

Packaging Technologists head to Woolworths



The AIP, in conjunction with IGD in the United Kingdom, ran their inaugural in-store excellence training session at Woolworths Newington store on the 16th of June this year. Fourteen packaging technologists from across food, beverage and manufacturing attended the full-day training session which was designed to give delegates exclusive access to Woolworths Newington store and staff, as well as offer three fully-planned, focused and reviewed hands-on experiences in-store. Attendees had the opportunity to have a go at range changing, promotion building and shelf-stacking, and the training was led by James Tupper, ECR Learning & Change Manager, IGD.

Packaging technologists don't often get the chance to see how their designs work in practice, so our unique session gave them the opportunity to get stuck in to the daily work of replenishing shelves, promotion points and range changing. During this session, the technologists were able to appreciate:

- The practicalities of their product designs
- What makes some packaging designs more intuitive than others
- What shelf-ready designs work first time
- Why some designs don't actually get used.

Delegates were then able to sit down with Woolworths head office and store staff and ask them plenty of questions about shelf-ready packaging and its true functionality in-store.

Many lessons were learnt during the day and the attendees walked away inspired, with fresh ideas on how to improve and even re-design their packaging to ensure that it meets the needs of the retail outlets as well as the customers.

The in-store training would not have been possible without the support of Woolworths and IGD in the United Kingdom. The AIP would like to extend their sincerest gratitude to Woolworths for opening their store during trading hours for the 14 packaging technologists.

Feedback from the attendees included:

"The training session was extremely informative on the use of shelf-ready packaging in store. Being able to actively participate in shelf stacking exercises will help with future packaging designs."

"There was a good spread of experienced technologists from different organisations in the training session and a very helpful store Manager and second in command during the day. This session was an excellent opportunity to see how people interact with the packaging (not as a manufacturer or as a user)."



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“The Training session provided great ‘hands on’ understanding of the constraints that retailers face replenishing their shelves. I learnt that not every shelf ready tray is a good design and that we have to make shelf ready trays intuitive and easy to use; remember ‘Monkey See, Monkey Do’.”

“Personally I think the training session was very helpful and informative. It made the difference between knowing what SRP format would work and hoping (and believing) that the design would work, by actually doing some store-staff work ourselves. The feedback from Woolworths store staff and head office management was also invaluable. I have gained a couple of key learnings from the session which I would not have been able to achieve by just sitting in the office and reading text books.”

“The day was fun whilst having the opportunity to understand how other food companies are approaching the drive for shelf ready shippers. It was also an opportunity to understand which shelf ready designs are considered “gold standard” by Woolworths. I learnt that Woolworths are still pushing Shelf Ready Shippers. This was new news to me as I thought W/W had moved away from wanting shelf ready shippers. The location was perfect for both in-store exercises and class room exercises. The session also gave me an opportunity to make some key contacts at Woolworths to follow-up and understand why our products that are in shelf ready shippers are not being used on shelf.”



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"I thought the training was a very useful exercise. The hands-on approach really paid-off, I never knew about how the store was run and all the different shelving and complexities. It was also an eye opener in terms of how our packaging impacts on the people working in store. There were some really great contacts made with other companies and with Woolworths. James Tupper was a very enthusiastic, passionate and knowledgeable speaker which made the day even better. I especially thought that writing down our aims to achieve were very useful and some good ideas came out of it. Overall a great day, experiences I will use and share in my packaging team and in development."



"The Woolworths in-store training session was a fantastic opportunity. The in-store work that we carried out was informative, practical and functional to my role within Visy. This session really gave me first hand experience of what is required from our packaging that we supply. I would recommend this training session to anyone with packaging industry!"

