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EXAMINING EFFECTS OF SHELF
READY PACKAGING ON BRAND
KNOWLEDGE BASED ON THE
EXAMPLE OF TORGOVY DOM
YARMARKA

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>The intense competition induces companies to make effort to distinguish their products from the market alternatives, which is to a certain extent facilitated by packaging. In the meantime, the demand on Shelf Ready Packaging (SRP), having emerged somewhat recently, is increasing while its geographical spread is growing. Thus, the purpose of this study consisted in the assessment of influence of SRP on brand knowledge.</p> <p>Therefore, the quantitative research was conducted, having been anteceded by examination of the extant literature on brand management, packaging and SRP. The research population is represented by the adult inhabitants of Russia, having been subject to the non-probability sampling. The survey strategy was realized through such a mean of data collection as an electronic questionnaire, having been transmitted with the public links and based on the positioning strategy of Torgovy Dom Yarmarka and its primary and shelf ready packaging. The individuals were provided with two dissimilar versions of the questionnaire, one having involved pictures of the primary packaging, while another having encompassed the depicted combination of primary and shelf ready packaging.</p> <p>Although the SRP was expected to contribute to conveyance of the Yarmarka brand meaning, the research results indicate that the corresponding effect is statistically insignificant in case of the SRP applied by Yarmarka. However, some of the limitations involved in the present study imply that other means of researching could have been employed to examine the SRP influence on the brand recognition in a more realistic manner. Apart from that, it is relevant to assess the impact of other types of SRP design on brand knowledge.</p>		
Keywords survey, packaging, brand knowledge, brand awareness, brand image		

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	5
1.1	Introduction to the Research.....	5
1.2	Research Problem, Objectives and Scope	6
1.3	Torgovy Dom Yarmarka.....	6
2	METHODS AND MATERIALS	7
2.1	Brand Management	7
2.1.1	Introduction to Brand and Brand Management.....	8
2.1.2	Brand Knowledge and Its Components	9
2.1.3	Brand Positioning	11
2.1.4	Brand Resonance and Value Generation.....	13
2.1.5	Brand Elements and Packaging	16
2.2	Packaging.....	18
2.2.1	Introduction to Packaging.....	18
2.2.2	Effects of Packaging on Consumer Behavior	20
2.2.3	Packaging in the Market.....	22
2.3	Shelf Ready Packaging	24
2.3.1	Introduction to Shelf Ready Packaging	24
2.3.2	SRP Functional Requirements	26
2.3.3	SRP Application Prerequisites	27
2.3.4	SRP and Consumers	29
2.4	Research Process	31
2.4.1	Research Philosophy, Approach and Design	31
2.4.2	Research Tactics and Implementation	32
2.4.3	Research Credibility and Ethics	34
3	RESULT ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS	36
3.1	Characteristics of the Respondents	36
3.2	Effect of SRP on Brand Awareness	37

3.3	Effect of SRP on Brand Image.....	40
3.4	Conclusions	42
	REFERENCES	45
	TABLES.....	47
	APPENDICES	
	Appendix 1. Questionnaire 1	
	Appendix 2. Questionnaire 2	
	Appendix 3. Tables on respondent perception of the depicted product	

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Research

These days, the pressure resulting from the intense competition motivates companies to allocate resources to the enhancement of brand equity, promoted by customer knowledge about brands (Keller 2013, 71) and intended to enable companies to take advantage of their positions in the market. The brand equity expansion is partly facilitated by packaging, which is able to assist companies in distinguishing their products from the market alternatives (Keller 2013, 167). The significance of packaging is reinforced by the fact that about 70% of consumer buying choices occur in stores (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 16), which implies the considerable potential for packaging to affect consumer decision-making at points of purchase. Meanwhile, the new type of packaging, that is, Shelf Ready Packaging (SRP), began to spread at the beginning of the century due to the expanded influence of retailers on supply chains (Dujak, Ferenčić & Franjković 2014, 32, 34).

The SRP combines features of transport and consumer packaging, which appears to offer the significant space for further innovation. Some of the positive effects resulting from SRP utilization are claimed to involve facilitation of the store performance, acceleration of stock handling, advancement of code monitoring and simplification of goods distinguishing (ECR Australasia 2011, 6). Furthermore, since SRP is faced by consumers, it may be considered as an additional contributor to the brand building. Besides that, the demand on Retail Ready Packaging (including SRP) is anticipated to be increasing and approach \$63.4 billion by 2017 as compared to \$54 billion in 2011 (Smithers Pira 2012). However, nowadays, there seems to be quite little academic research on such a packaging present, despite the existing uncertainty about SRP application being capable of offering the equilibrated amounts of value to the supply chain members concerned, that is, producers, distributors and consumers. Thus, the research on SRP, based on the example of a company currently utilizing it, was conducted.

1.2 Research Problem, Objectives and Scope

This research project is a survey designed to assess the impact of SRP on brand knowledge. In particular, the SRP is assumed to contribute to the consumer awareness and imagery of the brand. Thus, the extent of such a SRP effect is expected to be measured in the present research. This research might facilitate slight clarification of the relevance of in-store product presentation with SRP regarding the consumer point of view. The research results are going to be demonstrated to Torgovy Dom Yarmarka as a provider of the tangible base of the research, that is, primary and shelf ready packaging designs.

In order for the research aim to be achieved, the number of actions was taken within the research process. Initially, the existing knowledge related to such areas as brand management, packaging and SRP was considered. The secondary data was obtained from such sources as journal articles, books, organizational publications, websites and Torgovy Dom Yarmarka presentations. Furthermore, the SRP utilization practices and brand positioning strategy of Torgovy Dom Yarmarka were investigated, and the list of associations being likely to conform to the brand image of Yarmarka was developed. Hence, the present study involves a comparative quantitative research, serving as a source of primary data and based on the primary and shelf ready packaging applied by Yarmarka. Nevertheless, this study does not include examination of deep causes explaining the respondent judgments on the products and packaging incorporated in the research process. Also, the research concerns a single type of SRP, that is, a corrugated on-shelf tray. Finally, the present research involves the SRP that is utilized to handle and present the food products particularly.

1.3 Torgovy Dom Yarmarka

Torgovy Dom Yarmarka is a manufacturer of grocery products, located in Petrozavodsk, Russia. It was established in 1995 and currently sells its products in 19 countries, belonging to such regions as the CIS, Europe and North America while intending to expand on a global scale further. Nevertheless, the majority of Yarmarka's activities are directed at the Russian

market, where the company works with more than 100 distributors in over 50 regions so that its offering is present in a wide variety of the well-known Russian retail chains. Presently, Yarmarka manages five brands, involving Bravolli and Yarmarka, represented by exotic and conventional cooking ingredients, such as cereals, pulses, flakes and flour, respectively; as well as Yelli, Gotovo! and Yarmarka Otbornaya, represented by a series of main and side dishes being easy to cook. Thus, the company targets people belonging to the middle and upper class, who consider cooking as a pleasant activity, recognize benefits of the simplified cooking or prefer conventional grains. Moreover, the products of Yarmarka are claimed to be natural and green and correspond to the inclination of modern consumers to choose “mindful”, “convenient”, “exotic” and ecological food, which can be prepared independently.

Apart from that, Yarmarka is stated to pay significant attention to the product quality and innovation. Its main values involve “Development, Partnership, and Authenticity”. Likewise, the company’s adherence to quality is reflected in the fact that it owns laboratory, utilizes superior machinery, qualifies suppliers, exchanges information with the customers and attempts to exceed the common standards. In this connection, Yarmarka appeared to be one of the first Russian grocery producers to introduce SRP, which was induced by the examples of the Western retail chains and manufacturers applying such a packaging and which has had a positive impact on the company’s sales (Torgovy Dom Yarmarka s.a.). Besides, Yarmarka has been continuously improving its SRP in order for this packaging to adhere to the relevant logistics and marketing requirements, which has implied close cooperation with the packaging suppliers. Currently, a considerable part of the company’s offering is presented in SRP at the points of sale. Hence, the present research is based on the perforated trays utilized by Yarmarka.

2 METHODS AND MATERIALS

2.1 Brand Management

Since the concept of brand knowledge is of the essence to the thesis, it is relevant to consider the notions it emerges from and issues it leads to. Thus,

along with the brand knowledge structure, the concepts of brand, brand equity and brand management are introduced in order to facilitate comprehension of the correlation among and overall significance of the notions the thesis is based on. Furthermore, the strategy of achieving brand resonance is referred to demonstrate the relevance of brand knowledge and packaging as a brand element in the evolvement of customer relationships with brands. Moreover, since the positioning of a particular brand is applied as one of the bases of the questionnaire design, the brand positioning concept is addressed in the literature review as well.

2.1.1 Introduction to Brand and Brand Management

Nowadays, an increasing number of organizations invest in the advancement of brand power. Brand is stated to act as a distinctive source of value, added to a product or service (Keller 2013, 30). It is defined in terms of visual and wordy elements used in order to indicate that the offering is related to a particular organization or bunch of organizations and distinguish this offering from the market alternatives (Keller 2013, 30). The growth in the brand power potentially facilitates a positive customer vision of the product characteristics, enhances customer loyalty, diminishes the company's exposure to some market risks, enables premium pricing, contributes to the profitability, improves relationships with the trade partners and reinforces the process of exchanging information in the market (Keller 2013, 69).

Brands likewise allow customers specifically to derive some significant benefits. In particular, the brand indication enables customers to relate the offering to a certain entity being accountable for the product or service and assists customers in making a purchasing choice by ensuring feasibility of the anticipated offering qualities and by reducing the amount of physical and mental activity required in the purchasing process. Furthermore, consumers may consider a brand as an approach to express their personalities through the characteristic features attributed to the brand and, as a result of the brand application, to them. Moreover, while customers are demonstrating adherence to the brand, it is being assumed to propose the sufficient value to the customers, which results in a specific connection between the customers and brand. (Keller 2013, 34.)

In order to reinforce the benefits gained from the brand presence, brands should be operated strategically, which implies the number of sequential processes. Initially, the determination of brand objectives with regard to the competition, material benefit generation and expansion of bonds with the customers is required. Subsequently, the elaboration and introduction of marketing schemes takes place, which encompasses the combination of relevant verbal and non-verbal attributes representing the brand; coordination of the marketing practices directed at the offering, distribution, price settlement and promotion with the brand building strategies; and connection of the brand to meaningful objects allowing for the desirable impressions to be assigned to the brand. The following evaluation and analysis of the brand functioning enables to determine the state of the brand with regard to external and internal environments of the organization managing the brand. Finally, when handling the brands in various markets according to the durable plans, it is imperative to expand and maintain a diversified impact that the consumers' understanding of the brand has on their reactions to the branded offering and promotional, selling and distributing practices of the brand-related organization. Incidentally, such an impact is characterized by the term "brand equity", which represents a key subject of the whole brand management process. (Keller 2013, 58–60, 69.)

2.1.2 Brand Knowledge and Its Components

The extent of brand equity strongly depends on the information about the brand the consumers receive and the way they interpret it. Specifically, the mental system of collecting and remembering information is claimed to be comprised of the complex of "nodes", acting as repositories of notions, and "links", indicating the intensity of relations between such repositories and serving as attachments between them. Hence, the brand knowledge is considered to encompass a "brand node" and diversity of other nodes being connected to it, and besides, the intensity of the former represents "brand awareness", while the latter appear to constitute "brand image", contributing to the sense consumers assign to the brand. (Keller 2013, 71–72.)

