An Approach to Design for Enhancing Product Attachment Using Collectability
by
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Abstract

Products typically suffer from life cycles where they slowly die off immediately after release. Collectable products have the potential to lengthen these life cycles, occasionally achieving higher perceived values long after their release. Products with strong attachments to their users can be considered more desirable or collectable. By studying collectable products and users' attachment to them, it is believed that a design approach can be created that allows designers to implement collectable design into existing or new products to achieve deeper attachment by the owner, resulting in longer life cycles and higher perceived values. The strategies laid out can be used as a creative framework for generating relevant ideas for promoting attachment by the user in product and packaging design.

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A special thank you goes to my parents, Kayse and Shannon Fondren, for their endless support on every journey I have embarked on in life. While the path has not always been clear, they have always managed to see the light at the end of the tunnel and pushed me to chase after it. Niklas, my creative partner in crime, you have always been my right-hand man whether we were building LEGOs, creating treehouses, filming trick shots, and much more. To my grandparents, thank you for being my biggest fan no matter what hat I have been wearing at any given moment. I have been able to pursue my dreams because of all your unwavering support.

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1 Introduction

1.1   Problem Statement

Most products go through life cycles where they inevitably fail or die out. Many great products with superior function, form, or beauty can be forgotten in time when left alone to a natural life cycle. Products that are considered collectable, however, can be known to defy or outlive this rapid demise. After release, collectibles can remain relevant much longer than their less desirable counterparts. They can also explode in popularity years after their initial release. Some products are designed to be collected and sit on customers' shelves. Some products are a complete failure, then later consumers decide they want to collect every model of it. Regardless of the design intent, products of many types can be collectable. The time and manner that a product is released can also have a significant impact on a product's collectable value. *"By launching a product at the right time, businesses can take advantage of market conditions, consumer trends, and seasonal demand to increase sales and stay ahead of their competition" (Dickmann, 2023).* To extend a product's relevancy and perceived value for their product, consider implementing collectability into the design process. Doing so can help products remain competitive and relevant, thus creating longer life cycles in today's 'latest and greatest' markets.

1.2   Need for Study

This study is important because it is believed that products can achieve longer market relevancy and stronger user attachment by utilizing collectable design. Through the study of collectible history, human motivations for collecting, form, materials, and product release strategies, an approach for collectable design will be created. As a result, it is believed that products can sustain longer lives of relevancy with higher perceived value.

1.3   Objective of Study

The concept of creating a collectible product has been identified as one means to increase a product's life cycle. This study aims to create an approach for designers to incorporate collectable traits into a product's design to achieve greater user attachment and longer life cycles. Towards the goal of creating an approach for designers, this study will explore these areas:

- Research history of collectibles

- Identify top brands in current collectible markets

- Research psychology behind collecting

- Research successes and failures among different collectibles

- Research product packaging design

- Research materials

- Create marketing strategies for collectible design

- Develop an approach for designing for collectability

- Create a 3D model showcasing the design tool that will include: product design, packaging design, and product release strategies
- Conclude study

1.4 Definition of Terms

- **100%ing**- Completing a video game to a 100% achievement level, usually involving side quests, mini bosses, secret character unlocks, trophies, etc. (Geddy, 2018)

- **Beautility**- the idea that beauty can add function to an object (Viemeister, 2019)

- **Collectable**- adjective, describes a product that is desirable or coveted (Dictionary.com, n.d.)

- **Collectible**- noun, a product that is collected or sought after (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

- **Colorway**- describes the various color options available for a particular item (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

- **Connection point**- Extra items included in packaging as thankful gestures to a consumer

- **Content Creator**- an individual, team, or brand that creates content and posts on social media for a living (Kemp, 2023)

- **Convention**- a large meeting of people with a common interest, as in a particular recreational activity (Dictionary.com, n.d.)

- **DIY**- acronym for a 'do it yourself' function (Cambridge University Press & Assessment, n.d.)

- **Exclusive**- restricted in distribution, use, or appeal because of expense (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

- **Hype**- use of publicity and advertising to generate excitement or buzz around a brand or product (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

- **Memorabilia**- things that stir recollection or are valued or collected for their association with a particular field or interest (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

- **Nostalgia**- is an affectionate feeling you have for the past, especially for a particularly happy time (HarperCollins Publishers, n.d.)

- **Perceived value**- the value of a product based on how much customers want or need it, rather than on its real price (Cambridge University Press & Assessment, n.d.)

- **POI** (point of identification)- images or text on packaging that convey specific information to consumer or collectors

- **Product life cycle**- the length of time from a product first being introduced to consumers until it is removed from the market (TWI Ltd., n.d.)

- **Rerelease**- reproducing a model that has previously been produced, typically a popular model that may have sold out (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

- **Reseller**- a merchant or a company that buys goods or services from another merchant or company with the purpose of selling them to make a profit instead of using those products or services themselves (openPR.com, n.d.)

1.5   Assumptions

Within this study, it will be assumed that information gathered from books and online resources are validated. It can be assumed that collectability is an important factor in a product's success, while other factors will not be researched in this study. Lastly, it is assumed that a clear guideline can be created to help designers design for collectability, giving a product higher value and a longer life cycle.

1.6   Scope and Limits

This study will focus on collectibles and the effect that collectability can have on the product life cycle. Many things can be considered collectable. However, this study will only focus on collectibles that can fit on shelves and workspaces that are roughly within the following determined dimensions: **12" D x 32" W x 12" H**. Humans often display items in their workspace or living areas to express their personalities and interests (Ethan, 2015). It is believed that products that can fit within these spaces have greater potential of being seen and displayed, resulting in stronger user attachment. Items such as ancient artifacts, art, priceless items, automobiles, and furniture will not be included as they generally extend beyond a designer's ability to affect their collectability. It is also acknowledged that this study does not always promote strategies that reflect sound sustainable design practices. This study heavily focuses on strategies to create products that encourage user attachment. It then offers resources that have the best chance at achieving these goals. This study also focuses primarily on physical products and interfaces. Digital product, service, and interface design are largely excluded in this approach due to their shortened lifespans. Strategies relying strictly on

time as a collectable factor will also be excluded. Limitations of this study also include the inability to research every product that is considered collectable.

