Beverage Packaging Market Trends, Statistics, Growth, and Forecasts

Younger consumers are deciding emerging alcoholic drink trends and their focus on mindful drinking is pushing manufacturers towards

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Market Overview
Beverage packaging is expected to prove fairly resilient in 2020, despite the impact of COVID-19. In the early stages of the pandemic, massive stockpiling took place, as customers prepared for a lockdown. This will boost the market growth in most alcoholic drinks packaging product areas, with beer packaging in particular seeing strong growth in the year in contrast to the decline seen in 2019. Cider/perry is also expected to return to growth in 2021, with both product areas benefiting from strong sales of multipacks.

Younger consumers are deciding emerging alcoholic drink trends and their focus on mindful drinking is pushing manufacturers towards more environmentally friendly solutions, particularly in terms of packaging. Major manufacturers such as Diageo have announced ambitious sustainability targets, while craft producers have begun to imbue sustainability into their overall brand identity.

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Glass continued to struggle within alcoholic drinks packaging in 2019. Much of the overall decline was due to declines within beer packaging. Beer packaging continued to dominate glass alcoholic drinks packaging, so the performance of this product area shaped the overall performance of glass packaging. Within beer, the packaging landscape continued to change at the end of 2020, exacerbating the decline of glass. Metal packaging and metal beverage cans in particular gained share due to sustainability concerns associated with the transportation and recyclability of glass and because of this pack type's light weight and convenience

Within spirits and wine, 1.5 litre packs and larger will perform well in 2020. Large pack sizes and multipacks are both benefiting from offering a lower unit price and reducing the need for more frequent trips to stores. This shift towards larger pack sizes will also be linked to a surge in sales through e-commerce, particularly for spirits. With event cancellations and restaurant and bar closures, all product areas will see rapid foodservice with see a decline in 2020, with beer packaging being hardest hit. In terms of pack type, kegs will in particular be impacted by these trends, due to being used mainly in the foodservice/on-trade.

The pandemic will also slow the premiumisation trend in 2020, as the economic impact of the pandemic and rising unemployment will impact spending. Glass and metal bottles will be hit hardest by these trends in beer, while single-serve metal beverage cans will suffer in wine.

From 2021, alcoholic drinks packaging will return to growth, with annual total unit volume growth expected for the remainder of the forecast period as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic eases. While alcoholic drinks packaging is showing signs of maturity and growth will be slow, the forecast period 2020-2025 is expected to see slightly stronger volume growth in 2020.

Several product areas will struggle, with beer notably set to see sharper total unit volume decline in the forecast period. This may be linked to health concerns and economic uncertainty but will also be due to growing competition from hard seltzers within RTDs. Hard seltzers are also expected to continue to see high growth as more and more alcoholic drinks manufacturers produce their own brands. This will in turn support sales of metal beverage cans, the main pack type in this product area, with metal beverage cans set to see growth strengthen in the forecast period despite ongoing decline in beer.

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The slow shift towards sustainable packaging became more evident in 2020. New innovations continuously entered, including biodegradable six-pack rings, all-paper bottles and cardboard containers in product areas such as wine and spirits. While many of these eco-friendly solutions have a long way to go to before becoming mainstream staples, overall packaging trends are already putting sustainability first. Sustainability is expected to remain at the forefront of both consumer and manufacturer minds in the forecast period. This will also support the shift from glass to metal packaging and will also boost paper packaging in the forecast period. A focus on pack type and multipack innovation will also remain strong, with sustainable packaging increasingly used to woo consumers and enable brands to stand out on store shelves.

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