Keller (2013, 74) views brand awareness to serve as an essential foundation of the brand equity formation. The brand awareness is considered to be

constituted of the consumers' capability of identifying the brand by virtue of their previous experience ("brand recognition") and consumers' capacity for remembering the brand as a subject related to a certain product class or another appropriate prompt ("brand recall") (Keller 2013, 73). The strategies intended to manage brand awareness involve providing information in a distinctive and catchy manner, applying characteristic phrases or tunes, implementing visual representations of the brand (that is, symbols), engaging in PR activities, stretching the brand, providing consumers with prompts (for example, packaging), and ensuring regularity of the brand being encountered by the consumers (Aaker 1991).

The sound brand awareness creates value in several ways. The brand recognition is asserted to have a specifically strong influence on consumers in conditions of the in-store purchasing, while representing an initial stage of the consumer insight into the brand meaning (Aaker 1991; Keller 2013, 74). In turn, the brand recall contributes to probability of an individual addressing the brand as one of several brands linked to a certain product or service category, which enables the fulfillment of a particular demand (Aaker 1991).

Furthermore, in case the lack of interest in or understanding of the offering diminishes consumers' engagement in the purchasing process, the brand awareness tends to act as a foundation for consumer buying decisions (Keller 2013, 74).

The brand image, which, along with the brand awareness, was noted as representing an antecedent of the brand knowledge, is expected to be composed of "strong, favorable and unique brand associations", connected either to the offering characteristics or to the distinctive sense and significance that an individual assigns to such characteristics. The three aspects of brand associations indicated represent the main instrument for assessing the intensity of brand image. The "strength" of brand-related impressions is based on importance of the subject to an individual and coherence of the prompt provision process. In turn, the "favorability" is based on attractiveness of the offering characteristics to the customer, who applies the offering in order to fulfill individual demands. Finally, the "uniqueness" is based on ability of the brand to fulfill relevant customer demands in a manner that distinguishes it from the competitors, while being subject to some common features related to

a particular product or service group, often being necessary for the adequate brand comprehension by the customers. (Keller 2013, 77–78, 116.)

Nevertheless, the consumer associative activity appears to be a distinctive process being subject to a variety of effects, the control over which can hardly be achieved. In particular, apart from the brand marketing schemes, the generation of brand associations may be influenced by such factors as personal encounters with the brand, the Internet, reviews, informal conversations, consumer interpretations of the brand and related attributes, and the like (Keller 2013, 77). However, the effective operation and sufficient appreciation of consumer associations concerning brands by the companies potentially assist consumers in systematization and application of the brand-related knowledge, influence their buying behavior, foster their adherence to the brand, presumably enable them to avoid purchasing risks, prompt favorable emotional reactions to the brand performance and support brand stretching (Aaker 1991).

2.1.3 Brand Positioning

The brand positioning, which is tightly linked to the brand image, is determined as an effort made by the organization to achieve such a perception of the offering by the target customers that corresponds to needs and objectives of the organization and allows it to take advantage of its status. Initially, the positioning effort involves organizations in breaking the market down into customer clusters in terms of either customer characteristics (for example, demographics) or customer intentions and utilization patterns regarding the brand (for example, purchasing volume), which leads to the corresponding variations in the marketing approach, consequently increasing the probability of achieving a favorable customer response. Further, it is imperative for the companies to define the key competitors, which, in some cases, include the ones that exceed a particular product or service group, and besides, the brand expansion plans of the competitors and their ability to serve similar purposes should be taken into consideration. (Keller 2013, 79, 82.)

The identification of target customers and competition boundaries in turn assists in recognition of the scope of appropriate prompts and acquisition and

utilization conditions linked to the branded offering, which enables to detect brand likenesses and distinctions with regard to the competition identified, that is, “points-of-parity” and “points-of-difference”. The points-of-difference, which result from firm, pleasing and uncommon brand associations, can be based on practical features of the offering, practical advantages the offering suggests or symbolic impressions the offering prompts. They are usually viewed by customers as a reason for selecting a particular brand. On the other hand, the points-of-parity can be induced by the product or service class traits that are potentially anticipated by the customers, features enabling the company to remain a stable and noticeable actor among the competitors, and perceived unfavorable effects that a favored product or service feature might have on the opposite dimension of the brand performance. The points-of-parity assignment to the brand typically results from the substantial part of customers being satisfied with the brand performance regarding some essential offering features or advantages, which, subsequently, allows the points-of-difference to be recognized and appreciated by the customers. (Keller 2013, 79, 82–84.)

In order to achieve a positioning being the most favorable to the brand, the number of actions should be undertaken. In particular, after identifying a product or service group the offering belongs to, it is relevant to make the customers aware of such a “membership”, which will allow them to specify what kind of demands the offering is able to fulfill. This can be conducted through application of the corresponding marketing schemes, which emphasize the common advantages that might be taken by applying a product or service category the offering belongs to, or involve some alternative strategies. The brand capacity for providing superior features and advantages, representing the points-of-difference, should likewise be conveyed persuasively, which implies that the distinguishing aspects of the offering performance need to be justified and signaled sufficiently with respect to the consumer viewpoint. Finally, the changing market conditions are likely to induce the gradual transformation of brand positioning, and besides, the more extensive brand associations are, the less material and practical sense is expected to be attached to the brand. (Keller 2013, 85–87, 91–92.)

2.1.4 Brand Resonance and Value Generation

The brand positioning may have an impact on the affective and cognitive mental processes of consumers, their behavior and strength of relations with the brand, from which the number of phases of brand formation can be derived. The “brand salience”, serving as an initial phase of the brand progression, is based on brand awareness, which is stated to provide the offering with distinctiveness, or “identity”, by means of relating visual and wordy attributes of the brand to a particular product class and relevant acquisition and utilization contexts. In this connection, the “depth of brand awareness” is characterized by the probability of an individual retrieving a brand memory and by the amount of effort he or she needs in order to accomplish this, while the “breadth of brand awareness” is affected by the scope of various conditions potentially prompting the brand recall and by the individual inclination to assign particular order to the product information comprehended. (Keller 2013, 107–108.)

After the attainment of sound brand awareness, the brand is to be involved with a variety of appropriate associations, connected to either “brand performance” or “brand imagery” and enabling to attribute the favorable sense to the brand. The impressions related to the brand performance primarily hinge on the fundamental product components, serving as the basis of product functioning, and additional product components, allowing some flexibility of the offering. Furthermore, the service quality and practical stability of the product play a significant part in prompting the impressions of functionality suggested by the brand. The product design, which provides individuals with external stimuli (for example, details of the product appearance and product tactile qualities), and product price, which affects consumers’ mental process of interrelating various brands with respect to the distinctions in their pricing, foster assumptions on product functioning and functional effectiveness of the brand as well. (Keller 2013, 111, 113.)

In turn, the brand imagery is constituted of the associations indicating brand influence on the consumer self-esteem and social life and being somewhat distinct from the brand realities. Specifically, such associations may concern an exemplary kind of individual or another entity applying the brand, whom a consumer may identify with some basic characteristics (for example, gender

and age) or more complex aspects (for example, lifestyle and interests). Moreover, the brand imagery may be based on the assumptions about relevant contexts of purchasing and utilizing the branded offering, which may include a mean of distribution, a particular sales point, an event the brand application is viewed to accompany, and so on. Furthermore, the generation of symbolic brand associations may be induced by “brand personality”, which is determined as the scope of human-like characteristics assigned to the brand and can be assessed in terms of the number of established basic traits including “sincerity”, “excitement”, “competence”, “sophistication” and “ruggedness”. The brand imagery is likewise impacted by the aggregate of former times of the brand, meaningful outcomes of the brand culture evolution and consumers’ personal encounters with the brand. (Keller 2013, 113–116.)

Once the brand is reinforced with the profound associations, “brand responses” are generated while being prompted by either consumer logic (“brand judgments”) or affections (“brand feelings”). The customer view on and assessment of the brand primarily regard the quality offered by the brand and the corresponding extent of perceived fulfillment of the customer expectations and demands with respect to particular brand features and advantages. Furthermore, in order for the brand to be perceived as “credible”, the entity managing the brand has to demonstrate proficiency in its field of operation, attention to the customer concerns and ability to maintain the customer sympathy. The brand judgments also hinge on brand significance to an individual, the degree of which affects probability of the brand being minded in a purchasing situation and which is fostered by firm and positive brand associations. Besides that, the consumer thoughts of the brand may be influenced by associations being characteristic of the brand exclusively and expected to contribute to perceived excellence of the brand in the market. In turn, the “brand feelings”, which were noted as representing the affective activity prompted by brands, may be formed by such emotional states of an individual as heartiness, entertainment, eagerness, sense of stability, confidence resulting from the perceived appreciation by the surrounding people, sense of contentment, and the like. (Keller 2013, 117–120.)

Finally, the “brand resonance”, which indicates the extent of customer attachment to the brand, occurs. It is partly determined by the customer

actions with regard to the brand, typically characterized by the regularity of a customer buying the branded offering and monetary value associated with such an activity. Besides that, it is important that the customer purchasing decisions favoring the brand are noticeably based on the degree of customer affection for the brand. Furthermore, the significance of the brand to the customers may be enhanced by their recognition of a specific connection with the scope of individuals and entities related to the brand, that is, “brand community”, and besides, such an aspect may be applicable to both external and internal environments of the organization handling the brand, while potentially leading to positive opinions on and behavior towards the brand. Moreover, the customer readiness to contribute to the brand progress may eventually surpass conventional buying and utilization of the branded offering, which is expected to result in the intense involvement of customers with the brand, expressed in such activities as transmission of the brand information and conveyance of the brand significance. Such a way of acting is considerably facilitated by the Internet these days and represents the highest level of brand resonance, or customer adherence to the brand. (Keller 2013, 120–121.)

All in all, the brand development stages mentioned determine to a great extent the brand equity level. In particular, they serve as a direction for the brand marketing endeavors and enable evaluation of the brand development process (Keller 2013, 122). Besides that, as indicated by Keller (2013, 125), these stages imply that customers play a principal part in the advancement of brand building and value generation, which signifies usefulness of the customer research, and that organizations should comply with each phase of the described process of attaining deep relationships with the customers. Furthermore, it is considered relevant for brands to be able to fulfill both functional and affective customer requirements (Keller 2013, 125). However, it is stated that, in reality, the effect that customer intentions, caused by the individual perspective on the brand, have on the customer behavior is intermediated by such considerations as capabilities of the market alternatives, performance of distribution mediums and characteristics of the customer base particularly (Keller 2013, 130).

Subsequently, the company’s progress in reaching the brand resonance, which is fostered by brand positioning, expected to provide the basis for

designing original, significant, coordinated, commercially successful and thoroughly planned marketing schemes, influences brand functioning in the market. Specifically, the customer approach to the brand, representing a particular step on the way to the brand resonance, may have an immediate impact on revenues (for example, through the reduced customer responsiveness to increases in price and expanded percentage of market sales attributed to the brand) and provide supplementary revenue growth opportunities (for example, through the positive customer attitude to the novel offering of the brand). Moreover, the marketing costs may be decreased due to customer understanding of the brand, as well as profit generation may eventually be facilitated. Consequently, the brand's achievements in the market along with the brand and market characteristics allow for the market value of the brand to be determined. (Keller 2013, 128–131.)