1.7   Procedures and Methods

This thesis will be conducted using these procedures and methods.

1.7.1   Procedure 1:

- Research collectible products from the past and present.

- Methods:

  - Research books from library as well as online resources on the history of collectible products

  - Research products that are intentionally/unintentionally collectible

  - Research consumer behavior concerning these products

1.7.2   Procedure 2:

- Determine the human motivations for collecting

- Methods:

  - Research psychology in collecting

  - Research nostalgia in design

  - Research reselling markets for collectibles

  - Research videos from collectible content creators

1.7.3   Procedure 3:

- Develop packaging design strategies to create stronger user product attachment

- Methods:

    Research unboxing experiences from collectible products

    Study packaging design from collectable products

    Study functions for extended use in product packaging

1.7.4 Procedure 4:

- Identify marketing strategies to best release products into markets

- Methods:

    - Research different times and manners in which products have been released

1.7.5 Procedure 5:

- Develop an approach for collectable design

- Methods:

    - Select a product for collectable redesign

    - Analyze current product state

    - Create a new design platform

    - Choose from motivations for collecting

    - Select product release strategies

1.7.6 Procedure 6:

- Design a product to showcase the design approach for attachment through collectability

- Methods:

- Create sketch concepts for product designs

- Determine materials

- Design packaging and branding

- Finalize concept

- Produce final renderings showcasing product concepts

1.8   Anticipated Outcomes

- Identify common characteristics among successful collectibles

- Extend product life cycle and gain value by applying design tools for collectability

- Create an approach to design for collectability

- Design and develop a collectible product by applying the proposed approach

Designing for Collectibility

Noah Fondren

SIMPLE GANTT CHART by Vertex42.com
https://www.vertex42.com/ExcelTemplates/simple-gantt-chart.html

Project Start: Sun, 1/1/2023

Display Week: 1

		Spring 2023								Summer 2023				Fall 2023													
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	16	17	18	19	20	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
TASK	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS	START	END	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S

Phase 1 Spring 2023

TASK	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS	START	END
Research Aspects of Collectibility	Name		2 Weeks	#VALUE!
Research Succesful/Failed Collectibles			2 weeks	#VALUE!
Packaging research			2 weeks	#VALUE!
Maybe attend a comic con?			2 weeks	#VALUE!
Interview Content Creators			1 Week	#VALUE!

Phase 2 Summer 2023

TASK	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS	START	END
Determine Aspects of Collectibility			2 Weeks	#VALUE!
Develop Marketing Strategies			2 Weeks	#VALUE!
Packaging design			2 Weeks	#VALUE!
Manufacturing strategies			2 Weeks	#VALUE!
				1/3/00

Phase 3 Fall 2023

TASK	ASSIGNED TO	PROGRESS	START	END
Compile research into guideline			2 weeks	#VALUE!
Create model			4 weeks	#VALUE!
Create presentation showcasing tool			2 weeks	#VALUE!
Graduation				1/4/00

Figure 1.1 Thesis Development Schedule

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2 Literature Review

Collecting items has been around nearly as long as human history. Motivations for collecting may have evolved over time, but studies show evidence of humans having collections as early as 105,000 years ago (Gutierrez, 2021).

> *We know our lives are inextricably entangled with things and the earliest archeological records show that ownership of objects is a universal phenomenon that has existed across time, cultures and people," said Kiara Timpano, professor of psychology in the University of Miami College of Arts and Sciences (Gutierrez, 2021).*

While nearly anything can be collected, this review will focus on collectible products. It is believed that designers can play a much larger role than just the creation of a figurine. Collectible toys, when developed correctly, can be bought as investments and sold for more than they were purchased for (Beattie, 2022). Through the study of history, psychology, product life cycles, and product release strategies an approach for designing for collectability and attachment will be created. As a result, products can aim to have longer life cycles and achieve higher perceived value.

2.1   Human Motivations for Collecting

Understanding 'what' people collect and 'why' is fundamental when considering designing for collectability or attachment. Shirley Mueller said,

> *Specific areas of their brains light up when the unusual are presented. This may be why we seek the unique when we collect. It stimulates our brains in areas that connect to our pleasure center. This may also have an evolutionary benefit (Mueller, 2020).*

Here, Mueller states that acquiring something unique or rare can stimulate the brain in a pleasurable way. Therefore, uniquity can be considered a motivation for collecting.

Mueller continues to go into depth about the motivations and explanations behind collecting. She says,

> *Another contributing motive for some collectors is pride in acquiring exquisite objects. This is heightened by gathering like-items together for the first time. During the search, excitement is further sharpened by identifying a rare piece that sets us apart from our peers and may provide recognition and admiration by associates (Mueller, 2022).*

According to Mueller (2022), obtaining rare items can be used as a means for elevating a collector's social status. Collecting as a means of elevating one's social status can be considered a motivation for collecting.

Obtaining exquisite objects can also be thought of as collecting premium, or high-end items. Defining what premium means to consumers is important. JC Lupis with MarketingCharts.com shows results from a survey regarding the definition of 'premium' in different age ranges as shown in Figure 2.1.
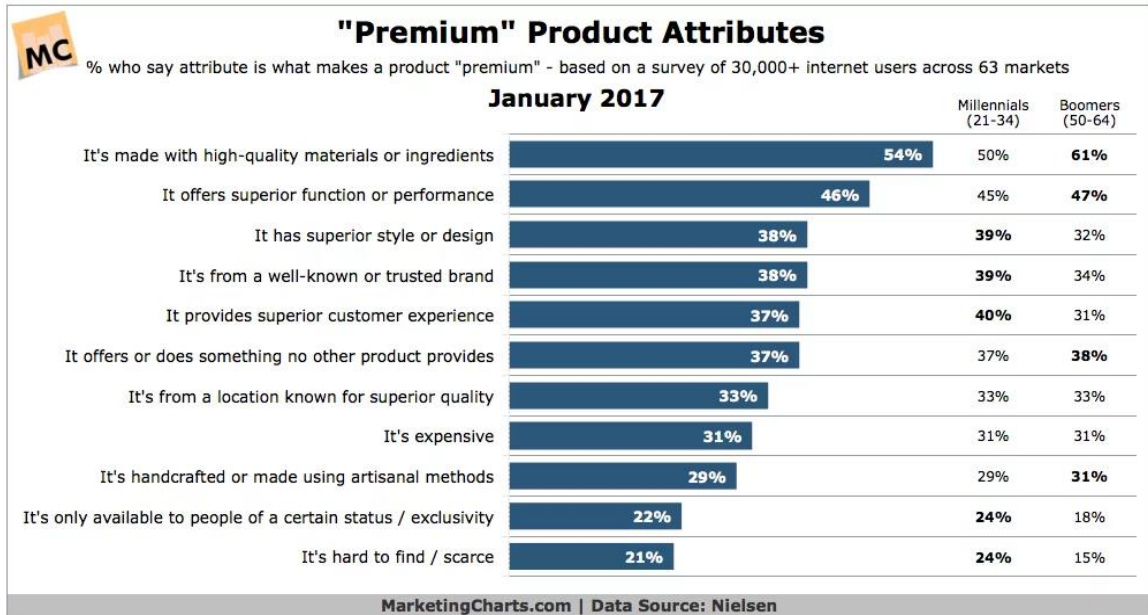
Figure 2.1 Premium Product Attributes (Lupis, 2019)

