



**vnv**

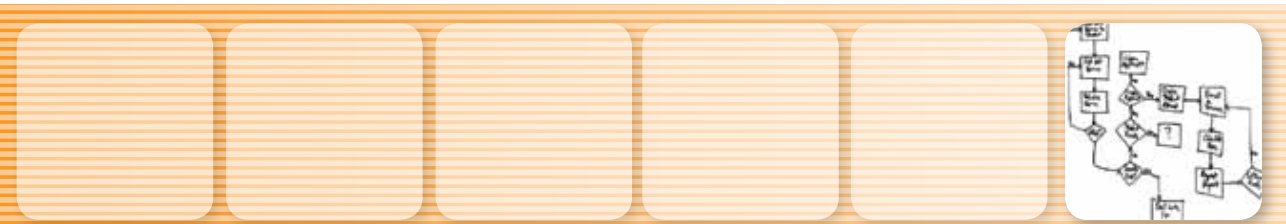
dutch association of packaging professionals

# Innovation drives us forwards





*“Innovation, cost management, safety, sustainability...  
Innovation drives us forwards!  
Packaging plays a leading role in this innovation.  
The packaging professionals are in control.”*



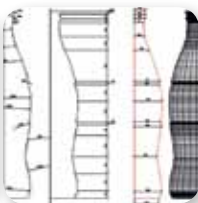
# Catalyst in innovation

**The current entrepreneurial climate demands fast action and decisive steering. On all fronts – and especially in packaging. From positioning a product in the market, communicating the appropriate product values, to achieving higher output; packaging touches all company activities. By using and implementing packaging optimally, packaging professionals know how to help achieve corporate objectives.**

Like no other, packaging professionals understand the complexity of strategic, tactical and operational packaging issues. Their challenge is to maximise the coherence between disciplines and so achieve good solutions and effective decisions.

Packaging professionals are catalysts in innovation – innovation that is essential for promoting brand loyalty, facilitating healthy enjoyment and ensuring a sustainable society. Packaging professionals make these advances possible.

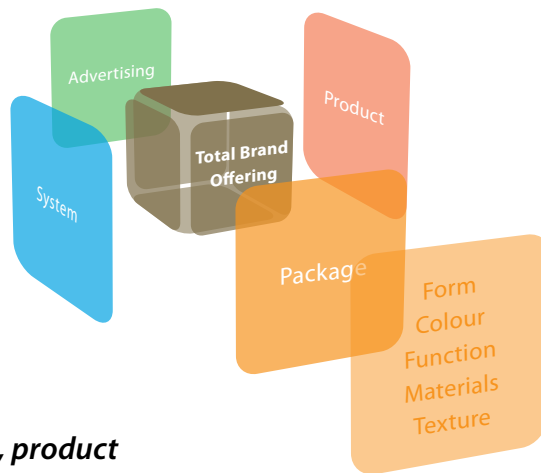
*In 1988, packaging professionals in the Netherlands joined forces to create the Vereniging Nederlandse Verpakkingskundigen, also known as the VNV or Dutch Association of Packaging Professionals. This brochure provides a sketch of the Netherlands' foremost packaging experts.*



# Directing the packaging process

In areas where packaging is crucial, packaging professionals direct the activities. They ensure the packaging provides the right mix of user-friendliness, emotion, product information and protection. This mixture enhances product sales at the store level, ensures efficient and safe supply chain operations, and provides brand loyalty.

This is relevant in various positions - the purchaser, packaging developer, marketing manager, quality coordinator, packaging consultant, operations manager or the board. In all these areas, it's essential that the packaging expert can perform his or her work on an operational, tactical and/or strategic level and so deliver the best imaginable product-packaging combination.



***“Packaging, product  
and brand are really a single entity”***



# Area of operation

Packaging professionals operate on the frontline of four core areas.



**Strategy & Innovation** - Packaging professionals assign priority to packaging innovation in the organisation. This is important for retaining or strengthening a company's market position.



**Consumer & Society** - Packaging professionals translate consumer needs, trends and social issues into successful product / packaging / market combinations.



**Process & Organisation** - Packaging professionals steer and implement packaging processes from various disciplines such as operations, marketing, purchasing, quality, engineering and development.



**Profit & Loss** - With a focus on the chain and the opportunities, packaging professionals know how to extract maximum return from the packaging and packaging process.

