

# UPP

UNLIMITED PACKAGING POSSIBILITIES



## Future-Proofing Packaging



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**UPP provides a snapshot of some of the recent stand-out market and product news.**

UPP stands for Unlimited Packaging Possibilities and in this edition we have compiled a round-up of news from August and September 2024.

There's heightened consumer awareness and an evolving regulatory landscape impacting the packaging industry. The industry is increasingly adopting a circular economy model, with aluminium emerging as a key sustainable material and UK recycling rates rising by 3% in Q2 2024. Concurrently, government regulations like the UK Plastic Packaging Tax are influencing packaging design.

Notable product launches include Deciem with the Loopaha brand, and a surge in body care interest will undoubtedly lead to new product launches and interesting claims.

Additionally, Unilever is utilising influencer-led campaigns on platforms like TikTok to promote a new seasonal range of home care products. The cocooning trend and holistic approach to wellbeing is clear to see.



# We exhibited at Beauty Trends & Innovations

It was fantastic to be at the 12th Annual Beauty Trends & Innovations conference in London on 25th September. Our team members, Rosie Major and Ben Harris, proudly represented us, showcasing our expansive aluminium range, alongside a selection of our caps, closures, dispensers, and pouches.

The conference was a wonderful opportunity to connect with industry leaders and explore the newest trends in beauty packaging.

If you'd like to learn more about how our offerings can support your packaging needs, please don't hesitate to contact us.



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# Major corporations adjust sustainability goals

**A coalition led by Marks & Spencer (M&S) is expanding its reusable packaging initiative, which initially focused on home cleaning products, into beauty and personal care categories due to growing consumer demand.**

The initiative, which includes partners like NGO City to Sea and The Beauty Kitchen's platform Reposit, aims to create a scalable 'buy anywhere, return anywhere' scheme across the UK. M&S has seen strong engagement from shoppers, with more than 10,000 people participating in the reuse system in stores. As the program expands, brands like ARRAN Sense of Scotland and Mama Bamboo will offer products in returnable packaging at M&S stores, while Abel and Cole will stock reusable packaging from Beauty Kitchen.

The coalition's goal is to scale this system across industries, helping reduce single-use plastic waste and contribute to a circular economy. Edie reported that recent research by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation suggests that widespread adoption of reusable packaging could cut material use by 75% and reduce packaging-related emissions by up to 70%. The project has received support from UK Research & Innovation's Smart Sustainable Plastic Packaging Fund, though further government intervention is needed to drive widespread adoption. The success of this initiative highlights the growing need for reusable solutions in the retail space, particularly as urban areas face significant packaging-related carbon emissions.

Source: Edie, [Reusable packaging coalition including M&S expands collection as demand rises](#), 25th September 2024



# Packaging Industry Embraces Circular Economy as New Standard

The shift to a circular economy is rapidly becoming the industry standard, pushing packaging professionals to prioritise waste reduction, material reuse, and recyclability in their designs. Moving away from the traditional 'take, make, dispose' model, this approach emphasises keeping materials in use for as long as possible.

Packaging professionals are adopting biodegradable or recyclable materials, designing for easier disassembly, and integrating closed-loop supply chains to reduce reliance on virgin resources.

This transformation also demands changes in manufacturing, with innovations like additive manufacturing minimising waste, while

collaboration with suppliers and recyclers ensures materials can be efficiently returned to production.

The rise of extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes further increases manufacturers' accountability for the full lifecycle of their products, encouraging more sustainable practices. Engaging consumers is also crucial, with clear labelling and refillable or returnable packaging encouraging responsible disposal and participation in circular initiatives. Embracing these principles allows packaging professionals to drive sustainable solutions and meet growing consumer demand for eco-friendly packaging.

Source: Packaging Gateway, [Circular economy becomes industry standard](#), 25th September 2024

A collection of clear PET bottles of various shapes and sizes, including rectangular, cylindrical, and rounded forms, arranged in a circular pattern around the central text. The bottles are set against a light green background with a faint purple circular graphic behind the text.

# Do you need PCR packaging?

Your PET packaging can be made in a variety of PCR strengths. Increasing the level of PCR provides an even greater sustainable solution.