Some important findings can be drawn from the survey (Lupis, 2019). Premium products can be defined as items that are priced an average 20% higher than other products in its category. Over half of the respondents believed that premium products used high-quality materials, while 46% of the respondents believed a premium product showed superior performance or function. In another part of the study, most respondents credited 'premium' to superior design, a well-trusted brand, and a function that was unlike any other. In a concluding statement regarding the survey results, Lupus says,

"Boomers are more likely to point to high-quality materials or ingredients, and also rank its uniqueness relatively higher; while millennials are more apt to cite superior customer service and scarcity (Lupis, 2019)."

Another motivation for collecting can be the sense of community, or friendships. Mueller says,

Collectors also gather what they consider treasures to enhance their network of friends; in other words, they have a social motivation for collecting. Perhaps their love of objects came first; then, somewhere along the line, they realize there are people like themselves (Mueller, 2022).

Mueller is expanding past the idea of simply collecting items that someone likes. She is identifying the idea that people tend to create a community and friendships through their seemingly isolated collecting interest.

One of the more apparent reasons for collecting is nostalgia. It seems that many movies released are remakes of classic movies from decades prior. Clay Routledge of Harvard Business Review (Routledge, 2021) touches on the power of nostalgia in design.

However, a growing body of research reveals that it's an important psychological resource that helps individuals cope with life's stressors, build strong relationships, find, and maintain meaning in life, and become more creative and inspired. I've been conducting research on the psychology of nostalgia for almost 20 years. Based on what I've learned, I believe managers can use the power of nostalgia to help their organizations thrive (Routledge, 2021).

Routledge believes that nostalgic design can assist people with life's stressors, relationships, and creativity. This belief can be important when considering what kind of motivation could be considered during a design process.

Another motivation for collecting can be for the purpose of completing a set. Collectibles can be released as a group with other items with a common theme. Author Catherine Carey (2007) touches on the idea of completing a set in her article, Modeling Collecting Behavior: The Role of Set Completion. Carey writes,

> *Set completion is another. The reasons for collecting are not always mutually exclusive. For example, a complete set may be worth more in the secondary market, if one exists, than the sum of the individual pieces. This reflects the value of the rarest pieces and the opportunity costs of obtaining them (Carey, 2007).*

Highlighted here, completing a set can bring higher resell values in the secondary market than if the items were sold as individuals. Knowing a set can bring a collector higher value, a designer can consider releasing a series, or set, of products to create a higher perceived value.

The psychology of completing a set can go deeper than simply financial gain. In video games, a large community exists that focuses on completing a game to 100%. Simply completing the story or campaign typically is not completing 100% of the game. Many side quests, trophies, achievements, and challenges exist that offer the player a chance to go back and explore further into the game. While not typically a physical collectible, there is often an award gifted to the player in game once the game has been

completed to 100%. The following article describes a handful of games the author has completed to 100% and why he was motivated to do such. Geddy says,

One of my favorite traits of a game is one where exploration is not only

encouraged, but handsomely rewarded. This game is just so absolutely packed

with secrets and bonus levels and things to find that you can easily spend an

hour wandering around a single level. Enemies don't respawn either, which

makes it feel like you really make each level 'yours' before moving on.

100%'ing these games feels like the only way to really 'close the file'

(Geddy, 2018).

Geddy is passionate about this game enough to complete it. What the game developers did well for the fans was implement incentives and rewards for players who went above and beyond to immerse themselves into the game. A designer of physical or digital products can implement incentives and rewards for consumers to complete, or 100%, a set.

A list of motivating factors for collectors has been developed by Collectibles Insurance Services (2023). The list has been paraphrased below:

- **Emotional attachment**- Sentimentality can be a big reason why many people collect, as the products may remind them of loved ones or special memories.

- **Nostalgia from childhood**- People can collect things they may have admired since childhood, and they can finally possess it as an adult.

- **Increase knowledge and learning**- Learning about objects can motivate people to acquire items. Unique items can drive people to research and learn more which can result in intellectual satisfaction

- **Having fun and enjoyment**- Collecting for fun and enjoyment can activate the pleasure center of the brain. Curating a collection can be fun and motivate people to collect more.

- **Aesthetics**- Many collectors seek items that are aesthetically pleasing. Beautiful objects can create joy for others to enjoy while on display

- **Completeness**- Some collectors are driven to complete a set of items. For example, a Star Wars enthusiast may attempt to obtain every figure from a certain series of Star Wars toys

- **Investment**- Collectors can acquire items with the intent of making a profit by selling them. The value of collectibles is expected to grow over time. Therefore, collectors can invest in collectibles in order to sell them for a greater value later

- **Sense of Community**- Some collectors can use collecting as a way of being a part of a community and creating friendships. Many events online and in person take place that offer collectors or enthusiasts a chance to interact with each other

- **Recognition**- Collecting can bring recognition to the curator. Getting recognition can be a driving force for some collectors. Obtaining particular items can elevate the status of collector

- **The Thrill of the Hunt**- Collectors can be driven to collect for the thrill of

   the hunt. Searching for a rare item can create excitement and motivation.