# Strategy & Innovation

Consumer  
&  
Society

Process  
&  
Organisation

Profit  
&  
Loss

*“Innovation in packaging is only successful if the whole chain, with all its links, wins – right up to the consumer”*



*There are many companies that still repeatedly do themselves an injustice by not understanding and realising packaging's true value and potential. Using packaging strategically enhances the profitability and value of a product or brand.*

*"We assign priority to packaging innovation, prevent sub-optimisation and are quick to evaluate whether a new innovation is likely to be a success," claims a packaging innovation manager.*

#### **How do you extract profit from the chain?**

"Innovation in packaging is only successful if the whole chain, with all its links, wins – right up to the consumer. Packaging professionals retain the big picture and keep an eagle eye on things. As soon as one of the parties suffers, it has a negative impact on the whole chain."

#### **Are there opportunities in sustainability?**

"Being sustainable is no longer a nice-to-have choice. Increasing numbers of companies are imposing ambitious objectives on themselves. We look at matters like product, process and company so that the innovation provides (environmental) benefits for the entire chain and doesn't simply shift the problem elsewhere."

#### **How do you retain an advantage?**

"Innovation! If we don't innovate with our packaging, we'll be out of the picture sooner rather than later. Packaging, product and brand are really a single entity. Everything has to be perfectly coherent before a brand or product launch can be a success. The focus of the packaging expert is always on retaining or strengthening the competitive advantage."

#### **Where can you optimise?**

"Within companies, packaging knowledge and expertise are often quite spread out. This dispersal leads to sub-optimisation and a risk of greater issues developing elsewhere. Packaging professionals keep an eye on this and create new opportunities with an integral approach."

#### **Which future strategy is important?**

"You have to use packaging materials carefully and with focus so that you add value down the chain. This calls for knowledge and experience. Together with the other parties in the chain, we sketch a scenario for upcoming packaging concepts. These projects may not offer value for the chain tomorrow but will certainly contribute – possibly as far as five or ten years down the line."

***"Being sustainable is no longer a nice-to-have choice"***



*Packaging increasingly capitalises on trends in society and consumer needs. Contemporary challenges include smaller households, user friendliness, out-of-home consumption, internet shopping, urbanisation, and consumers who are more critical with increasing awareness of health and environmental issues. "We solve these issues appropriately and therefore contribute to the economy and society as well as welfare and wellbeing," adds the consumer packaging manager.*

### **How do you make a difference?**

"Innovations really must add value for the consumer nowadays. Just putting an attractive picture on the package is no longer enough. Packaging functionality is increasingly the distinguishing factor and therefore considered part of the product proposition. The thing is - you can often make a difference with relatively simple changes."

### **What is the significance of packaging for a brand?**

"You can use packaging to strengthen a brand, communicate product qualities and work on your image. As a packaging expert you know how to get the various parties involved so that the products land on the shelves looking as intended."

*"Innovations really must add value for the consumer nowadays. An attractive picture alone is no longer good enough."*

### **What's the right balance?**

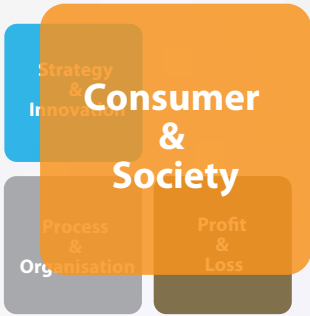
"As a packaging expert you keep a close eye on whether packaging is giving off contradictory signals. A particular message on the packaging can counteract another value. For example, consumers experience the strength of a 'sustainable' washing powder to be lower than that of the same powder without the message 'sustainable' on the packaging."

### **Which benefits can you gain?**

"If products need to be transported further and so require better impact resistance, packaging costs rise as well. There's still a lot to gain by taking a close look at product-packaging combinations. For example, by making the product less fragile. It allows you to save on packaging material and increase loading volumes."







*“Packaging professionals keep an extremely close eye on the interplay between packaging’s various values.”*



Strategy  
&  
Innovation

Consumer  
&  
Society

## Process & Organisation

Profit  
Loss

*“Packaging is subject to the continuous interaction and tension between cost-production and the demand for shorter runs, smaller batches and faster delivery times.”*”



*Packaging processes are complex. Companies need agile, flexible packaging lines so that they can, for example, capitalise multiple times on the demand for differentiation and speed of innovation. This calls for people who devise processes that allow you to remain competitive with respect to production moving forward. "As a packaging expert you oversee the entire process and know the areas that need particular focus if you're to create and capitalise on opportunities," says the packaging process manager.*

### **What are the ins and outs of the development process?**

"There is normally a broad idea for the packaging, volume, target group, sales channel and preferred market introduction. The packaging expert then goes and talks to the various parties involved, investigates whether the whole process is feasible and introduces a range of alternatives. In principle you can come up with solutions for anything, although they always come with a price tag."