2.1.5 Brand Elements and Packaging

Brands are distinguished and recognized due to “brand elements”, including brand designations, logotypes, representative persons, animals or other subjects, brand ambassadors, URLs, signs, packaging, characteristic phrases and tunes, and so on. These brand components promote brand identity, which embodies the elements' mutual influence on the brand knowledge and serves as an essential foundation, subsequently leading to emergence of the brand associations, shaping of the customer behavior regarding the brand, strengthening of the connection between the brand and its customers and therefore the brand equity enhancement, as it was described in the previous subchapter. In order to accomplish the objectives linked to the brand identity advancement, it is stated that each of the brand components should be capable of describing the product in a desired manner, despite the existence of other product features and brand marketing schemes, facilitating the brand message transmission. Apart from that, it is important that all the brand components are compatible with each other, which contributes to the proper understanding and uniform consumer view of the brand. (Keller 2013, 142, 167.)

The assessment of brand component applicability is based on the number of accepted characteristics the components should comply with. Firstly, brand

components are selected in terms of their potential “memorability”, which ensures that the elements are capable of contributing to the consumer ability to identify the brand and keep it in mind. Furthermore, “meaningfulness” should be attributable to the brand elements, which determines the components’ capacity for sufficient definition of the offering and its features and for convincing the consumers by addressing distinctive features of the offering. In turn, the degree of components’ “likability” is connected to their capability of attracting the consumers and encouraging their interest. Moreover, brand elements are to be attributable to the principle of “transferability”, which implies that the components can be utilized in case of brand stretching and entry into the new markets. Besides that, the extent of brand elements’ “adaptability”, ensuring that necessary element modifications can be conducted in course of time, plays a significant part in deciding on the component appropriateness to the brand. Finally, the sufficient attention should be paid to components’ “protectability”, intended to facilitate soundness of the brand differentiation strategy by legally ensuring the exclusive ability of the brand to capitalize on its distinctive features. (Keller 2013, 142–144, 147.)

As it was indicated, packaging represents one of the brand elements. Keller (2013, 167) notes that packaging can contribute to the brand equity either by differentiating the offering, which is caused by visual and practical features of a package, or by facilitating brand recognition and recall, and associative activity of consumers. Specifically, packaging is claimed to have a significant impact on consumer decision-making in the store while being used as a supporting tool in a variety of marketing activities concerning pricing, means of distribution, brand stretching and modification of a product and its appearance (Keller 2013, 166–167). Furthermore, packaging is asserted to assist the new market penetration (Keller 2013, 165) and, as well as brand indication, may be perceived as a mean of purchasing risk mitigation by consumers.

Besides, the components of packaging themselves can result in the meaningful brand associations while assisting the consumer insight into the brand message. In particular, color is considered to be one of the most influential constituents of a package (Keller 2013, 166). Apart from that, the construction of a package, to a great extent determining practicality of the packaging, may be subject to introduction of a diversity of new packaging methods, which enable to reduce expenditures, reinforce the brand

differentiation and enhance customer willingness to buy, subsequently facilitating the profit generation (Keller 2013, 164–166).

2.2 Packaging

Further, the common aspects related to packaging are considered in order to investigate a role of packaging in the marketing activities and determine the background of Shelf Ready Packaging and its possible effects on the consumer perception of products and brands. Specifically, the literature review concerns packaging functions, main elements of packaging, effects of packaging on consumers and position of packaging in the market functioning.

2.2.1 Introduction to Packaging

These days, an increasing number of marketers and analysts admit the weightiness of packaging in marketing communications, which is induced by such processes as intensification of competition, resulting desire of companies to optimally distinguish their products in stores, expansion of self-service in the retail sector, and increased complexity of advertising due to escalation in subdivisions of the media (Ampuero & Vila 2006, 100–101; Dobson & Yadav 2012, 4, 21). Thus, packaging can be determined as a process of outlining and actualizing an object applied to cover or hold a product (Keller 2013, 164). Alternatively, packaging is described as a device constructed of any substances in order to be utilized to hold, secure, operate, carry and maintain products in the process of their transfer from the manufacturer to the final customer (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 3). Packaging is divided into categories including primary packages, tightly linked to the substance of a product and designed for the domestic utilization by a buyer; secondary packages, usually containing several products covered in primary packages; and tertiary packages, representing an external packaging level and aimed at facilitation of the product manipulation during transportation and keeping the goods in stock (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 3).

Generally, the practical needs packaging fulfills are attributable to the categories including logistics and marketing (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 7). The

principal purpose of packaging with regard to logistics consists in maintaining the proper condition of products during conveyance and stocking (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 7). In turn, with regard to the marketing requirements, packaging is viewed to be capable of affecting the consumer perception and understanding of the product features by means of transmitting explicit and implicit information about the product (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 9). While offering some informative details about the goods, such signals enable the product to be noticed by the consumers, which may subsequently influence the consumer buying behavior (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 4). Besides that, packaging serves as a brand element, which implies a variety of effects mentioned in the previous section and, along with a price and brand indication, represents a prompt considered to be external to the product (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 23). Furthermore, packaging promotes simplicity of manipulation, facilitates innovation and in some cases enables to reduce costs (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 10). Based on such significance of packaging in marketing, Dobson and Yadav (2012, 2) consider it to have a stimulating impact on the market competition.

The constituents of packaging are represented by visual and verbal features (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 12). The former involve print, coloring, package dimensions, shape and matter, and besides, such components prompt primarily emotional consumer reactions, linked to aesthetic appeal, affinity and favor, and are essential to product recognition and recall, which may at first determine the consumer view of the product as well as motivate consumers to examine the product more closely (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 12; Orth & Malkewitz 2006, 6; Silayoi & Speece 2007, 1502). In turn, the wordy features of packaging, which comprise information about the offering and indications of manufacturer, brand and place of production, induce rational consumer responses, connected to opinions, decisions, classification, and the like; however, it is stated that the exceeding amount of information tends to cause consumers to reduce the number of brands and aspects of the offering examined in the purchasing process (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 12, 15; Orth & Malkewitz 2006, 6).

Besides, Dobson and Yadav (2012, 17) state that the combination of packaging components is to correspond to the tendencies of consumer buying. For example, the nature of human perception suggests that, in order

to assist consumers in remembering the packaging components, the design of a package should be arranged so that the components appealing to the sight are placed within the left part of the packaging surface, while the wordy constituents are attached to the right part (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 14). Moreover, consumers are considered to expect particular types of products to be represented with certain colors, which, incidentally, may be influenced by the cultural factors (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 13). Finally, when designing a package, it is relevant to take into account that colors may likewise convey a diversity of broad impressions of the product and brand (for example, sophistication or affordability) and that pictorial elements require considerably less effort to be comprehended than verbal elements (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 13; Silayoi & Speece 2007, 1497).

2.2.2 Effects of Packaging on Consumer Behavior

Packaging has a particular impact on consumers' assumptions on products and their choice of products in the store, which has been substantiated by a number of scholarly researches (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 17-18). Specifically, the verbal aspects of packaging and packaging style and structure were determined to represent the third and the fourth most significant aspects affecting the in-store buying behavior of consumers respectively (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 19). Simultaneously, these packaging features appear to be surpassed by brand associations and pricing in terms of the impact on consumers, while being followed by promotional activities at the point of sale, new ideas incorporated into the product design and TV commercials (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 19). Such an extent of the packaging influence may be attributed to the fact that the vast majority of target customers encounter packaging directly when making a final choice of products to purchase, which implies that the customers interact with the packaging in a relatively close manner (Ampuero & Vila 2006, 102). In addition, packaging allows brands to convey the product quality and worth at the point of sale (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 23).

Besides, the degree of an effect that packaging has on consumer behavior hinges on the number of factors, the first of which is represented by "involvement level" of consumers (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 24). The

“involvement level” can be determined by examining the grade of individual significance the consumer assigns to a purchasing choice, which basically depends on the consumer’s aims, principles and perception of the self (Silayoi & Speece 2007, 1500). In the absence of criticality involved in the purchasing process, the degree of consumer engagement is expected to be low, which potentially results in the goods being perceived primarily in terms of visual components of their packaging, as well as product advertising, instead of informative details about the offering and the brand, including the ones offered with a package (Silayoi & Speece 2007, 1498, 1500). Such an approach to buying is tightly linked to the types of products obtained on a regular basis (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 17), which, among other things, involve food products, determining the context of the present research.

The second factor affecting the extent of packaging effectiveness in prompting the consumer choice is represented by the assumed shortage of time (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 24). In particular, the “time pressure” motivates consumers to act in a manner being similar to the one induced by the insignificant degree of individual commitment to the purchasing process (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 18), indicated above. As a result, the consumer’s visit to the store is likely to cause a number of products bought spontaneously, which is described as “impulse buying” (Silayoi & Speece 2007, 1498). In fact, about 70% of buying choices occur in the store, which requires the packaging to combine attractive visual components and clear and valid information to facilitate the shopping experience of consumers and elicit desirable consumer reactions to the offering (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 16). Moreover, the ease of package handling, tightly linked to the technological aspects of packaging, may be considered as increasingly significant in case consumers experience a lack of time (Silayoi & Speece 2007, 1500).

Finally, the effect of packaging on consumer behavior is intermediated by personal traits (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 24). According to Bloch, Brunel and Arnold (2003, 552), people are dissimilar in terms of the degree of impact the appreciation of visible beauty has on their approach to products, which can be assessed with the “centrality of visual product aesthetics”, comprised of such aspects as individually perceived contribution of visually appealing products to the personal and common sense of contentment; individual capability of judging, understanding and perceiving visual components of a product; the

intensity of personal reaction to artistic elements; and the degree of individual reliance on the visual appeal in prioritizing products and reaching the sufficient grade of product choice approval. Besides, it is claimed that the extent of consumer reaction to the visual beauty may partly explain the occurrence of unplanned purchases (Bloch et al. 2003, 553). Furthermore, the research conducted by Silayoi and Speece (2007, 1508) demonstrates that there is an overbalance in consumer recognition of such packaging attributes as usability, appearance and informational content, meaning that an individual is inclined to pay predominant attention to one of the attributes indicated when purchasing. Apart from that, the culture is viewed to impact consumer perceptions with regard to some distinct aspects (for example, impressions of colors), while a variety of subjects being common to diverse cultures are expected to exist (Silayoi & Speece 2007, 1496).

2.2.3 Packaging in the Market

Packaging is interrelated with a broad variety of business groups, the needs of which are fulfilled by packaging suppliers and producers of packaging matters. Thus, packaging can affect competition and other marketplace processes, specifically with regard to the consumer goods purchased frequently, the sales of which principally depend on prices, offering attractiveness to customers and the extent of product presence in a diversity of points of purchase. The application of appropriate packaging elements can assist companies in appealing to certain customer clusters. Furthermore, packaging may assist young companies, exposed to the limited amounts of finances and recognition, in facing the competition, caused by the rise in the number of manufacturer and private brands, by means of contributing to the product distinctiveness at the point of sale. At the same time, the introduction of proper packaging may enable the reduction of expenditures on transmission of promotional messages and brand meaning, which is considered to likewise have a positive impact on customers. (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 4, 27, 30-31, 39, 49.)

