
Clubstore Packaging Trends: What Brands Need to Know in 2025

By Eric Faber, Founder & CEO of Packaging Resources January 2025

Clubstores have become one of the most influential retail forces in North America. Chains like Costco, Sam's Club, and BJ's have reshaped how consumers shop—and how brands must package, present, and protect their products. The club environment demands packaging that performs differently than traditional grocery, mass retail, or e-commerce.

For manufacturers and private-label suppliers, understanding clubstore packaging trends isn't optional—it's critical to winning (and keeping) shelf space.

Below are the most important clubstore packaging trends shaping 2025, along with actionable insights brands can use to stay competitive.

1. Value-Driven Packaging That Shows “More for Less”

Club shoppers are conditioned to equate bulk with value. Packaging must clearly communicate **abundance, efficiency, and cost savings**.

Emerging strategies include:

- Oversized or tall display panels that maximize billboard effect.
- Transparent windows or cutouts to show quantity.
- Simplified front-panel messaging that reinforces the value proposition in under three seconds.
- Multi-packs that feel substantial without unnecessary material waste.

Brands that fail to visually communicate value risk being overlooked, even if the product is competitively priced.

2. Display-Ready Packaging (DRP) Is Now the Norm

Clubstores rely heavily on **pallet-based merchandising**, which means packaging must function as both **container and display**.

Key DRP requirements:

- Easy-open perforations for quick stocking.

- High-strength corrugate engineered for long-term floor stability.
- Large, readable graphics on all sides—especially from 20–30 feet away.
- Consistency in pallet patterns to optimize warehouse and floor operations.

Brands that master DRP reduce labor costs, improve in-store compliance, and increase sales velocity.

3. Sustainability Is No Longer a Bonus—It’s a Mandate

Costco and Sam’s Club are accelerating sustainability commitments across categories.

Trending sustainability initiatives:

- Recyclable mono-material films replacing multi-material laminates.
- Reduction of over-box packaging for items that can stand alone.
- Use of PCR (post-consumer recycled) resins in rigid plastics and shrink films.
- Minimized inks, glues, and varnishes to improve recyclability.

But sustainability must be balanced with durability. Club environments stress-test packaging—strength and shelf-life remain non-negotiable.

4. Ergonomic, Easy-to-Carry Designs

Large packages must be **easy for shoppers to lift, handle, and transport**.

Trending ergonomic features:

- Die-cut handles with reinforced fiber or film backing.
- Multi-pack configurations designed for natural hand placement.
- Weight balancing across rigid or semi-rigid formats.

Poor ergonomics can hurt both sales and customer perception—club shoppers will quickly choose the easier option.

5. Bold, Clean Graphics Made for a 60-Second Shopping Trip

Clubstore customers shop fast, and SKU count is lower than traditional retail. Your packaging must **communicate benefits instantly**.

Graphic trends include:

- Minimalist front-panel layouts that highlight two or three core selling points.
- Oversized typography for visibility from long distances.
- Consistent color-blocking to stand out on full pallets.
- Ultra-clean photography that reads clearly even from a moving cart.

Think of clubstore packaging as outdoor advertising—billboard clarity is essential.

6. Durability and Structural Integrity Take Priority

Packaging in club environments faces unique challenges: double stacking, pallet moves, forklifts, customer handling, and long dwell time.

Brands are upgrading:

- Heavy-basis corrugates and reinforced corners.
- Shrink films with higher tear strength and puncture resistance.
- High-COF films to improve pallet stability.
- Improved heat-sealing and bonding for high-speed lines.

Clubstores expect product to hold up long after it hits the floor.

7. Multi-Pack Innovation: “Smart Bulk” Instead of Just Bigger

Instead of simply supersizing items, brands are exploring **modular bulk**.

Examples:

- Two-packs or three-packs of smaller units that offer flexibility.
- Resealable pouches bundled within a master pack.
- “Dual-use” packaging that supports both pantry loading and on-the-go consumption.

This approach reduces consumer waste and increases perceived value.

8. QR Codes, Digital Enhancements, and Member-Exclusive Messaging

Club members are increasingly tech-savvy. Packaging is now a gateway for deeper engagement.

Trending digital integrations:

- QR codes linking to product demos, recipes, or behind-the-scenes sourcing content.
- Member-exclusive offers accessible only through digital scans.
- Track-and-trace transparency for sustainability stories or supply chain verification.

This digital layer strengthens brand loyalty long after the purchase.

9. Private Label Competition Is Driving Better Packaging

Costco's Kirkland Signature and Sam's Club Member's Mark continue to **raise the bar** on packaging quality.

National brands must now compete not just on product quality, but on:

- Shelf presence
- Packaging sustainability
- Functionality
- Storytelling
- Multi-pack innovation

Clubstore private label is no longer basic—it's strategic, premium, and aggressively designed.

Final Thoughts: Packaging for Club Is Packaging for the Future

The club channel continues to outperform much of retail, and its influence is growing across industries. For brands looking to scale, club-ready packaging is not just a design exercise—it's strategic engineering that blends **value messaging, structural durability, and sustainability**.

At Packaging Resources, we've guided leading manufacturers and private-label suppliers through decades of evolving club demands—across food, beverage, CPG, household goods, and industrial categories.

As clubstore expectations increase, brands that invest early in smarter packaging stand to gain the most shelf space, loyalty, and long-term growth.