and so, four days later, the packs were ready to shine at the client's animation shoot!"

Staying on brand was vital and their multipack packaging had to fully communicate this. Dalston's felt that any tape on the outer of the boxes would compromise the look and feel of the boxes. So, the new full lithographic crash lock box featured a ripper strip for easy opening with no loss in the aesthetic of the boxes. We needed to ensure the pack performed well in a retail setting. We went through a lengthy, detailed design process, exploring different styles and opening experiences. We wanted the opening of a case of Dalston's cans to be less fiddly and more efficient.

Fast, effective and eco-friendly

As Dalston's drinks are packaged manually, our crash lock boxes were the perfect solution. They're super quick and easy to assemble, in fact, they're 75% faster than conventional boxes. Our quick-to-assemble crash lock boxes also help small businesses meet their sustainability goals, which is extremely important for Dalston's as a fully carbon-neutral business. We use 100% recyclable, FSC-certified materials to produce all crash lock base packaging.

Small business packing, big impact

From design concepts and the advertising packaging to the final packaging on the shelves, Dalston's are really pleased with the print quality and opening experience of the full lithographic crash lock boxes, complete with a ripper strip for easy opening. Graham Walker from Dalston's said he was "really pleased with the cases. I love the print quality and the opening experience of the pack. The self-sealing tape means that our fulfilment centre doesn't need any additional glue or tape and they can package these multipacks quickly and efficiently."

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