### **What is the major challenge?**

"Packaging is subject to the continuous interaction and tension between line efficiency and the demand for shorter runs, smaller batches and faster delivery times. As a packaging expert you know how to deliver an optimal result despite these contradictory demands."

### **How would you describe your function?**

"I am primarily a mediator between the various disciplines. My job is done when marketing has the feeling it is getting what it wants and operations is happy with delivering the design as planned."

### **How important is a good operator?**

"The line profits are based on three factors: people, machines and resources. If people are not perfectly trained, line profits suffer. Packaging professionals can train operators. Self-confident people feel more at ease, which automatically improves your return."

### **What do you offer as a specialist?**

"Because of rising prices, variable demand and varying availability of qualified personnel, it's increasingly tricky for brand owners to market innovative packaging concepts. As a packaging expert you can offer proactive support and so eliminate some of their risk."

*"Packaging professionals are mainly mediators between the various disciplines that are involved."*





***“Cost-effective packaging is a precondition for achieving our company’s significant growth ambitions.”***



*Packaging covers a huge area that also uses a great deal of money. For many products, packaging is a source of added value and essential for sales and profits. Where direct packaging costs are generally considerable in themselves, you can multiply their impact on the whole chain several times. Think of development, investments, production costs, logistics and marketing. Packaging professionals are always on the lookout as to where money is best spent. "I create links between the market, production, technology and key financial data and so create innovative, lucrative applications in packaging and technology," records the packaging purchase manager.*

#### **What's good purchasing policy?**

"Try to compare packaging processes to Formula 1. Cheaper purchasing primarily means smarter purchasing. It means ensuring materials can be processed with ease for higher output per hour and assessing integrally how we can produce more efficiently. In addition to saving costs, you also ensure reliable supply. Integration with production planning saves the company significant sums of money."

#### **What's the focus?**

"Cost-effective packaging is essential. Our products travel the world and are used in all sorts of processes and in very demanding markets. Transport distances, quality demands and pressure on cost efficiency are all increasing. You have to produce the highest quality packaging at the lowest possible cost and exude the same image of professionalism around the world."

#### **How do you manage costs?**

"In any packing company, there are three forces at work with respect to the packaging. Marketing wants the most attractive packaging with as many colours as possible. Production really wants a single standard. And purchasing is looking for the cheapest solution. To manage the overall packaging costs, packaging professionals start exchanging wishes and possibilities as soon as possible, determine the limits and where necessary stretch them."

#### **Can you provide an example?**

"For one of our products we wanted a packaging method that was unique to our sector. It meant creating a new production line. I listed all the consequences and determined the costs. The project called for a huge investment and was pretty risky. But we wouldn't even have started if we had even the smallest doubt it was going to deliver enough."

*"It is the task of the packaging expert to create the highest quality packaging at the lowest possible cost..."*



# vnv

dutch association of packaging professionals

## Who are we?

The Vereniging Nederlandse Verpakkingskundigen, VNV or Dutch Association of Packaging professionals, is a sector association in which packaging professionals exchange information and knowledge and inspire and motivate one another.

## What do we do?

VNV strengthens the position of the sector group and is an active and dynamic platform for personal and professional development. The association is a sounding board and source of inspiration for members, relations and other parties involved in (social) packaging issues.

## We do so by:

- Supporting members in their professional development (advice, training, workgroups and company visits)
- Networking on various fronts (amongst ourselves at VNV meetings and externally through active relationships with other organisations)
- Looking after the interests of our members, for example by publicising the work and added value of practitioners in the packaging profession
- Exchanging knowledge and information (VNV newsletter, our website [www.verpakkingskundigen.nl](http://www.verpakkingskundigen.nl), internal and external committees and workgroups, company visits, sounding board for one another and for third parties)
- Facilitating internal and external workgroups such as 'Training in Packaging' and 'Sustainability in Packaging'



*“Packaging professionals provide the knowledge and skills necessary for introducing the product and ensuring it stays on the market.*

*They are the linchpin between all company disciplines so that the maximum can be extracted from the product / packaging / market combination.”*





**vnv**

dutch association of packaging professionals

**e-mail**  
info@verpakkingskundigen.nl  
**website**  
www.verpakkingskundigen.nl