**Explore our wide range of packaging with recycled content.**



# UK Plastic Packaging Tax Revenue Declines by 6% in Fiscal Year 2023-24

The UK's Plastic Packaging Tax (PPT) saw a 6% decrease in revenue for the financial year 2023-2024, collecting £268 million compared to £285 million the previous year, as reported in a Defra bulletin released on August 15, 2024.

During this period, 42% of all plastic packaging manufactured and imported into the UK was classified as taxable under the PPT.

The remaining 58% comprised 11% exported or converted, less than 1% exempt for immediate packaging of human medicines, and 46% containing 30% or more recycled plastic, thereby qualifying for exemption.

Steve Gough, CEO at Valpak by Reconomy, highlighted the positive trend towards increased use of recycled content in plastic packaging, noting that the proportion of packaging with 30% or more recycled material rose to 46% from 40%

the previous year. However, he emphasised that the 42% of taxable plastic packaging indicates ongoing challenges for businesses in meeting the recycled content threshold.

Zoe Brimelow, Director at packaging manufacturer and consultancy Duo, urged the government to provide clarity on how PPT revenues are being utilised, advocating for investments in the UK's closed-loop recycling infrastructure to support the tax's objectives. She also called for a comprehensive evaluation of the PPT to assess its impact and effectiveness, highlighting the need for continued policy support to drive progress towards a circular economy.

Source: LetsRecycle.com, [Plastic Packaging Tax Collects 6 Per Cent Less Than Previous Year](#), 15th August 2024



# How Government Regulations Are Shaping the Future of Packaging Design

**Government regulations are having a profound impact on packaging design, pushing companies to prioritise sustainability, consumer safety, and technological innovation.** With growing concerns about environmental issues and waste management, regulations such as the European Union's Single-Use Plastics Directive are driving companies to adopt eco-friendly materials.

Packaging designers are tasked with balancing these sustainability demands while maintaining product integrity and appeal. This shift is also spurring innovation in material science and packaging technology as companies strive to comply with regulatory standards.

In addition to sustainability, consumer protection is a key focus of packaging regulations. Companies

must meet stringent safety standards, particularly for food packaging, which must prevent contamination and maintain freshness. Labelling requirements are also essential, ensuring that packaging displays critical information like ingredients, allergens, and expiration dates. Regulations are further encouraging innovation, with companies exploring smart packaging technologies that enhance safety and user experience. QR codes, for example, allow consumers to access product information and verify authenticity. As regulations evolve, businesses that proactively invest in sustainable and compliant packaging solutions will remain competitive and well-positioned for the future.

**Source: Packaging Gateway, [Government regulations and their impact on packaging design](#), 2nd September 2024.**

# Aluminium

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options



100%  
recyclable



Endlessly  
reusable



Range  
of sizes



Pumps &  
closures  
available



# Ingredient & Packaging Trends in Cosmetics

**The cosmetics industry is undergoing rapid innovation, with breakthroughs in both ingredient technology and packaging trends shaping the market in 2024.** A significant shift is occurring toward sustainable and functional packaging, including the rise of lightweight, refillable containers, as brands aim to reduce environmental impact while maintaining product appeal.

One standout trend that Cosmetics Business reported on is [airless packaging](#), which prevents contamination, extends product shelf life, and is particularly beneficial for preservative-free formulations. This technology aligns with consumer demand for clean beauty and environmentally conscious products while improving user experience with precise dosing and reduced waste.

In addition to packaging advancements, ingredient technology is also evolving. Biotech-engineered ingredients and multifunctional formulations are transforming skincare by offering more potent, safe, and effective solutions. Smart beauty packaging, including augmented reality features and QR codes, is also on the rise, allowing brands to engage consumers with interactive experiences and detailed product information. These innovations are driving the cosmetics industry toward a more sustainable, personalised, and tech-savvy future, providing exciting opportunities for both brands and packaging suppliers.

**Source: Cosmetics Business, [Breakthroughs in ingredient technology and packaging trends in the cosmetics industry](#), 23rd September 2024**



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# Deciem Launches Loopha

Deciem, the parent company of The Ordinary, is will launch Loopha, a “scented” home and self-care lifestyle brand with a “scientific soul,” on September 26.

Loopha will initially feature three categories - Cleanse, Condition, and Elevate - and offers a modular fragrance system that allows for product layering. The launch includes the Broadleaf Forest, Oud & Amber, and Chalk Hand + Body Washes, with prices starting at £12 available on [loopha.com](https://loopha.com).