   Searching through websites or shelves creates a hunt for collectors to

   chase (Collectibles Insurance Services, 2023)

This extensive list of motivations can be considered when designers are creating a

product. Designers can consider which motivations to target, and the design process can

follow in that direction.

Many humans have what they need to survive. Why do those same people seem

to constantly want more and more then? In an article by Ethan (2015) from Appropedia,

authors of Advances in Consumer Research, Vol. 16, are quoted saying this regarding

the motivations behind accumulating possessions: "As such, 'possessions are used as

symbols of what we are, what we have been, and what we are attempting to become'"

(Schultz, Kleine, Kernan, 1989).

According to the authors, people can use possessions to symbolize the past,

present, and future of themselves.

There are times when people hold onto objects well past their time of function or

use. People develop an attachment to the product that they may or may not be able to

explain. Jonathan Chapman, an author and designer, coined the term 'emotional

durability' to describe these attachments (Ethan, 2015). Writing about this term is

author Ethan from Appropedia. Ethan writes,

> *It presents strategic counterpoints to our throwaway society, by developing*
>
> *design tools, methods and frameworks that enhance the resilience of*

relationships established between people and things; supporting not the

design of durable 'products' per se, but the design of durable meanings, and

values, that products deliver (Ethan, Appropedia, 2015).

Here, the author is defining emotional durability as well as establishing its

significance in creating connections with the consumer. Ethan describes a throwaway

society that exists today. So many products are designed to be discarded and disposed

of so quickly. Designing for emotional durability can create a resistance to this

throwaway attitude, according to the author. Emotional durability consists of designing

long lasting meanings and values into products.

Chapman can have a lengthy and elaborate explanation for his term emotional

durability. Lauren Phipps attempts to define the term in a simpler way in her article,

Playing for Keeps: Is Designing Emotional Durability the Key to a Circular Economy?

Lauren defines emotional durability as:

Emotional durability is the idea of designing products that people want

to keep. Where physical durability resists wear and damage, emotional

durability resists our natural tendency to want the next new thing

(Phipps, 2019).

Lauren does a good job at modernizing the term with a basic definition of

emotional durability. This guideline, like the term is described, is an aid to help

designers create things that people want to keep. Despite the wear and tear, a

connection is created with the product so that the consumer does not want to discard it

so easily.

Lauren continues in the article with a story about an author who has a favorite piece of clothing he/she refuses to discard. Instead, he/she repairs the item over and over.

> *We all have a favorite thing that stands the test of time. For me, it's*
>
> *the perfectly cozy flannel shirt that I bought on sale in high school.*
>
> *Despite frayed sleeves and missing buttons, I've repaired and re-sewn*
>
> *it more times than I can count. As author and decluttering expert*
>
> *Marie Kondo puts it, the flannel most certainly sparks joy*
>
> *(Phipps, 2019).*

While a short story, the message is direct and familiar. The author has held onto a flannel that was on sale in high school. The flannel has been torn and frayed. The author, because of whatever connection he/she has with the item, has likely spent more time repairing it than it would take to go purchase a new one. Still, the author wants to hold on and repair the flannel. This type of connection to an item is a good example of emotional durability.

Now that the term emotional durability has been laid out, it is important now that one can know how to implement this term into his/her designs. Chapman created a list of themes one can utilize to create different connections for the consumer. Ethan lists Chapman's terms in this article (Ethan, 2015).

1. **Design for Narrative**: Users share a unique personal history with the product; this often relates to when, how and from whom the object was acquired

2. **Design for Detachment**: Users feel no emotional connection to the product, have low expectations and thus perceive it in a favorable way due to a lack of emotional demand or expectation (this also suggests that attachment may actually be counterproductive, as it elevates the level of expectation within the user to a point that is often unattainable)

3. **Design for Surface**: The product is physically aging well, and developing a tangible character through time, use and sometimes misuse

4. **Design for Attachment**: Users feel a strong emotional connection to the product, due to the service it provides, the information it contains and the meaning it conveys

5. **Design for Fiction**: Users are delighted or even enchanted by the product as it is not yet fully understood or know by the user; these are often recently purchased products that are still being explored and discovered by the user

6. **Design for Consciousness**: The product is perceived as autonomous and in possession of its own free will; it is quirky, often temperamental and interaction is an acquired skill that can be fully acquired only with practice (Chapman, 2008)

This list of themes by Chapman can be very useful when considering designing for collectability. One could go very in depth into each of these topics as an entire thesis. However, areas of collectability aligns most closely with designing for attachment. Collectability focuses on creating attachments with the consumer to create longer interaction with the product.

Just as emotional and physical durability are meant to create a longer lasting

product, there is an opposite end to that spectrum. Ethan discusses a term called

planned obsolescence, where the manufacturer implements design aspects to shorten a

product's life cycle to encourage consumerism (Ethan, 2015). He discusses his thoughts

in the following:

> *Packard's dualistic theories of functional obsolescence and*
>
> *psychological obsolescence assert that 'the deliberate shortening of*
>
> *product life spans was unethical, both in its profit-focused*
>
> *manipulating of consumer spending, and its devastating ecological*
>
> *impact through the nurturing of wasteful purchasing behaviours'*
>
> *(Ethan, Appropedia, 2015).*

The author quoted here states that planned obsolescence was unethical because

it encourages wasteful behavior, like the world we live in today. The idea of designing

for collectability is one approach for creating longer lasting products that consumers will

want to preserve and hold on to. A byproduct can be a less wasteful consumer.

Creating a story with products can also enhance their perceived value and user

attachment. Patagonia, a large outdoors clothing brand, puts an emphasis on used

items. Patagonia will take their used clothing from customers and resell them, calling

them 'Worn Wear'. Phipps quotes Chapman regarding Patagonia's strategies to reselling

worn items.

> *Consider Patagonia's approach to durability: In addition to offering*
>
> *free product repairs, the outdoor gear company features customer*

stories and photos on its 'Worn Wear' (a re-branding of 'used') site. In

Patagonia's world, garments embody experience, wear becomes a

status symbol, and the brand reinforces the connection its customers

have to their purchases. Your worn fleece becomes 'better than new',

according to its marketing campaign (Phipps, 2019).