On the other hand, there is a number of factors affecting the evolvement of packaging itself, including the consumer demands, technical novelties, improvement on substances for packaging production, logistics conditions,

ecological concerns and marketing considerations. With regard to the consumer concerns, it is assumed that, in order to maintain consumer enthusiasm for the offering and resist the intense competition while reinforcing the consumer trust, the introduction of new packaging techniques should be adequately harmonized with the packaging attributes being perceived as typically characteristic of the offering, which may be assisted by engagement of representatives of the demand side of the supply chain in the process of designing the package. In turn, the impact of technological progress on packaging is linked to the advancement in processing of substances utilized to manufacture packaging (for example, novel coating and printing techniques) as well as to the enhanced capabilities of machinery for packaging production and manipulation. In addition, nowadays, the process of globalization causes the exchange of tastes and knowledge among countries, which, incidentally, concerns the modification of packaging. (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 28-29, 32, 34.)

Furthermore, the weightiness of packaging in the marketing activities implies the necessity of adjusting it in accordance with the modern trends and competences of the packaging industry (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 32). As reported by Dobson and Yadav (2012, 35), the impetus for innovating packages originates from consumer requirements, on the one hand, and suppliers' capabilities, consisting in technical advancement in packaging and matter production, on the other hand. The balance between the two aspects indicated is based on marketing, logistics and moral motives for package modification and practical purposes assigned to the packaging (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 35). In case of marketing considerations, the potential for innovation in general is determined with respect to such aspects as usability proposed, representative meaning conveyed, affective benefits offered and the overall difference between resources spent on and advantages taken of the offering, as judged by the customers (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 36). In turn, the logistical aspects of package modernization are comprised of the ability of packaging to secure the goods, instruct the individuals concerned and be operated easily (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 36). The third type of reasons for updating packages is to be considered specifically.

These days, a growing number of organizations are attempting to adhere to the principles of sustainability, directed at such constituents of human

prosperity as expansion of the economy, preservation of the natural world and enhancement of the quality of life (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 46). Moreover, the sustainable practices are anticipated to eventually form a significant determinant in economic activities by affecting consumer demands, legal policies and firms' opportunities to reduce expenditures (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 46). Therefore, the motivations caused by a principled approach to updating packaging are tightly linked to the sustainability concerns while referring to such issues as validity of the offered information, contribution to the public prosperity, mitigation of the possibility of harming individuals with the packaging and its effects, establishment of beneficial relationships with the society and engagement in practices of "recycling, reducing and reusing" packaging (Dobson & Yadav 2012, 37).

2.3 Shelf Ready Packaging

In order to understand the substance of Shelf Ready Packaging (SRP) from the positions of different supply chain members, such issues are considered as the emergence of SRP, benefits connected to its utilization, SRP functional requirements, responsibilities of producers and retailers regarding SRP application and, importantly, effects of SRP on consumers. These details are expected to facilitate insight into the essence of SRP practices of Torgovy Dom Yarmarka and provide the basis for expectations and guidance in case of the present research.

2.3.1 Introduction to Shelf Ready Packaging

In the modern market conditions, the sizable retailers are claimed to have an increasingly extensive influence on members of the supply chains they are involved in, which caused the emergence of the retail supply chain management concept (Dujak et al. 2014, 32). Such a powerful position allows retailers to launch the schemes they consider useful in meeting consumer requirements and decreasing expenses required to maintain the business (Dujak et al. 2014, 40). One of such proposals is represented by Retail Ready Packaging (RRP), specifically intended to expedite the process of refilling the shelves in the retail outlets while decreasing expenditures on the workforce

(Dujak et al. 2014, 32). Other decisive benefits of RRP employment regarding the enhancement of retail performance are connected with facilitated code monitoring and simplified distinguishing of goods, potentially improving the product presence on shelves, which likewise assists companies in overcoming the competition and generating profits (Dujak et al. 2014, 34; ECR Australasia 2011, 7).

RRP is comprised of such kinds of packaging as Shelf Ready Packaging, display constructions residing out of shelves and plastic crates utilized repeatedly (Dujak et al. 2014, 33). The RRP introduction is assumed to have taken place at the beginning of the 2000s (Dujak et al. 2014, 34). The intense employment of RRP by the German and English retailers led to its spread in Europe, and then, globally, and besides, the extent of RRP application tends to be dependent on the amount of expenditures required to maintain staff in various countries (Dujak et al. 2014, 33). Furthermore, as the comprehensive and consistent realization of the RRP strategy had required the sound support, the common guidelines for RRP application were provided by Efficient Consumer Response (ECR), being an organization that promotes cooperation within supply chains and intends to advance effectiveness of the consumer demand fulfillment (ECR Australasia 2011, 3, 6).

Shelf Ready Packaging (SRP) in particular is determined as a variation of secondary packaging that is adjusted to being set on a retail shelf as a single unit with the minimal number of actions required (ECR Australasia 2011, 6). SRP is typically represented by various types of corrugated trays. The implementation of such a packaging may affect the overall combination of “primary, secondary and tertiary packaging” while being expected to concern the full scope of supply chain stages, from the production processes being necessary for packaging creation to the encounters by the final customers (Dujak et al. 2014, 33; ECR Europe 2006, 10). Since SRP protects products in transportation as well as presents them to consumers at the point of sale, it is demanded to conform to both logistics and marketing requirements (Dujak et al. 2014, 33). Hence, the established practical prerequisites of beneficial SRP operation, the individual significance of which depends on the nature of the offering, SRP and distribution, include “easy identification”, “easy open”, “easy dispose” and “easy shelf”, influencing the employee performance; and “easy

shop”, specifically influencing the consumer experience (ECR Europe 2006, 15). These practical standards are elaborated on further.

2.3.2 SRP Functional Requirements

To begin with, the “easy identification” principle consists in facilitation of the goods manipulation in logistics operations, which is accomplished by means of graphic features of SRP, comprising product depictions, code, designation, constituents, version, expiration date, and so on, being detectable from a variety of physical positions. Simultaneously, it is relevant that the logistical and other product details intended solely for the employees are not encountered by the shoppers. As a result of the enhanced employee capability of distinguishing the goods in storage facilities and retail outlets, the number of operational mistakes is expected to decline. (ECR Europe 2006, 16.)

In turn, “easy open” is aimed at contributing to the promptness and simplicity of shelf refilling particularly, which may be realized by providing the store employees with the clear illustrated directions for adjusting SRP or detaching relevant SRP parts, and by minimizing the necessity for the staff to apply sharp devices when opening the packaging, which is assisted through the employment of perforated SRP. At the same time, the ability of SRP to resist compression in transporting and stocking and its capacity for maintaining visual appeal and product steadiness after the adaptation to the retail environment should not be neglected. Consequently, the consumer access to goods is anticipated not to be interfered by any unnecessary objects in the store, while the product on-shelf availability is expected to expand. (ECR Europe 2006, 17.)

Similarly to the “easy open” principle, “easy shelf” is intended to support the repeated process of adding the new stock to shelves, which, in this case, is achieved through the minimized number of movements required to place products on the shelves and adequate shelf space load. In particular, it is imperative that SRP retains its form when being located on the shelf and is manipulated smoothly, which depends on SRP size, heaviness, on-shelf location and specific SRP adjustments directed at facilitation of the employee

performance (for example, grips or cuts for holding). Moreover, the number of SRP units to be placed on the shelf should be determined according to the shelf dimensions and volume of product selling. (ECR Europe 2006, 18.)

As well as the effective shelf refilling, “easy dispose” is partly designed to eliminate clutter in the store space, subsequently facilitating the purchasing activity of consumers. In order to fulfill such a function, SRP should be represented with a construction requiring little effort to be stacked, comply with the relevant governmental regulations concerning the efficient operation of materials, be “returnable, reusable or recyclable” and composed of the least number of matters possible, enable uncomplicated division of matters for further processing, and involve illustrated directions for repeatedly utilizing SRP or folding its components up for recycling. Besides, the rise in the amount of matter applied to produce packaging should in general be avoided in order for the packaging policy to adhere to the principles of sustainability. (ECR Europe 2006, 19.)

Finally, “easy shop” fosters consumer buying decisions, made either in advance or in the store, by means of graphic and constructional components of SRP, which allow consumers to detect products at the point of sale and manipulate them in a convenient manner. Specifically, the SRP elements facilitating consumer choice may include product depictions, SRP form, product and brand indications, logotypes, colors, images, and the like, presented on the SRP front. However, it is relevant that SRP does not prevent consumers from noticing significant details about the offering and sustains its visual appeal while resisting the impact of consumer activity. Additionally, SRP should maintain appropriate visual condition of the store environment and, whether possible, reinforce it by contributing to the distinctiveness of products being present in the assortment of the point of sale. (ECR Europe 2006, 20–21.)

2.3.3 SRP Application Prerequisites

So as to derive the sufficient benefits from SRP employment and attain accord on individual significance of the practical principles indicated above, the entities concerned with SRP introduction should adhere to a specific course of

action. In particular, the durable cooperation within the supply chain is required, which is supposed to lead to the advanced ability of companies to fulfill demands and approach expectations of the customers, enhanced customer adherence to the brand and particular retail outlet, and expanded effectiveness in raising revenues, thus enabling to harmonize the distribution of SRP-related benefits among the producer, distributor and consumer (ECR Europe 2006, 10). Moreover, it is relevant that SRP utilization corresponds to the requirements of the environment and society as well as involves adequate recognition of the practical principles directed at SRP and other common supply chain guidelines by the supply chain members concerned (ECR Europe 2006, 11). In addition, the range of SRP variations regarding the style and dimensions should be diminished, likewise allowing for the simplified SRP operation (ECR Europe 2006, 12).

Furthermore, in order for the SRP application process to be thorough, the number of indicators enabling to examine its potential with respect to a particular product, product group or mean of distribution exists. The operational aspects of SRP employment are represented by such metrics as the proportion of quantity of goods sold provided in SRP ("SRP availability") and proportion of the whole applicable SRP ultimately placed on the store shelves ("SRP usage"). In turn, the commercial aspects of SRP application are linked to such indicators as the ratio of the value of favorable SRP effects to the value of initial and continuing SRP costs; "on-shelf availability", which depends on the frequency of cases when the product appears not to be present on the store shelves; consumer satisfaction, or the extent to which relevant consumer demands are fulfilled; and the number of products sold in a time period. (ECR Europe 2006, 12–13, 24, 34–35.)

At the same time, since the challenge of inequality between supply chain members in the extent of value received from SRP may yet occur, with a product producer being subject to the majority of SRP introduction expenses (Dujak et al. 2014, 35), the producer ability to take sufficient advantage of the SRP application is to be ensured. In this connection, the research conducted by Dujak et al. (2014, 39) acknowledges that, in the producers' opinion, the most significant assistance caused by SRP employment is connected with the increased possibility of a consumer detecting the product or its presence in the store, facilitated product representation at the point of sale and reinforced

bond with the retailers. Specifically, the size of a frontal side of SRP is considered to provide producers with the additional capacity for in-store marketing communication, subsequently influencing the extent of brand awareness and allowing for a rapid rise in the revenue (Dujak et al. 2014, 35). Moreover, the components of SRP style and structure were determined to have a positive impact on the brand meaning communication and primary packaging presentation, given that the SRP constituents are compatible with the branding of the product (Dujak et al. 2014, 35). Simultaneously, the consistent application of brand elements to SRP is capable of contributing to the employee performance (ECR Europe 2006, 12), as it was described with regard to the “easy identification” principle.