Its packaging is minimal and is made from 100 per cent post-consumer recycled (PCR) content.

Source: [Cosmetics Business, The Ordinary Owner Deciem Launches New Body Care Brand, 24th September 2024](#)



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# Aluminium Gains Traction as a Sustainable Packaging Solution for Spirits

The spirits industry is increasingly embracing **aluminium** as a sustainable alternative to traditional glass packaging, driven by its lightweight nature, infinite recyclability, and lower environmental impact.

Over the past two years, major airlines such as EasyJet and British Airways have introduced aluminium miniatures. Prominent brands like Penrhos Spirits, Foxhole Spirits, and Ogilvy Spirits have also transitioned to aluminium, highlighting significant reductions in weight, volume, and carbon emissions. Aluminium's durability and cost-effectiveness, especially amid rising glass prices, make it an attractive option for both smaller, eco-conscious brands and industry giants like Diageo, which is investing in advanced aluminium recycling facilities to further minimise its carbon footprint.

Studies from the University of Southampton affirm aluminium's superior environmental benefits compared to glass and plastics, reinforcing its potential to reduce the industry's carbon footprint.

As sustainability becomes a key competitive advantage, more spirits brands are likely to adopt aluminium packaging, supported by advancements in recycling technology and growing consumer demand for eco-friendly products. This trend underscores a significant shift towards more responsible packaging solutions within the spirits market, positioning aluminium as a viable and impactful material for the future.

Source: The Spirits Business, Could Aluminium Revolutionise Sustainable Spirits Packaging?, 7th August 2024.



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# UK Aluminium Packaging Recycling Sees 3% Uptick in Q2 2024, Reaching 59% of Annual Target

Aluminium packaging recycling in the UK rose by 3% in the second quarter of 2024 compared to Q2 2023, according to the National Packaging Waste Database (NPWD). A total of 45,246 tonnes of aluminium packaging were recycled during Q2, contributing to an overall collection of 84,222 tonnes in the first half of the year, which meets 59% of the annual recycling target of 140,431 tonnes. The increase includes 29,831 tonnes collected through kerbside, bring, and on-the-go systems—a 4% year-on-year growth—and 13,156 tonnes recovered from incinerator bottom ash. Additionally, 14,936 tonnes were processed domestically, while 30,310 tonnes were exported for recycling.

Tom Giddings, Executive Director of Alupro, highlighted the positive trend despite challenges such as market disruptions and political changes, attributing the growth to national behavioural shifts and innovative supply chain initiatives.

Looking ahead, the introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations in 2025 is expected to further boost aluminium recycling rates. Giddings pointed to potential policy advancements like a variable rate deposit return scheme as key factors that will support the industry's efforts to achieve a long-term goal of 100% aluminium packaging recycling in the UK.

**Source: Resource.Co, UK Aluminium Packaging Recycling Increased 3 Per Cent in Q2 2024, 5th September 2024.**



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# Surge in Body Care Solutions

CosmeticsDesign-Europe reported that there has been a “surge of interest in body care in 2024”. A more informed, savvy consumer base has led to an increase of 1025% in searches, according to Google Trends and Meta.

The body care trends for 2025 focus on multifunctional products, sustainability, and wellness integration. Key trends include the rise of "beautility" where products offer multiple benefits, increased demand for natural ingredients inspired by Ayurvedic and West African beauty, and a holistic approach to sun protection used year-round. Aluminium-free deodorant formulations and AI-driven product personalisation are also gaining traction. Additionally, microbiome-infused body care is expected to grow as consumers seek solutions for balanced, healthy skin.



Source: CosmeticsDesign-Europe, [Body Care Trends You Need to Know About for 2025](#), 24th September 2024



# Unilever Launches Fresh Winter Breeze Collection

Unilever is launching a limited-edition "Fresh Winter Breeze" range, featuring well-known brands such as Surf, Comfort, Cif, and Domestos. The marketing campaign will be led by influencers Giovanna Fletcher and Lynsey Queen of Clean, leveraging TikTok's #CleanTok trend.

The duo will showcase the products through TikTok demonstrations and in-store promotions. This collection features seven products and will be available across major UK retailers including Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, Morrisons, and more. The campaign aims to engage consumers with a unified scent experience for their homes.



Source: KAMCity, Unilever Partners with Influencers to Launch Winter Home Care Range, 25th September 2024.



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