To some, the idea of buying used items rather than new may seem silly.

However, Patagonia highlights the stories that these items have created with their

previous owner. The original owner had an attachment to these items, and the next

consumer is happy to invest into that storied item. The worn item is no longer seen as

just used. People can continue to add to the story that has already been established in

the item. As a result, people can consider a worn item to be more valuable than buying

a new, storiless item.

2.2   Marketing/Product Release Strategies

The time and manner in which a product is released can affect its success in the

market. Eric Dickmann with FiveEchelon says this regarding the importance of choosing

the correct product launch strategy,

Proper timing can help businesses maximize revenue and gain a

competitive advantage. By launching a product at the right time,

businesses can take advantage of market conditions, consumer trends,

and seasonal demand to increase sales and stay ahead of their

competition (Dickmann, 2023).

While not all of these release strategies create emotional durability, and some still catalyze consumerism, it is useful for designers to understand the range of strategic approaches in the planning and launching collectable products. Specific methods of release strategies will be studied and identified later with case studies in Chapter 3.

If it is not broken, do not fix it. That statement can hold true when considering which model to release next. Often, producing a 'rerelease' of a former model can be highly desired by consumers. Here, Starnes points out the trend of rereleasing successful toys from the past. While updated, the toys remain similar to their original form. In this excerpt, Starnes touches on why this may be. Starnes says,

> *Trends even indicate that as a new generation of parents return to the*
> *toy store to purchase figures for their children, they are often*
> *purchasing some for themselves as collectibles at the same time. This*
> *has started a massive influx of 're-releases', 'reissues', and restyling of*
> *figures from the 1970s, 80s, & 90s. It is thought that parents will be*
> *more apt to purchase products that they themselves enjoyed playing*
> *with as children when making the buying decisions for their own*
> *children (Starnes, 2004).*

Rereleases of products are bringing parents back to the toys they enjoyed as children. New generations can then be introduced to these toys through their parents. Rereleasing a product can be considered a release strategy designers can use.

Companies can choose to release products only during certain times of the year, known as seasonal releases. Brands can take advantage of changing markets at different

times of the year (Tran, 2023). Angie Tran with AdRoll gives examples of businesses that

would likely be more successful in different times of the year.

> *For instance, a flower shop would probably see a surge in sales during*
>
> *Valentine's week, and a bathing suit retailer would find great success*
>
> *during the summer. This is called seasonal marketing (Tran, 2023).*

People are more willing to spend money during holiday seasons, therefore it is

important for brands to prepare ahead of time to secure a purchase from these

consumers (Tran, 2023).

Brands can take a break from generating new ideas by letting the consumers

choose their own design through customization. As of 2021, Funko Inc. offers

consumers the chance to customize a Funko Pop however they choose with the 'Funko

Pop! Yourself' platform (Diaz, 2023). By putting the design process into the hands of

consumers, crazy new configurations such as figures with both Captain America's shield

and Darth Vader's lightsaber can be created (Diaz, 2023).

Many versions of the same product can exist. When this occurs, certain versions

of that product can become more valuable (Collector's Guide, 2011). One of these

versions is the first edition of a product. Depending on certain traits, first editions of

products can become more valuable than later releases. An article by Collector's Guide,

Literature discusses the following regarding first editions of books:

> *Nevertheless, first editions do exert a profound pull which reprints do*
>
> *not. Why? Primarily because a first edition is the physical*
>
> *manifestation of a particular moment in the life of a novel, and it can*

also reflect a significant time in the wider culture (Collector's Guide,

Literature, 2011).

If products become very popular over time, first editions of the product can come to represent the beginning of the journey. As a result, the demand can rise in these first editions. Because items get rarer with age, value for these products can skyrocket.

When these first editions become collectable, it is important that consumers are able to identify which of these versions are a first edition. Using Pokémon, a popular trading card series, as an example, the packaging of the first editions is clearly labeled for consumers. Consumers see the label of a first edition and the value increases exponentially. Discussing the crazy values first editions can bring is Elliott Santiago (2021) with HypeBeast:

At Heritage Auctions' last Comics & Comic Art event, this never-been-

opened Pokémon First Edition Base Set Booster Box from 1999 sold for

a handsome $408K USD. This broke HA's previous world record which

saw a similar booster box move for a whopping $360K USD back in

November 2020. "Recent history has shown that the demand for First

Edition Base Set Sealed Booster Boxes is soaring," stated Jesus Garcia

who is a Trading Cards Expert in Heritage Auctions' Comics

Department (Santiago, 2021).

According to the article, by simply being a first edition set, Pokémon booster boxes can go for hundreds of thousands of dollars. Utilizing first editions as a release strategy will be touched on further in Chapter 3.

Collaboration is an important strategy designers can use to bring awareness and popularity to a product (Hecto, n.d.). Supreme, an exclusive streetwear brand, collaborated with Nabisco to create a Supreme x Oreo collaboration (Hoeffner, 2021). Hoeffner writes about the release and reaction to this shocking collaboration.

> *As of Tuesday afternoon (before the official drop), Eater reported a pack of Supreme Oreos already listed on the secondary market, for $500. By noon, bids for a special sleeve of cookies had reached $4,000 in two different eBay auctions for the exclusive treats. As of Friday, February 21, the highest bid has increased to $52,100, and is rising, with eight days left in the auction (Hoeffner, 2021).*

A collaboration between two dissimilar brands resulted in cookies, commonly sold for under $5, being resold for almost $100,000 (Hoeffner, 2021). Collaborating can bring together fan bases from two different brands, resulting in new business opportunities (Hecto, n.d.).

A trending product release strategy in the past few years has been in the form of mystery boxes. Companies will release a product in a concealed state so that a consumer is not aware of the make or model he/she is receiving. The mystery and possibility of getting a valuable piece is the attraction to this release strategy. Discussing sports memorabilia mystery boxes is Garret Price with UltimateAutographs.com.

> *The appeal of a mystery box lies in the excitement and surprise of not knowing exactly what you will receive. It can be an enticing option for*

sports enthusiasts and collectors who enjoy the element of surprise

and the possibility of getting rare or valuable items (Price, 2023).