Finally, the accomplishment of SRP strategy strongly depends on activities of the store managers and employees (ECR Australasia 2011, 21), which may cause a considerable challenge in the process of SRP application, as it was demonstrated by ECR Australasia (s.a., 1). In particular, it is imperative that the knowledgeable management informs the staff members about the purpose and significance of SRP utilization and provides them with the adequate directions and practice concerning SRP so as to assist the employee effort (ECR Europe 2006, 38). Furthermore, the supply chain actors concerned should observe the SRP application process as well as stimulate the response on its practicalities (ECR Europe 2006, 8). Besides that, since ECR Australasia (s.a., 1) indicated the occurrence of inappropriate SRP designs and corresponding necessity for the SRP configuration requirements to be revised in accordance with the distinctions of product groups, there seems to be a case for further SRP innovation.

2.3.4 SRP and Consumers

The aggregate of concepts discussed in the sections related to brand and packaging suggests that SRP may serve particular marketing purposes. Specifically, since SRP is encountered by consumers, playing a decisive part in the outcome of branding activities, it may be considered as one of the brand elements, the components of which contribute to the brand recognition at the point of sale, brand recall and brand image, and, consequently, brand equity. Besides that, since the appropriate SRP design is expected to incorporate

attractive visual components and brief information, it may positively affect the consumer behavior in the situations of low involvement in the purchasing process and considerable shortage of time, while inducing unplanned purchases. Simultaneously, the aesthetics and creativity of SRP components may act as a mean of appealing to the cluster of consumers, attaching the extensive amount of personal significance to the visual beauty. Moreover, the creative SRP design can assist in signaling the innovativeness and technological excellence of the product and brand, while offering the facilitated shopping experience. Apart from that, the ability of SRP to serve as a marketing communication instrument and distinguish the offering in stores allows to assume that SRP may have a stimulating impact on the competition, which eventually provides consumers with the noticeable benefits and opportunities.

With regard to the relation between SRP and consumers particularly, the evidence was provided that SRP has an effect on consumer in-store purchasing experience by making the product recognition on the shelf simpler, improving the appearance of shelves and assisting in detection of the novel offering. Furthermore, in general, consumers tend to prioritize practicality of SRP over the visual attractiveness it generates; however, some consumers view SRP to cause the excessive amount of packaging being present on the retail shelves. At the same time, weightiness of the high quality style and construction of SRP and common inability of consumers to pay a premium price for taking advantage of such a packaging are noted, meaning that the extent of SRP applicability depends on the specific business and product characteristics. (ECR Europe 2006, 6, 44–45.)

The results of the study held by Korzeniowski substantially correspond to the previous considerations. In particular, these results demonstrate that, as perceived by consumers, the practical aspects of SRP, represented by facilitated manipulation of products and proper product presentation, prevail in significance over the visual aspects, linked to the appeal of outward SRP characteristics (Korzeniowski 2009, 3). Moreover, from the consumers' point of view, SRP noticeably exceeds primary packaging residing on the store shelves in terms of such functions as maintenance of the shelf neatness and proper condition of products, assistance in detecting a product and display of the offering at the point of sale (Korzeniowski 2009, 3). Besides, the

consumers consider product designations, expiration dates, product variants and producer indications relevant to be presented on SRP units (Korzeniowski 2009, 4). Finally, 80% of consumers surveyed show their preference for the expansion of SRP utilization in stores (Korzeniowski 2009, 5). Thus, it may be assumed that the SRP encounter is likely to affect the consumer perception of the product and brand, which entails that the interaction between consumers and SRP could be examined further.

2.4 Research Process

2.4.1 Research Philosophy, Approach and Design

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009, 107–108) state that the research philosophy determines the essence of an original piece of information being generated by the researcher, as it indicates the researcher's conception of the actuality and, consequently, affects his or her approach to the study. Despite the practical intricacy of the aspects of actuality, the present study may be attributed to the "philosophy of positivism", which is characterized by the inclination to attain knowledge based on determinable features of the investigated matter instead of individual perceptions of it (Saunders et al. 2009, 113–114). In particular, with regard to the procedure of the present research, systematic indicators of the SRP impact on the brand knowledge are prioritized over specific respondent impressions of the brand caused by the SRP. Besides, the research exposure to bias is mitigated through such an aspect of positivism as a minimized effect of the study originator on units of analysis in the process of research implementation (Saunders et al. 2009, 114).

Furthermore, since, in case of the present study, a particular assumption regarding the SRP effect on consumer perception of the brand is examined, the study may be assigned to a deductive mean of researching, which likewise tends to be representative of the positivism (Saunders et al. 2009, 124). Specifically, the investigation of connection between the SRP and brand knowledge hinges on the supposition about their positive correlation, derived from the extant information about SRP and branding and realized in the form of practical and computable aspects of the Yarmarka's brand positioning.

Additionally, the deduction is stated to be linked to a quantitative approach to researching (Saunders et al. 2009, 125), being relevant in case of the present study.

Besides that, Saunders et al. (2009, 138) consider an inclusive scheme for solving research problems to be comprised of a “research strategy”, “research choice” and “time horizon”, among other things. In this connection, it should be asserted that survey is applied as a “research strategy” in the present study, since it is viewed to be relatively moderate in terms of the required expenditures while enabling the significant degree of self-sufficiency in the research conduction (Saunders et al. 2009, 144). Moreover, if the survey is performed correctly, the received information is expected to be uniform and systematized, which is stated to assist in detecting distinctions within the details acquired (Saunders et al. 2009, 144). Such a survey feature is specifically important in case of the present study, which involves differentiated approach to the groups of individuals, serving as units of analysis.

Regarding another aspect of the research arrangement, that is, “research choice”, it is relevant to mention that a quantitative approach to research conduction, linked to utilization and production of arithmetical values or quantities (Saunders et al. 2009, 151), is solely employed in acquiring the information and determining its meaning in the present study. Besides, the quantitative methods are widely utilized in the brand knowledge assessment, as they are claimed to lead to more justifiable results in comparison with the qualitative methods, which are often employed in search for the new perspectives and revelations (Keller 2013, 339). Apart from that, the present research may be considered “cross-sectional”, meaning that its outcomes can be attributed to the restricted extent of time only (Saunders et al. 2009, 155), one of the reasons for which is a limited amount of time being available for allocation to this research.

2.4.2 Research Tactics and Implementation

The present research employed such an instrument for obtaining information as a questionnaire, which typically involves the surveyed individuals in

answering a particular selection of requested matters, being systematized and unchanged in the process of inquiring of the sample units (Saunders et al. 2009, 360). In particular, an online questionnaire, which serves as a mean potentially enabling to reach the extensive and geographically spread public in a relatively fast way (Saunders et al. 2009, 364), was utilized. However, the proper questionnaires are stated to be quite demanding to form, meaning that the sufficient attention is to be paid to preparation of the questionnaire structure and contents (Saunders et al. 2009, 361).

The questionnaires applied in the present research are provided in Appendices 1 and 2. They are comprised of such data elements as the respondent features, constituting the section of background questions (questions 1–5, 10), and respondent judgments, compounding the section of main questions, which are related to the examination of correlation between the SRP and Yarmarka brand knowledge and comprised of the categories of brand awareness (questions 6–7) and brand image (questions 8–9). Furthermore, the majority of questions are closed, since such an approach is claimed to facilitate determination of distinctions within the obtained information (Saunders et al. 2009, 375), which, as it was mentioned above, is relevant in case of this study, having included provision of individuals with dissimilar versions of the questionnaire, one involving depictions of the primary and shelf ready packaging, while another involving depictions of the primary packaging only, in order for the level of contrast between the packaging effects to be determined. Besides that, the main questions are based on measurement with 7-point likert and semantic differential scales, appearing to adequately conform to the assessment of individual viewpoints. The questionnaire design is likewise based on the positioning strategy of Yarmarka, linked to such notions as organic products, eco-friendliness, high quality, uniqueness, reliability, novelty, stylishness, exotica, convenience, healthiness, and so on.

Since the primary operations of Torgovy Dom Yarmarka take place in the Russian market, the research population encompasses the adult inhabitants of Russia. Such a decision is additionally supported by the consideration of demand on SRP in the Russian market as rapidly increasing, which means that the Russian people are likely to be acquainted with such a type of packaging (Smithers Pira 2012). As the population is comprised of the

exceeding number of individuals, the register of whom could not have been obtained in case of the present study, the “non-probability sampling”, which implies that personal decisions serve as a foundation for engagement of the potential respondents in the research (Saunders et al. 2009, 233), was applied. Specifically, despite the stated potential for the significant number of risks to the research credibility (Saunders et al. 2009, 241), “convenience sampling” was involved in the present study, because it may be considered as a sufficient approach to detecting the signs of SRP impact, likewise enabling quite fast research conduction. Besides that, the gender and age dimensions were chosen to act as a basis for balancing the individual characteristics within the respondent groups.

Thus, the English versions of the questionnaire were translated into the Russian language (Appendices 1 and 2). Subsequently, the two electronic questionnaires were created through Webropol and the corresponding public links were published on the social media websites as well as on a variety of the Internet forums, meaning that the respondents particularly were responsible for filling the questionnaires in a thoughtful manner. The questionnaire dissemination was accompanied by a short explanation of the purpose of communicating the link. Subsequently, the obtained data was analyzed with SPSS Statistics and transformed into crosstabs as well as t-test and frequency tables.

2.4.3 Research Credibility and Ethics

The degree to which the research outcome can be trusted is stated to depend on research “reliability” and “validity” (Saunders et al. 2009, 156). The reliability, which is connected to stability of the study results, hinges on potential for the researcher or investigated entity to be inaccurate or partial in the research process (Saunders et al. 2009, 156–157). With regard to the present research, the reliability of obtained information strongly depended on sampling, respondent understanding of the questions and the degree of respondent thoroughness when completing the questionnaires. Thus, the questionnaire implementation was anteceded by a number of individuals having been requested to examine the questionnaires and provide their opinions on the questions. Besides that, it is stated that, in case of the

questionnaires transmitted through the Internet, there is quite little possibility of receiving fictitious responses from the respondents (Saunders et al. 2009, 364), which is beneficial for the research conduction.

In turn, the validity depends on the extent to which the study results reflect the truth about the researched object (Saunders et al. 2009, 372). With respect to the present study, in order for the validity to be fostered, the significant attention was paid to creation of the survey questions, translation of them into the Russian language and accuracy of the data analysis. Furthermore, although the main questions constituting the questionnaires were created specifically for this study, the general idea of methods applied in the present research is similar to the one constituting the study of Hoolhorst et al. (2014, 115), in which some of the SRP assessment criteria are represented by SRP visibility on the shelf and SRP accordance with the brand image. Likewise, the brand associations serve as a basis for the packaging assessment by consumers in the research conducted by Orth and Malkewitz (2006, 7).

