Packaging is an integral part of supply chain management that involves planning among many departments including engineering, manufacturing, marketing, quality control, transportation and warehousing (Murphy, P., Knemeyer, M). Research suggests that a coordinated packaging system that connects the aspects of logistics, marketing, production and the environment will ensure the efficient flow of goods upstream and downstream the supply chain with an end goal of maximizing consumer value, sales, and profit (Anand, S). The purpose is to increase awareness of current state, trade-offs, and continuous improvements in packaging logistics (Palsson, H., Hellstrom, D). Optimized packaging can increase product efficiency, improve material handling, ensure efficient use of equipment, and enhance damage control, inventory management, cycle counts, and space usage (Magasura, M). Implementing the 10 Principles of Materials handling can have a positive impact on the organizations profitability, customer service, and productivity (Murphy, P., Knemeyer, M).

From a consumer’s approach packaging becomes a critical element to overall product satisfaction and in many cases, is a central element in the creation of an effective brand identity (Magasura, M). One area that I find particularly important in packaging logistics is social responsibility as it relates to the environmental principle for example, a greater focus on reusing or recycling products, reducing the amount of packaging, and improving energy efficiency, which in turn, reduces the amount of pollution. According to the U.S. EPA, packaging accounts for nearly one third of municipal solid waste in the United States with over 77 million tons generated in 2015 alone – 29% of total generation. This includes cardboard boxes, fiberboard, plastic, metal and glass containers, and foam (EPA, 2015). Today, many consumers have more awareness about the environment and are more prone to supporting brands that are committed to green and sustainable packaging. For example, 57% of those surveyed said green packaging was important to them and 61% have considered supply chain sustainability practices when choosing brands (Packsize, 2016).

Coca-Cola is an example of an organization that is committed to sustainability particularly in plastic bottle packaging and is responding to not only, the changing consumer preference but also, the implications waste has to the environment. President and CEO, James Quincy, stated, “Through our ‘World Without Waste’ vision, we are investing in our planet and in our packaging to help make the world packaging problem a thing of the past (Moye, J).” Moreover, Coca Cola believes that every package has life and value beyond its initial use. In 2015, Coca-Cola introduced the World’s first PET bottle made from 100% plants and has plans to exclusively use PlantBottles in place of petroleum-based plastic bottles by 2020. Since 2009, when they introduced bottles with 30% plant-based resources, Coca-Cola has eliminated 319,000 metric tons of emissions which equates to 36 million gallons of gasoline (Goldman, D).

Regards,

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