While it is not guaranteed that a valuable item will be gained through the mystery box, the consumer still receives an item. It is a fun win-win situation for the consumer.

Case studies for further research into product release strategies will be conducted in Chapter 3.

2.3   Form

A good design must begin with a concept. Not having a solid foundation can result in compromising in the design too far into the product development process. Starnes talks about the importance of having a strong foundation for your design from the beginning. Starnes says,

> *The project concept is one of the most important steps in the design process.*
>
> *Without a solid design concept at the inception of a project, further steps may*
>
> *not be possible, or may be undertaken only to realize later that valuable work*
>
> *must be undone in order to rethink or correct errors made earlier due to an*
>
> *incomplete concept at inception (Starnes, 2004).*

Starnes' statement is accurate when he says a toy should have a strong foundation in the design process. Designers also possess the skills to create a collectable toy. Giving up creative freedom to other non-design departments can hurt the motivation and drive from the designer. Being able to see a product from concept to shelf is invaluable. Losing concept control can ruin the initial design intent.

Aesthetics and beauty are important in form because they can add function to the product, according to designer Tucker Viemeister (2019). He has coined a term, 'beautility', which states that beauty can serve as a function for the product (Viemeister, 2019). In an article published in popular design magazine, Innovation: the journal of the Industrial Designers Society of America, Viemester describes 'beautility'. Viemeister writes,

> *Beautility is a word that highlights the utility of aesthetics. The word*
> *reminds diehard pragmatists and bean counters to count the value of*
> *how things look. Beautility is a bottom-line factor and a top-line*
> *aspiration. As Pratt professor Rowena Reed Kostellow, FIDSA, said, "If*
> *you can't make it more beautiful, what's the point"*
> *(Viemeister, 2019)?*

According to Viemeister, creating beauty in a product's design adds value to the product. Therefore, form should be functional but also beautiful.

2.4   Packaging

Packaging is arguably as important as the product itself. Customers often stroll past shelves without looking for anything in particular (Jargons, 2023). It is essential that the packaging of the product grabs the consumer's attention. Mark Hampshire describes successful packaging design in his book, Packaging: design successful packaging for specific customer groups.

> *Philippe Becker Design created a sophisticated brand identity with an*
> *appetizing color palette to delineate each of the four menu categories:*

soups and starters, entrees, sides, and desserts. With the food hand-

packaged in clear, stand-up pouches, a double-sided label was

developed to attach at the top. One master label works for every item

in a category through the use of add-on laser-printed stickers.

(Hampshire, 2007, pg. 88-89)

Hampshire describes the design intent behind Phillipe Becker Design's packaging

for high end pre-packed meals. The clear packaging showcases the beautiful and natural

characteristics of the ingredients inside the package. Quality graphics and advertising

are important, but often showing the actual product as much as possible is the best way

to reach a consumer.

There are different types of packaging that exist. Currently there are three kinds

that are commonly accepted amongst packaging companies (Premier Protective

Packaging, n.d.) The three levels include primary, secondary, and transportation.

Primary is the packaging that is directly interacted with by the consumer and houses the

product. Secondary packaging is for branding and displaying a product. The design of

secondary packaging should protect the product in shipment as well as market the

product to consumers. Transportation packaging is meant primarily for protecting the

product during shipment with foam, bubble wrap, packing peanuts, and more.

Packaging can often be seen as merely a vessel for the product following payment.

Once a product is retrieved out of the vessel, the packaging is thrown away. However,

some packaging is held onto by consumers after opening. In some cases, the packaging

can be viewed as a part of the product as a whole (Hisao, 2023). Tech giant Apple is a

famous example of a brand with desirable packaging. Elvis Hsiao describes Apple's

packaging and what makes consumers want to hold onto them. Elvis writes,

> *After all, once its protective role is fulfilled, why does the box hold value?*
>
> *However, when it comes to Apple, a brand synonymous with innovation,*
>
> *quality, and a certain aspirational lifestyle, the packaging is viewed as much*
>
> *more than just a protective shell, it's an extension of the product experience*
>
> *and the Apple brand itself (Hisao, 2023).*

Elvis states that Apple's packaging is an extension of the product and its

experience. The packaging represents the entire brand and its reputation. Often, the

box is the first thing a consumer sees when deciding to make a purchase. As Elvis said,

the packaging is an extension of the product and brand. Therefore, it should be

designed as such.

Elvis goes on to quote Steve Jobs and explain the design process behind Apple's

packaging and unboxing experience. Hsiao says,

> *Apple's boxes typically consist of a lower base and an upper lid that fits*
>
> *snugly over it, offering an almost seamless unboxing experience. The*
>
> *high-quality, rigid cardboard material ensures durability, while the*
>
> *white, minimalist aesthetic speaks volumes about the product inside*
>
> *(Hisao, 2023).*

Using similar minimalist design cues, it is apparent that Apple mirrors its product

design in the packaging design. Because Apple uses high-quality materials with

minimalist forms, the packaging should similarly follow suit.

Elvis continues to emphasize the attention to detail that Apple puts in its design process for packaging. He states,

The packaging, like the product it houses, is designed to be

appreciated and valued, becoming a part of the Apple brand story in

its own right. And so, the Apple box becomes more than just a box. It

becomes a keepsake, a symbol of the user's affiliation with the Apple

brand, an object that holds its own significance (Hisao, 2023).

Elvis is hitting home that the reputation Apple has starts with the packaging. The box is almost a preview at the value of the product inside. If a box is of high-quality and design, then one can anticipate a high-quality product to be found inside.

To drive home the value packaging can add to the product, Elvis has this to say about Apple's packaging regarding the product as a whole.

When consumers purchase an Apple product, they don't just acquire

the physical device, but also the whole package, which includes the

packaging itself. By producing high-quality, aesthetically pleasing

packaging, Apple enhances the ownership experience, making the

packaging seem valuable and worth keeping (Hsiao, 2023).

What Elvis pointed out here was the idea that when a product creates a certain impression, it can lead consumers to expect that same value in other areas such as packaging. This idea lends itself to the thought that consumers have come to expect high-quality machines from Apple, which leads them to expect equally high-quality

packaging. This thought process serves to emphasize the importance of the packaging with the product.