The research ethics, which is imperative to the study conduction as well, is determined in terms of the extent to which the researcher's manner of acting corresponds to the criteria of accountability and honesty, meaning that no confusion or damage must be posed to the individuals and entities engaged in the research process (Saunders et al. 2009, 160, 184). In case of the present study, the anonymity of respondents was ensured by applying the public links when transmitting the questionnaires. Likewise, the electronic form of the questionnaires implies that possible respondents were able to quit the inquiry at any of its stages. Furthermore, in order to facilitate the research clarity and respondent awareness of the research procedure, the introduction to the questionnaires provided surveyed individuals with the details about the study purpose and subsequent utilization of data, brief description of SRP, contact details and information about the questionnaire completion time, anonymity and sequence of questions. The respondents were also asked for feedback regarding the survey, which did not diminish the individual anonymity in case of the present research though. Besides that, the principles of "netiquette" were not neglected.

3 RESULT ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

Each of the two versions of the questionnaire was fully completed by 74 different individuals, having comprised 42 females (56.8%) and 32 males (43.2%) in both cases. Likewise, each respondent group consisted of five age categories, having been represented by the equalized numbers of individuals (Table 1). Thus, in case of the questionnaire 1 (including primary packaging) as well as questionnaire 2 (including primary and shelf ready packaging), the respondents aged 18 to 25 years constituted 23.0% of the surveyed individuals and involved 11 females and 6 males; the ones aged 26 to 35 formed 31.1% of the inquiry participants and comprised 15 females and 8 males; the ones aged 36 to 45 constituted 33.8% of the surveyed individuals and involved 13 females and 12 males; the ones aged 46 to 55 formed 10.8% of the inquiry participants and comprised 3 females and 5 males; and, finally, the individuals aged 56 to 65 years were represented by only 1 respondent.

Table 1. Age and Gender Distribution in Each Respondent Group

		Age					Total	
		18-25 years old	26-35 years old	36-45 years old	46-55 years old	56-65 years old		
Gender	Female	Count	11	15	13	3	0	42
		%	26.2%	35.7%	31.0%	7.1%	0.0%	100.0%
	Male	Count	6	8	12	5	1	32
		%	18.8%	25.0%	37.5%	15.6%	3.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	17	23	25	8	1	74
		%	23.0%	31.1%	33.8%	10.8%	1.4%	100.0%

With regard to the geographical distribution of the respondents, it is relevant to mention that the majority of individuals having been provided with the questionnaire 1 resided in such locations as Pushkino (Moscow Region) (13.5% of respondents), Petrozavodsk (9.5% of respondents), Moscow (9.5% of respondents) and Uryupinsk (Volgograd Region) (6.8% of respondents). At the same time, the most common places of residence with respect to the individuals having completed the questionnaire 2 were Moscow (14.9% of respondents), Petrozavodsk (14.9% of respondents), Khabarovsk (12.2% of respondents) and Valday (Novgorod Region) (8.1% of respondents).

In turn, the difference in location frequencies may be considered as one of the reasons for some disproportion in monthly incomes between the two

respondent groups, especially, with regard to the category of individuals earning from 19500 to 32499 rubles a month (Table 2). However, there was no considerable dissimilarity in the shares of completed levels of education between the respondent groups (Table 3). Likewise, no significant divergence between the respondent divisions could have been noticed with respect to the extent of respondent acquaintance with the Yarmarka brand, which was 35.1% in case of the individuals having completed the questionnaire 1 and 37.8% in case of the individuals having completed the questionnaire 2. Besides, the fact that the majority of respondents found the Yarmarka brand unfamiliar enables to assume that the risk of biased respondent judgments was somewhat mitigated, potentially having had a positive impact on the research credibility.

Table 2. Income Distribution in the Respondent Groups

		Average monthly income					Total
		Less than 7999 RUB	8000-19499 RUB	19500-32499 RUB	32500-64999 RUB	65000 RUB or more	
Group	Primary packaging	9 12.2%	17 23.0%	14 18.9%	22 29.7%	12 16.2%	74 100.0%
	Primary and shelf ready packaging	6 8.1%	13 17.6%	24 32.4%	20 27.0%	11 14.9%	74 100.0%
Total		15 10.1%	30 20.3%	38 25.7%	42 28.4%	23 15.5%	148 100.0%

Table 3. Distribution of Educational Levels Completed by the Respondents

		Education						Total	
		Primary education	Basic general education	Secondary general education	Secondary vocational education	Higher education	Other		
Group	Primary packaging	Count	0	0	11	11	49	3	74
		%	0,0%	0,0%	14,9%	14,9%	66,2%	4,1%	100,0%
	Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	1	1	11	7	52	1	73
		%	1,4%	1,4%	15,1%	9,6%	71,2%	1,4%	100,0%
Total		Count	1	1	22	18	101	4	147
		%	0,7%	0,7%	15,0%	12,2%	68,7%	2,7%	100,0%

3.2 Effect of SRP on Brand Awareness

In order to measure the impact of SRP on brand recognition, the two similar depictions of store shelves were created with Adobe Photoshop, the single difference between which consisted in representation of a particular type of products with the SRP in one of the pictures. Thus, the respondents were asked to demonstrate the extent of their agreement with the assertion that the type of products being subject to the difference attracts special attention

among other products on the shelves, which was assumed to serve as a prerequisite of the brand recognition at the point of sale. Table 4 shows that, in case of the first and second questionnaires, 66.2% (49) and 73.0% (54) of the respondents respectively indicated disagreement with the mentioned assertion. At the same time, only 17.6% (13) of the surveyed individuals acknowledged on-shelf visibility of the product presented with the primary packaging while only 10.8% (8) of the respondents admitted visibility of the primary packaging being supplemented by the SRP. Hence, the insignificance of SRP impact on product visibility on the shelf can be noted.

Table 4. Opinion of the Respondents on Product Visibility on the Shelf

		Opinion on product on-shelf visibility			Total
		Negative	Neutral	Positive	
Primary packaging	Count	49	12	13	74
	%	66,2%	16,2%	17,6%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	54	12	8	74
	%	73,0%	16,2%	10,8%	100,0%
Total	Count	103	24	21	148
	%	69,6%	16,2%	14,2%	100,0%

Besides that, the questionnaire 2 contained two additional questions, having been intended to assess the effect of SRP on brand recognition more concretely. In particular, the respondents were requested to demonstrate their view on the role of SRP in product and brand noticeability on the shelf. With regard to the SRP impact on the product visibility, 63.5% (47) of the respondents indicated the lack of SRP effect, while only 18.9% (14) of the inquiry participants demonstrated agreement with the positive presence of the SRP influence (Table 5). In the same manner, 70.3% (52) of the respondents acknowledged insignificance of the SRP effect on the brand noticeability, while only 17.6% (13) of the surveyed individuals admitted that some positive impact of the SRP occurs (Table 6).

Table 5. Perceived Effect of the SRP on Product Visibility

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	1=Insignificant	47	63,5
	2	13	17,6
	3=Significant	14	18,9
Total		74	100,0

Table 6. Perceived Effect of the SRP on Brand Noticeability

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	1=Insignificant	52	70,3
	2	9	12,2
	3=Significant	13	17,6
	Total	74	100,0

Furthermore, in order to examine the contribution of SRP to brand recall, the respondents were asked to indicate the degree of their agreement with the statements concerning the packaging suitability for representing groceries, cereals and cooking ingredients, which serve as fundamental aspects of the Yarmarka's offering. Generally, the packaging was viewed to be compatible with the product divisions and subdivisions mentioned, which is presented by Tables 7–9. Specifically, the primary packaging was found to be appropriate for representing groceries by 62.2% (46) of the respondents, adequate for representing cereals by 58.1% (43) of the respondents and suitable for representing cooking ingredients by 43.2% (32) of the respondents. In turn, the combination of primary and shelf ready packaging was considered as appropriate for demonstrating groceries by 68.9% (51) of the respondents, adequate for demonstrating cereals by 64.9% (48) of the respondents and suitable for demonstrating cooking ingredients by 54.1% (40) of the respondents. Thus, the insignificance of SRP effect on the individual perception of product packaging compatibility with the relevant product groups can be stated.

Table 7. Opinion of the Respondents on Packaging Compatibility with Groceries

		Opinion on packaging compatibility with groceries			Total
		Negative	Neutral	Positive	
Primary packaging	Count	17	11	46	74
	%	23,0%	14,9%	62,2%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	15	8	51	74
	%	20,3%	10,8%	68,9%	100,0%
Total	Count	32	19	97	148
	%	21,6%	12,8%	65,5%	100,0%

Table 8. Opinion of the Respondents on Packaging Compatibility with Cereals

		Opinion on packaging compatibility with cereals			Total
		Negative	Neutral	Positive	
Primary packaging	Count	24	7	43	74
	%	32,4%	9,5%	58,1%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	15	11	48	74
	%	20,3%	14,9%	64,9%	100,0%
Total	Count	39	18	91	148
	%	26,4%	12,2%	61,5%	100,0%

Table 9. Opinion of the Respondents on Packaging Compatibility with Cooking Ingredients

		Opinion on packaging compatibility with cooking ingredients			Total
		Negative	Neutral	Positive	
Primary packaging	Count	29	13	32	74
	%	39,2%	17,6%	43,2%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	27	7	40	74
	%	36,5%	9,5%	54,1%	100,0%
Total	Count	56	20	72	148
	%	37,8%	13,5%	48,6%	100,0%

3.3 Effect of SRP on Brand Image

So as to determine if the SRP is able to facilitate favorable consumer impressions of the product and, consequently, brand, the number of associations, which included distinctive features of the Yarmarka's offering as well as characteristics being common to the product category this offering represents, were selected and subsequently suggested to the respondents as a basis for the product assessment. The tables provided in Appendix 3 demonstrate that, in general, the respondents tended to attribute the depicted type of product with more positive characteristics. In particular, the proportion of respondents having made positive judgments regarding the product presented with the primary packaging varied from 41.9% (as for the perceived uniqueness) to 73.0% (as for the perceived price), while the corresponding share of respondents in case of the combination of primary and shelf ready packaging ranged from 44.6% (as for the perceived convenience) to 77.0% (as for the perceived modernity).

However, Table 10, being a result of the t-test of independent samples, represented with the two respondent groups having been subject to dissimilar versions of the questionnaire, shows that the SRP effect on the respondent impression of each given aspect of the product is statistically insignificant, since the levels of significance (Sig. (2-tailed)) tend to exceed the reference point of 0.05 (Saunders et al. 2009, 450). Nevertheless, the highest degree of diversion between the respondent groups took place in case of the perceived stylishness and modernity, with the means linked to the assessment of the product represented with the combination of primary and shelf ready packaging surpassing the means related to the assessment of the product presented in primary packaging by 0.216 and 0.162 respectively. At the same time, no diversion between the groups occurred with regard to the perceived reliability.

