



Caps & closures



Keep a lid on it

Innovations in closures and caps give brand-owners an opportunity to differentiate through convenience and style - and helps packaging manufacturers stay ahead of the game. With lightweighting and clever design key in the more visible role of closures and caps, Emma-Jane Batey speaks to players across the packaging value chain to learn more.

Brand-owners often say that they were not prepared for how much time their packaging was going to take up; the dream is always about the product, the social media following, the customers - probably even the design of the packaging is part of the initial storytelling. But the lid? That isn't really something that people dream about.

But where would we be without it? And what added value can innovative closures offer to consumers and the circular economy?

The trend for convenience has been growing across FMCG categories for many years and shows no sign of slowing down. While consumers are increasingly focused on being responsible, they largely want the brands they

choose to be responsible as opposed to themselves going without convenience. For the latest launch from hugely successful Swedish fruit cider brand Kopparberg, both the convenience trend and a beverage category-specific trend have been ticked.

Kopparberg has launched new brand drink concept Balans in the form of the headline product Balans Aqua Spritz. Rob Salvesen, head of marketing at Kopparberg, says, "We know that people see social occasions where they might want to have a drink as an important part of their lives, but often drinks choices can be limiting. Balans Aqua Spritz is for people who want to enjoy the pleasures of life without compromise. Move aside vodka, lime and soda - Balans is refreshing, light in



lime and soda - Balans is refreshing, light in taste, and is currently the lowest calorie 4% ABV drink of its kind available in its current 250ml serving.»

The Balans brand was developed by Kopparberg in partnership with UK brand agency Elmwood and it “signals the UK arrival of a growing US trend towards alcoholic sparkling seltzers”, says Salvesen.

An ‘alcohol-infused sparkling water with a hint of natural fruit taste’, Balans is low-calorie and low-sugar, and ‘inspired by the growing trend for health, fitness and well-being’. Elmwood designer Tim Wood, who developed the Balans brand design, says, “Elmwood worked on the brand world, packaging and tone of voice for the Balans brand, with the brief to appeal to a balance-seeking audience who do their best to not let the demand of life get in the way of having fun. There’s so much social pressure for people to look good and feel good - Balans in a drink means our audience can literally balance pleasure and sociability with their personal wellness goals.”

Available in single serve 250ml cans with ring pulls, Balans Aqua Spritz lies two flavours currently - mandarin and lime - and is available in ASDA and at ASDA.co.uk. The practicality of the ring-pull can is ideally suited to the convenience element of the product, especially as it is targeted to sociable drinking with friends and can be easily recycled in standard recycling collections. Wood continues, “The Balans logo represents two things coming together - be that alcohol and sparkling water, or a busy lifestyle and time to relax. The point where the two shapes overlap is the perfect moment of equilibrium.

This sits against a backdrop of variant-coloured sky. The brand pairs an elegant, yet friendly, script with a sans serif type to add a personal feel, while an endorsement of quality ‘From the makers of Kopparberg’ sits at the base.”

Light yet strong

For global packaging manufacturer RETAL, the closures issue is a chance to add an extra level of responsibility to its offering, with its multinational household-name

customers increasingly demanding solutions that support their GSR targets. The company showcased its new high-grip closure design at BrauBeviale last year, which offers more options for plastic reduction in beverage packaging. RETAL's high-grip closure is 19.85mm, the same height as a standard closure, but just 2.45g, saving around 1.3g of weight per bottle compared with standard bottles, thanks to the unique manufacture of the closures that allows for deeper grooves to distribute the weight across a taller surface area.

The innovative design is more sustainable as it uses less plastic, is easy to grip and open, and retains rigidity due to the height. Dalia Petrauskaite, RETAL's closures director, says,

“We worked closely with the market-leading bottle-filling company to create a functional solution that delivers high market acceptance thanks to its consumer-friendly attributes, such as being easy to open and grip. Our high-grip closures offer many unique advantages; light yet strong, it also allows co-packers to reuse their existing stacking trays that are for standard 1810 specifications, making the high grip even more eco-friendly.”

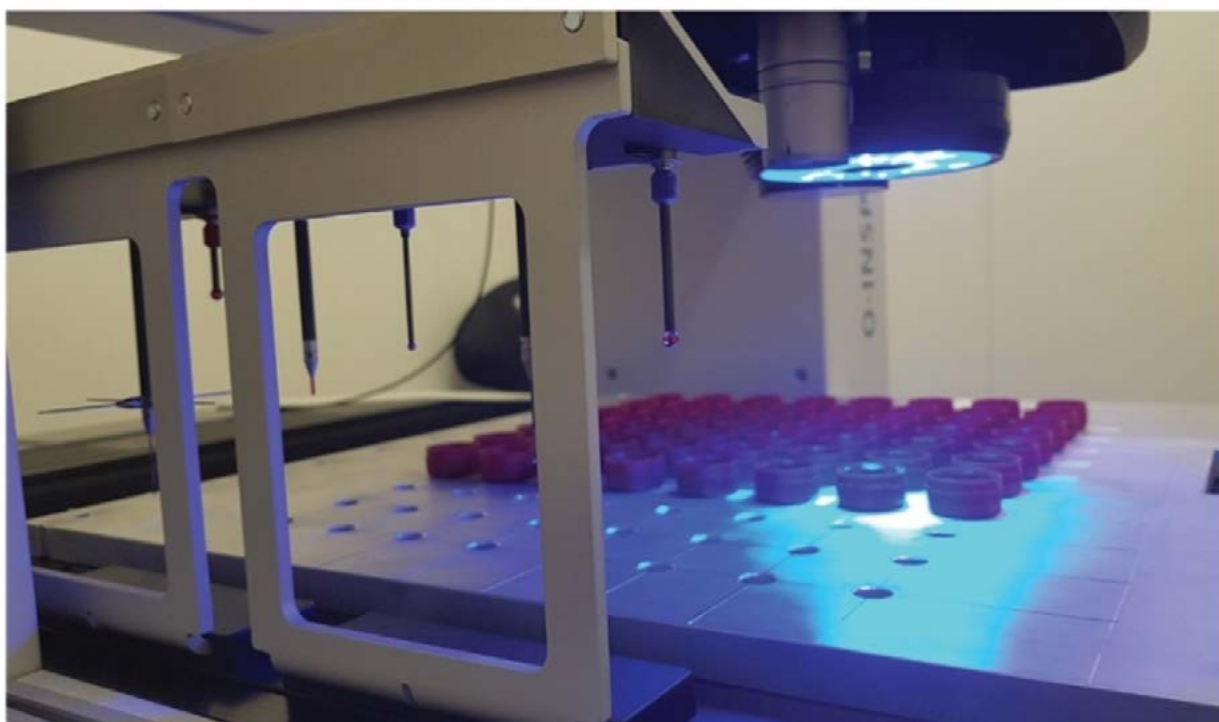
For the wine industry, where closures have typically been corks with a thin foil wrapper for decades, the industry shake-up of the screw-top wine bottle has not always been perceived with the right value proposition, even though it is far more practical for consumers and is more easily recyclable. For disruptive wine brand Garcon Wines, the 100% PET Hat wine bottle has been shaking up a storm across the wine, packaging and gifting sectors. Its choice of plastic screw cap is another choice that’s got people talking.

\$43.04 billion

The value of the global caps and closures market.
Waeqay Research Consultants

5.9%

The CAGR for the caps and closures market for 2019-25.
Waeqay Research Consultants



RETAL's high-grip closure caps use less plastic and are easy to grip and open.