Elvis continues talking about Apple's packaging, but he begins to describe the unboxing experience and its importance.

> When you unbox an Apple product, you're not merely opening a box, you're engaging in a ritual. The very act of unboxing is designed to build anticipation and create a memorable first interaction with the product. As the perfectly fitted lid is slowly lifted, revealing the product nestled within, there's a palpable sense of drama and reveal, akin to a theatrical performance (Hisao, 2023).

The unboxing experience from Apple is described as a ritual. Anticipation and first impressions are the goals of Apple's unboxing experience design. The sensations created from the high-quality packaging adds to the experience as well.

Next, Elvis describes the layout of the contents within the packaging and its importance. Elvis writes,

> The unboxing experience extends even to the way the accessories and product information are packaged. Every item has its own place. Accessories are tucked away neatly in compartments or envelopes, often with small tabs that allow you to lift them out easily. In every aspect, the design of the box and the arrangement of the contents are created with intention, ensuring a smooth and enjoyable unboxing process (Hisao, 2023).

Once the packaging is opened, the presentation is furthered by the placement of contents in their own compartment. The anticipation and first impressions are carried out to the end of the unboxing experience.

Unboxing experiences have become more relevant in today's markets because of the growth of unboxing videos on social media platforms such as YouTube. Talking about the importance of the unboxing experience in relation to these videos is Phil Forbes from PackHelp.com (2023). Phil lists the following statistics regarding unboxing review content:

> *Over 80% of shoppers research a product before buying. Almost 3 in 4*
>
> *won't take any action toward buying until they've read a review of the*
>
> *brand or product. Finally, conversion rates go up almost 400% when*
>
> *high-ticket items have positive reviews. With this in mind, there's a*
>
> *very high chance that anyone doing research is going to come across*
>
> *your brand, and someone unboxing it and reviewing it (Forbes, 2023).*

Forbes points out how customers today are much more likely to check reviews on products before purchasing an item. It is important the unboxing experience is elevated so that customers watching reviews can have a good first impression of the product before purchasing. Shot changing the unboxing experience design can result in poor unboxing reviews. As a result, the content creator could recommend customers not purchase the product.

The packaging and all its contents can become very valuable when consumers or collectors are purchasing products in the secondary markets. Many times, the resale

value of an item goes down if it does not have its original packaging with it. An article

from Watchmaster.com explains the importance of original packaging, using Rolex

watches as an example.

> *People who decide to buy a pre-owned Rolex tend to seek not only the*
>
> *watch but the warranty certificates that accompany it as well. More*
>
> *often than that, most prefer to buy a full set, which means the watch*
>
> *in its original box, including all the paperwork (Watchmaster, 2022).*

According to the article, original packaging and its contents can add on average

up to 10% in resale value (Watchmaster, 2022). Missing these items can bring the value

down. Therefore, it should be emphasized the importance of durable, well-designed

packaging that consumers are more likely to keep and preserve.

Because packaging can add such value to an item, there is bound to be imitation

versions on the market. Watchmaster continues by discussing methods of catching a

fake Rolex box. Below is a paraphrased list of design aspects to study when

authenticating a Rolex box:

- Workmanship: Does the box seem subpar in build and quality? Rolex will
  not send a box out unless it matches the highest level of quality

- Logo and lettering: Is the font consistent? Is the letter-spacing correct? Is
  the Rolex logo accurate?

- Color: Use professional help from someone such as a jeweler to study the
  color accuracies (Watchmaster, 2022)

A few different points can be taken from this list. First, it shows how important details can be when distinguishing 'real' from 'fake'. Secondly, it shows the importance of brands being consistent with their design cues. Design cues can mean using the same color, placing logos and lettering in the same place, and keeping the construction consistent in order to ensure consumers can distinguish real products from the fakes. It would be detrimental for someone to think a brand's genuine packaging is fake because of poor attention to details. The last point to be made would be that designers can use these tactics to their advantage. Designers can implement extra points of identification in the packaging design for collectors to use to authenticate items. For example, extra areas of text, specific textures on areas, stickers, pamphlets with information about the item, and more can be used to give collectors more points of identification for authenticating items. As a result, counterfeit items can be easily recognized as well.

Regarding packaging design, the design should reflect the design philosophy of the product inside. In an article by Deborah William, she gives a brief breakdown of Apple's packaging strategy.

> *Apart from the fact that Apple is a household name, its minimalist*
>
> *style is iconic. Its crisp white packaging, paired with the black Apple*
>
> *logo and high-resolution product images, allows customers to view*
>
> *their purchase in 2D before even opening the package. This alone*
>
> *creates enough buzz for reviewers to promote their unboxing*
>
> *experience (Williams, 2020).*

Williams continues to describe companies with great unboxing experiences. The next brand she discusses is M.M. LaFleur, a direct-to-consumer women's apparel brand. The article is as follows:

> Just like a traditional food bento box, M.M. LaFleur's comes with
>
> different compartments and layers – organized and well presented,
>
> just like the brand's target market. The lid has a poem printed on the
>
> inside, which reads: "Crack the code. Take the stage. Rewrite the rules.
>
> Lay down the law. Defy the odds. Think on the spot. Break the ice. Cut
>
> to the chase. Turn on a dime. Go out on a limb. Knock their socks off.
>
> What will you do in your MM (Williams, 2020)?

M.M. LaFleur does a handful of successful things with its packaging. The brand gives its packaging another function to serve with the ability to carry it as a briefcase (Williams, 2020). It also introduces itself to the customer with a welcoming poem that describes the brand's mission. Organizing contents, serving a second function, and creating a personal experience are all successful traits exhibited by M.M. LaFleur.

After unboxing, packaging can continue to serve a function for the customer. One strategy to accomplish this can be a DIY (do it yourself) functionality. Altoids, a famous breath-mint company, uses tin cans for its packaging. Customers have found many uses for the product's packaging after its mints have been exhausted. An article from SOFREP Media Group lists twenty different uses found for these tin metal cans from Altoids (Group, S.M., 2019).