Table 10. T-Test of Respondent Perception of the Product in Terms of the Potential Brand Associations

		t-test for Equality of Means			Mean
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Difference
Perceived naturalness	Equal variances assumed	,765	146	,446	,095
	Equal variances not assumed	,765	145,304	,446	,095
Perceived quality	Equal variances assumed	-,601	146	,549	-,068
	Equal variances not assumed	-,601	143,716	,549	-,068
Perceived uniqueness	Equal variances assumed	,208	146	,835	,027
	Equal variances not assumed	,208	144,629	,835	,027
Perceived price	Equal variances assumed	-,365	146	,715	-,041
	Equal variances not assumed	-,365	145,253	,715	-,041
Perceived reliability	Equal variances assumed	,000	146	1,000	,000
	Equal variances not assumed	,000	145,656	1,000	,000
Perceived modernity	Equal variances assumed	-1,447	146	,150	-,162
	Equal variances not assumed	-1,447	137,450	,150	-,162
Perceived stylishness	Equal variances assumed	-1,763	146	,080	-,216
	Equal variances not assumed	-1,763	142,039	,080	-,216
Perceived exoticism	Equal variances assumed	-,295	146	,768	-,041
	Equal variances not assumed	-,295	145,663	,768	-,041
Perceived convenience	Equal variances assumed	-,406	146	,685	-,054
	Equal variances not assumed	-,406	145,499	,685	-,054
Perceived healthiness	Equal variances assumed	-,710	146	,479	-,081
	Equal variances not assumed	-,710	143,390	,479	-,081
Perceived eco-friendliness	Equal variances assumed	-,676	146	,500	-,081
	Equal variances not assumed	-,676	142,017	,500	-,081
Perceived tastiness	Equal variances assumed	-1,121	146	,264	-,135
	Equal variances not assumed	-1,121	144,924	,264	-,135

Moreover, the respondents were asked to indicate additional associations they link to the depicted product. The corresponding question was adequately answered by 31.1% (23) of individuals belonging to the group that was provided with the questionnaire 1 and by 27.0% (20) of individuals belonging to the group having been provided with the questionnaire 2. With respect to the depiction of the product represented solely with the primary packaging, the most common associations were connected with various grains (5 respondents), healthy eating (4 respondents), inconvenience of utilization (4 respondents), exclusivity (3 respondents) and lack of information (3 respondents). In turn, regarding the product presented in both primary and shelf ready packaging, the most frequently mentioned subjects were linked to various grains (7 respondents), limited spread of the product among points of sale (3 respondents) and visually appealing design (3 respondents). Thus, although the associations provided by the respondent do not enable sufficient comparison between the respondent groups, the majority of them signify the product accordance with the brand image desired by Yarmarka, which is decisively facilitated by the packaging.

3.4 Conclusions

Despite the expectation of a positive effect of the SRP on the brand knowledge constituents, generally, the acquired data demonstrates that, in case of Torgovy Dom Yarmarka, no significant SRP impact can be noticed. Specifically, with regard to the relation between SRP and brand recognition, the collected information shows that the SRP applied by Yarmarka does not improve on-shelf visibility of the product it represents and does not assist individuals in detecting the brand of the offering, which is inconsistent with the existing research on SRP and basic SRP principles, that is, “easy identification” and “easy shopping”. Such an outcome may be attributed to the character of the Yarmarka’s SRP, representing somewhat basic variation of such a packaging and comprised of the relatively small number of elements, as well as to the selected order of product placement on the imitated store shelves in the corresponding depictions and inability of images to display the actual three-dimensionality of objects, as it was commented by one of the respondents.

With respect to the relation between SRP and brand recall, no considerable SRP impact can be stated as well, although the combination of primary and shelf ready packaging tends to slightly exceed the unaccompanied primary packaging in terms of the perceived capacity for representing the relevant product groups. Likewise, there is no noticeable divergence between the Yarmarka's primary packaging and its combination with the SRP regarding the conveyed brand impression, as it was indicated by the respondent judgments, which means that the SRP contribution to the brand image is insignificant. However, despite the concerns about SRP causing unfavorable consumer perception of the product and brand due to consumer encounters with the increased amount of packaging material, in case of the present research, the respondents did not consider the SRP to diminish the product eco-friendliness. Besides that, the consistency of SRP design of Yarmarka with the primary packaging design in terms of product functions and brand image communicated can be probably noted, which is essential to brand building as well. Thus, the research results might be useful for Yarmarka.

With regard to the research limitations, it is relevant to note that, in case of the present study, there was no control over the types of devices applied by respondents to complete the questionnaires, meaning that the depictions of products might have been perceived diversely by the surveyed individuals, which, consequently, might have affected validity and reliability of the research results. Furthermore, this study is determined by the context of the Russian culture while being concentrated on a particular type of SRP that represents a particular product category, which implies somewhat narrow focus of the research and limited scope for applying it. Besides that, the research sample cannot be considered as fully representative of such population as the adult inhabitants of Russia, since the proportions of respondents with particular demographic characteristics do not comply with the corresponding shares, describing the indicated population.

Since no studies on SRP being adequately comparable to the present research were found while a trade-off between SRP functionality and appearance in terms of costs is likely to exist, it is difficult to make any profound suggestions regarding the future research as well as SRP practices of Yarmarka. Nevertheless, in order to investigate the brand-related or other aspects of its SRP (for example, convenience of SRP manipulation by

consumers in stores), Torgovy Dom Yarmarka could apply such a mean of acquiring information as an observation, which might likewise enable to examine the SRP impact on the brand recognition more sufficiently in comparison with the present research. Additionally, based on the current level of SRP effectiveness in brand meaning conveyance, indicated by this study, the company could determine the extent to which its SRP design complies with the needs and requirements related to the marketing communications and, if relevant, continue improving the SRP.

With respect to the future studies, some basic research directions can be likewise proposed. In particular, other types of SRP design, including visually sophisticated ones, could be tested for contribution to brand equity. Moreover, the influence of particular SRP elements on consumer impression of brands and product categories could be examined. Also, the potential for connection between SRP and impulse buying as well as between SRP and levels of consumer involvement could be assessed. Apart from that, it might be relevant to investigate the consumer perception of different SRP designs within various cultural contexts.

Finally, it should be noted that the attainment of desired consumer perception of the brand appears to be a relatively demanding procedure. Thus, although no significant facilitation of the brand meaning conveyance was indicated in case of the SRP utilized by Yarmarka, there is a visible potential for SRP to act as a marketing communication tool, as it was considered in some previous studies on SRP and adopted in the present research, despite the initial direction of such a packaging at fulfillment of the functional business needs. In this connection, it might be relevant to research the SRP role in marketing activities while incorporating a consumer viewpoint further.

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TABLES

Table 1. Age and Gender Distribution in Each Respondent Group.....	36
Table 2. Income Distribution in the Respondent Groups.....	37
Table 3. Distribution of Educational Levels Completed by the Respondents	37
Table 4. Opinion of the Respondents on Product Visibility on the Shelf	38
Table 5. Perceived Effect of the SRP on Product Visibility	38
Table 6. Perceived Effect of the SRP on Brand Noticeability.....	39
Table 7. Opinion of the Respondents on Packaging Compatibility with Groceries.....	39
Table 8. Opinion of the Respondents on Packaging Compatibility with Cereals.....	40
Table 9. Opinion of the Respondents on Packaging Compatibility with Cooking Ingredients	40
Table 10. T-Test of Respondent Perception of the Product in Terms of the Potential Brand Associations.....	41

QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Version in English

Questionnaire 1

The aim of this survey is to examine the effect of Shelf Ready Packaging on consumer knowledge about brands. Shelf Ready Packaging, which you might have seen on store shelves, is often represented by various types of corrugated trays, containing a number of products to be sold. The information gathered in this survey will be used in writing the bachelor's thesis at Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences. First, you will be asked some background questions, being necessary for the subsequent analysis of answers, and then, the main questions will be asked. The survey should only take a few minutes, and your responses are completely anonymous.

Your input is highly appreciated!

If you have any concerns, please contact me at uliana.kovaleva@student.kyamk.fi.

1. Your gender.

- Female
- Male

2. Your age.

- Under 18 years old
- 18-25 years old
- 26-35 years old
- 36-45 years old
- 46-55 years old
- 56-65 years old
- 66 years and older

3. Name your place of residence.

4. Your education (completed).

- Primary
- Basic general
- Secondary general
- Secondary vocational
- Higher
- Other

5. What is your average monthly income?

- 7999 RUB or less
- 8000-19499 RUB
- 19500-32499 RUB
- 32500-64999 RUB
- 65000 RUB or more

6. The picture below imitates the store shelves, on which eight types of products are situated. The number of a particular product type consists of a letter, representing a shelf, and a figure, representing a vertical column of product pairs (for example, A1, B1). Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement as it relates to the products on the shelves. "1" represents strong disagreement, while "7" stands for strong agreement.

The product type A3 stands out among other kinds of products on the shelves.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7



7. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements as they relate to the picture below. "1" represents strong disagreement, while "7" stands for strong agreement.

The depicted packaging is suitable for representing groceries. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The packaging is sufficiently compatible with such a product type as cereals. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The packaging properly describes the product as a cooking ingredient. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



8. Indicate by choosing a position on each line below how you perceive the product in the picture from the question №7.

Artificial-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Natural

Low-quality-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-High-quality

Ordinary-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Unique

Cheap-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Expensive

Unreliable-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Reliable

Outdated-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Up-to-date

Unstylish-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Stylish

Familiar-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Exotic

Inconvenient-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Convenient

Unhealthy-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Healthy

Eco-unfriendly-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Eco-friendly

Untasty-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Tasty

9. Please suggest some other characteristics or objects you associate with the *product in the picture from the question №7* if there are any.

10. Are you acquainted with the brand Yarmarka?

- Yes
- No

Version in Russian

Опрос 1

Целью данного опроса является изучение влияния готовой к выкладке упаковки на знания потребителей о брендах. Готовая к выкладке упаковка, которую Вы могли видеть на полках магазинов, чаще всего представлена в виде различных картонных лотков, содержащих несколько единиц продукции для продажи. Полученная в результате данного опроса информация будет использована в написании дипломной работы в рамках обучения в Университете прикладных наук Кюменлааксо. Сначала у Вас будет запрошена некоторая общая информация, необходимая для последующего анализа ответов, а затем будут заданы основные вопросы. Опрос не займет много времени, и Ваши ответы останутся полностью анонимными.

Ваш вклад высоко ценится!

При наличии каких-либо вопросов, пожалуйста, свяжитесь со мной через uliana.kovaleva@student.kyamk.fi.

1. Ваш пол.

- Женский
- Мужской

2. Ваш возраст.

- Менее 18 лет
- 18-25 лет
- 26-35 лет
- 36-45 лет
- 46-55 лет
- 56-65 лет
- 66 лет и более

3. Назовите населенный пункт, в котором Вы проживаете.

4. Ваше образование (законченное).

- Начальное
- Неполное среднее
- Среднее
- Среднее специальное
- Высшее
- Другое

5. Каков Ваш средний месячный доход?

- 7999 рублей и менее
- 8000-19499 рублей
- 19500-32499 рублей
- 32500-64999 рублей
- 65000 рублей и более

6. Изображение ниже воспроизводит магазинные полки, на которых находятся восемь видов продукции. Номер каждого вида продукции состоит из буквы, обозначающей полку, и цифры, обозначающей столбец парных продуктов (например, А1, В1). Укажите степень Вашего согласия со следующим утверждением по мере того, как оно соотносится с продуктами на полках. “1” обозначает полное несогласие, “7” - полное согласие.

Вид продукции под номером А3 выделяется среди других типов продуктов на полках.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7



7. Укажите степень Вашего согласия со следующими утверждениями по мере того, как они соотносятся с изображением ниже. “1” обозначает полное несогласие, “7” - полное согласие.

Изображенная упаковка хорошо подходит для представления продовольственных товаров.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Упаковка в достаточной степени совместима с таким типом продуктов, как крупы.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Упаковка должным образом описывает продукт как кулинарный ингредиент. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



8. Укажите, выбрав позицию на каждой строке ниже, как Вы воспринимаете *продукт*, представленный в вопросе №7.

Ненатуральный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Натуральный

Низкокачественный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Высококачественный

Стандартный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Уникальный

Дешевый-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Дорогой

Ненадежный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Надежный

Несовременный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Современный

Безвкусный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Стильный

Привычный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Экзотический

Неудобный в использовании-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Удобный в использовании

Вредный для здоровья-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Полезный для здоровья

Неэкологичный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Экологичный

Невкусный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Вкусный

9. Если можете, пожалуйста, назовите любые другие характеристики или предметы, которые у Вас ассоциируются с *продуктом*, представленным в вопросе №7.

10. Знакомы ли Вы с брендом “Ярмарка”?

- Да
- Нет

QUESTIONNAIRE 2

Version in English

Questionnaire 2

The aim of this survey is to examine the effect of Shelf Ready Packaging on consumer knowledge about brands. Shelf Ready Packaging, which you might have seen on store shelves, is often represented by various types of corrugated trays, containing a number of products to be sold (see example in the picture). The information gathered in this survey will be used in writing the bachelor's thesis at Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences. First, you will be asked some background questions, being necessary for the subsequent analysis of answers, and then, the main questions will be asked. The survey should only take a few minutes, and your responses are completely anonymous.

Your input is highly appreciated!

If you have any concerns, please contact me at uliana.kovaleva@student.kyamk.fi.



1. Your gender.

- Female
- Male

2. Your age.

- Under 18 years old
- 18-25 years old
- 26-35 years old
- 36-45 years old
- 46-55 years old
- 56-65 years old
- 66 years and older

3. Name your place of residence.

4. Your education (completed).

- Primary
- Basic general
- Secondary general

- Secondary vocational
- Higher
- Other

5. What is your average monthly income?

- 7999 RUB or less
- 8000-19499 RUB
- 19500-32499 RUB
- 32500-64999 RUB
- 65000 RUB or more

6. The picture below imitates the store shelves, on which eight types of products are situated. The number of a particular product type consists of a letter, representing a shelf, and a figure, representing a vertical column of product pairs (for example, A1, B1). Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements as it relate to the products on the shelves. “1” represents strong disagreement, while “7” stands for strong agreement.

The product type A3 stands out among other kinds of products on the shelves.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Shelf ready packaging makes the product A3 visible among other types of products on the shelves. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Due to shelf ready packaging it is easier to detect the brand of the product A3 in comparison with other types of products on the shelves. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



7. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements as they relate to the picture below. “1” represents strong disagreement, while “7” stands for strong agreement.

All the depicted packaging is suitable for representing groceries. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

All the depicted packaging is sufficiently compatible with such a product type as cereals. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

All the depicted packaging properly describes the product as a cooking ingredient. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



8. Indicate by choosing a position on each line below how you perceive the *product in the picture from the question №7*.

Artificial-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Natural

Low-quality-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-High-quality

Ordinary-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Unique

Cheap-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Expensive

Unreliable-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Reliable

Outdated-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Up-to-date

Unstylish-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Stylish

Familiar-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Exotic

Inconvenient-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Convenient

Unhealthy-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Healthy

Eco-unfriendly-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Eco-friendly

Untasty-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Tasty

9. Please suggest some other characteristics or objects you associate with the *product in the picture from the question №7* if there are any.

10. Are you acquainted with the brand Yarmarka?

- Yes
- No

Version in Russian

Опрос 2

Целью данного опроса является изучение влияния готовой к выкладке упаковки на знания потребителей о брендах. Готовая к выкладке упаковка, которую Вы могли видеть на полках

магазинов, чаще всего представлена в виде различных картонных лотков, содержащих несколько единиц продукции для продажи (см. пример на картинке). Полученная в результате данного опроса информация будет использована в написании дипломной работы в рамках обучения в Университете прикладных наук Кюменлааксо. Сначала у Вас будет запрошена некоторая общая информация, необходимая для последующего анализа ответов, а затем будут заданы основные вопросы. Опрос не займет много времени, и Ваши ответы останутся полностью анонимными.

Ваш вклад высоко ценится!

При наличии каких-либо вопросов, пожалуйста, свяжитесь со мной через uliana.kovaleva@student.kyamk.fi.



1. Ваш пол.

- Женский
- Мужской

2. Ваш возраст.

- Менее 18 лет
- 18-25 лет
- 26-35 лет
- 36-45 лет
- 46-55 лет
- 56-65 лет
- 66 лет и более

3. Назовите населенный пункт, в котором Вы проживаете.

4. Ваше образование (законченное).

- Начальное
- Неполное среднее
- Среднее
- Среднее специальное
- Высшее
- Другое

5. Каков Ваш средний месячный доход?

- 7999 рублей и менее

- 8000-19499 рублей
- 19500-32499 рублей
- 32500-64999 рублей
- 65000 рублей и более

6. Изображение ниже воспроизводит магазинные полки, на которых находятся восемь видов продукции. Номер каждого вида продукции состоит из буквы, обозначающей полку, и цифры, обозначающей столбец парных продуктов (например, А1, В1). Укажите степень Вашего согласия со следующими утверждениями по мере того, как они соотносятся с продуктами на полках. “1” обозначает полное несогласие, “7” - полное согласие.

Вид продукции под номером А3 выделяется среди других типов продуктов на полках.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Готовая к выкладке упаковка делает продукты под номером А3 заметными среди других типов продукции на полках. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Из-за готовой к выкладке упаковки бренд продуктов под номером А3 определяется легче по сравнению с другими видами продукции на полках. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



7. Укажите степень Вашего согласия со следующими утверждениями по мере того, как они соотносятся с изображением ниже. “1” обозначает полное несогласие, “7” - полное согласие.

Вся изображенная упаковка хорошо подходит для представления продовольственных товаров.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Вся изображенная упаковка в достаточной степени совместима с таким типом продуктов, как крупы.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Вся изображенная упаковка должным образом описывает продукт как кулинарный ингредиент. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



8. Укажите, выбрав позицию на каждой строке ниже, как Вы воспринимаете *продукт, представленный в вопросе №7*.

Ненатуральный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Натуральный

Низкокачественный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Высококачественный

Стандартный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Уникальный

Дешевый-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Дорогой

Ненадежный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Надежный

Несовременный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Современный

Безвкусный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Стильный

Привычный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Экзотический

Неудобный в использовании-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Удобный в использовании

Вредный для здоровья-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Полезный для здоровья

Неэкологичный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Экологичный

Невкусный-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Вкусный

9. Если можете, пожалуйста, назовите любые другие характеристики или предметы, которые у Вас ассоциируются с *продуктом, представленным в вопросе №7*.

10. Знакомы ли Вы с брендом “Ярмарка”?

- Да
- Нет

TABLES ON RESPONDENT PERCEPTION OF THE DEPICTED PRODUCT

1. Perceived Naturalness

		Perceived naturalness			Total
		1=Artificial	2	3=Natural	
Primary packaging	Count	10	15	49	74
	%	13,5%	20,3%	66,2%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	13	16	45	74
	%	17,6%	21,6%	60,8%	100,0%
Total	Count	23	31	94	148
	%	15,5%	20,9%	63,5%	100,0%

2. Perceived Quality

		Perceived quality			Total
		1=Low quality	2	3=High quality	
Primary packaging	Count	10	15	49	74
	%	13,5%	20,3%	66,2%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	6	18	50	74
	%	8,1%	24,3%	67,6%	100,0%
Total	Count	16	33	99	148
	%	10,8%	22,3%	66,9%	100,0%

3. Perceived Uniqueness

		Perceived uniqueness			Total
		1=Ordinary	2	3=Unique	
Primary packaging	Count	14	29	31	74
	%	18,9%	39,2%	41,9%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	19	21	34	74
	%	25,7%	28,4%	45,9%	100,0%
Total	Count	33	50	65	148
	%	22,3%	33,8%	43,9%	100,0%

4. Perceived Price

		Perceived price			Total
		1=Cheap	2	3=Expensive	
Primary packaging	Count	9	11	54	74
	%	12,2%	14,9%	73,0%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	7	12	55	74
	%	9,5%	16,2%	74,3%	100,0%
Total	Count	16	23	109	148
	%	10,8%	15,5%	73,6%	100,0%

5. Perceived Reliability

		Perceived reliability			Total
		1=Unreliable	2	3=Reliable	
Primary packaging	Count	13	21	40	74
	%	17,6%	28,4%	54,1%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	11	25	38	74
	%	14,9%	33,8%	51,4%	100,0%
Total	Count	24	46	78	148
	%	16,2%	31,1%	52,7%	100,0%

6. Perceived Modernity

		Perceived modernity			Total
		1=Outdated	2	3=Up-to-date	
Primary packaging	Count	12	10	52	74
	%	16,2%	13,5%	70,3%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	5	12	57	74
	%	6,8%	16,2%	77,0%	100,0%
Total	Count	17	22	109	148
	%	11,5%	14,9%	73,6%	100,0%

7. Perceived Stylishness

		Perceived stylishness			Total
		1=Unstylish	2	3=Stylish	
Primary packaging	Count	15	16	43	74
	%	20,3%	21,6%	58,1%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	8	14	52	74
	%	10,8%	18,9%	70,3%	100,0%
Total	Count	23	30	95	148
	%	15,5%	20,3%	64,2%	100,0%

8. Perceived Exoticism

		Perceived exoticism			Total
		1=Familiar	2	3=Exotic	
Primary packaging	Count	19	14	41	74
	%	25,7%	18,9%	55,4%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	16	17	41	74
	%	21,6%	23,0%	55,4%	100,0%
Total	Count	35	31	82	148
	%	23,6%	20,9%	55,4%	100,0%

9. Perceived Convenience

		Perceived convenience			Total
		1=Inconvenient	2	3=Convenient	
Primary packaging	Count	20	21	33	74
	%	27,0%	28,4%	44,6%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	16	25	33	74
	%	21,6%	33,8%	44,6%	100,0%
Total	Count	36	46	66	148
	%	24,3%	31,1%	44,6%	100,0%

10. Perceived Healthiness

		Perceived healthiness			Total
		1=Unhealthy	2	3=Healthy	
Primary packaging	Count	11	21	42	74
	%	14,9%	28,4%	56,8%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	6	25	43	74
	%	8,1%	33,8%	58,1%	100,0%
Total	Count	17	46	85	148
	%	11,5%	31,1%	57,4%	100,0%

11. Perceived Eco-Friendliness

		Perceived eco-friendliness			Total
		1=Eco-unfriendly	2	3=Eco-friendly	
Primary packaging	Count	14	18	42	74
	%	18,9%	24,3%	56,8%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	7	26	41	74
	%	9,5%	35,1%	55,4%	100,0%
Total	Count	21	44	83	148
	%	14,2%	29,7%	56,1%	100,0%

12. Perceived Tastiness

		Perceived tastiness			Total
		1=Untasty	2	3=Tasty	
Primary packaging	Count	14	26	34	74
	%	18,9%	35,1%	45,9%	100,0%
Primary and shelf ready packaging	Count	9	26	39	74
	%	12,2%	35,1%	52,7%	100,0%
Total	Count	23	52	73	148
	%	15,5%	35,1%	49,3%	100,0%