1.) First Aid Kit

2.) Electronics Lab

3.) Charcloth Maker

4.) Pocket Games Chest

5.) Martini On the Go Kit

6.) Mini Flashlight

7.) Portable BBQ Stove

8.) Survival Kit

9.) Covert Dart Gun

10.) S'mores Pocket Snack Kit

11.) Pinhole Camera

12.) Fire Starting Kit

13.) Morse Code Oscillator

14.) Pocket Watercolor Kit

15.) Alcohol Stove

16.) Emergency Candle

17.) Urban Survival Kit

18.) Tackle Box

19.) Lipstick Storage

20.) Coin Purse

Altoids cans are simple in use and construction, which allow for many different applications after the mints are gone. Using durable materials for the packaging also allows for these DIY second functions to be useful for longer. Altoids does not

necessarily promote this DIY function, but it could be utilized by a designer to encourage customers to do so.

When designing the packaging, it can be useful to consider the standard lids and boxes available. Below is a list of available box and lid options available from Marion Box Paper Company (n.d.):

- Shoebox Lid

- Telescope Lid

- Partial Telescope

- Hinged Lid

- Specialty Lids (Marion Box Paper Company, n.d.)

Marion Paper Box Company offers a good look at the types of boxes and lids commonly available by them for packaging. Being aware of these options is important for designers when dealing with mass producing a product.

2.5   Materials

Materials can greatly affect the capability and lifespan of products. Physical durability should be a priority to ensure the intended function is achieved. This study discusses materials that are considered durable and/or premium. It is recognized that some materials discussed are not considered sustainable. This study is not focusing on sustainable materials. While the materials may not be sustainable, the study addresses sustainability in that it aims to create products that consumers hold on to rather than discarding. In an article about toys for children, author Cat Bowen (2022) says the following:

Kids love toys, and they're an essential part of a child's development.

But did you know that 26.8 million toys are thrown away each year,

and over 90% of that is made from plastics? That's a lot of landfill —

but thankfully, sustainable toys can help alleviate that by making

sturdy, durable, fun toys that are also made of better for the earth

materials (Bowen, 2022).

Cat is discussing both durable and sustainable materials available in children's toys. Materials that are more durable can be less likely to be thrown away. Instead of breaking down, these products can be used for longer. Once children outgrow them, they can be passed down to other children instead of being thrown away. Simultaneously, parents can feel better knowing the materials are better for the earth when their time is up with the toy. Cat continues to describe the benefits of these durable, sustainable toys, saying,

I've had the chance to watch toddlers interact with this hardwood,

certified-safe toy, and I can't tell you how much joy it brought them

and how much abuse it can take. The way kids flung themselves into

running the characters over the tracks would make the New York City

MTA blush. And it didn't show any wear (Bowen, 2022).

Cat describes how much fun her children have with these toys because they can withstand the wear and tear that they put them through. Materials that are physically durable can stand the test of time, which can lead to longer lasting enjoyment. As a result, a longer emotional durability can also be achieved.

Fun and durable items are useless to a designer if one does not know which of these materials are available. Author and collector Asenva from BJD Life writes an article about dolls and the popular materials used to manufacture them. Asenva says,

ABS BJD dolls are favored by collectors and enthusiasts alike due to their affordability, accessibility, and aesthetic appeal. One of the primary advantages of using ABS plastic in BJD doll making is its ability to withstand impact and resist scratches (Asenva, 2023).

Here, Asenva states that ABS plastic is a popular material used in manufacturing Ball-Jointed Dolls (BJD). ABS is affordable, durable, accessible, and achieves a nice finish. The plastic allows for long term wear and tear without looking like it has gone through such. ABS makes for excellent plastic when creating a toy or collectible product.

Regarding plastics, LEGO offers a very insightful article listing the types of materials they use in different bricks and pieces in their offered products. These materials all serve different purposes for LEGO and can be a helpful tool for designers when choosing materials for a product. A paraphrased list of materials from LEGO has been provided below:

ABS (Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene) hard, very scratch resistant plastic that is optimal for keeping bricks locked together

HIPS (High Impact Polystyrene) strong and tough material which is useful for making base plates

MABS (Methyl methacrylate-acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene) used specifically to

make elements that need to be transparent, such as windscreens, lightsaber

blades and transparent plates

PC (Polycarbonate) is a strong and impact resistant material used to make

elements such as hinges and ball and cup connectors

TPU (Thermoplastic Polyurethane) Good for bending and twisting while

remaining locked (LEGO Group, 2023)

It may be a surprise to learn that LEGO uses so many mixed materials in their

products, considering how cohesive all LEGO pieces are. Each material serves a different

purpose, some of which include transparency, vibrancy, flexibility, durability, and

detailing. Despite the vast number of materials, nearly all LEGO pieces are designed to

fit or interact with each other as a family of pieces.

Another popular plastic option is vinyl, or PVC. It is a common material used in

many applications, especially decorative toys. This material is not generally considered

sustainable, although it offers its own unique benefits that company ZARGES touches on

in an article on their website.

The vinyl material is strong, durable, abrasion, and moisture resistant.

These properties make it a great material choice for art toys. These

collectibles can make it through the most challenging of shipping

handlers unscathed. If a rogue deliveryman tosses your collectible onto

your doorstep, chances are the toy will not break (ZARGES, n.d.).

Vinyl is a good option for toys or products that need to be lightweight and durable. This material can take a beating and come out looking unscathed. While a durable material, it is recognized that vinyl is not beneficial to sustainable design. This study is focusing on premium, durable materials. It acknowledges the environmental concerns of some materials. Still, this material exhibits strong characteristics that make it valuable for products such as collectable dolls.

Materials can also convey certain feelings or atmosphere in a space. Discussing luxurious materials and their characteristics is Steven on his website InteriorsbyStevenG.com. Below is a paraphrase list of the materials mentioned by Steven:

Gold- used in luxury interior design fixtures, can add warmth and richness to a space

Silver- used in luxury design fixtures, can add sparkle and a clean feel

Silk- luxurious fabric, soft feel, elegant appearance, adds a royal look

Velvet- luxurious fabric, soft, smooth, can add pops of color and a hint of shine in direct lighting

Leather- highly durable material, versatile, requires minimal maintenance and develops character with age (Steven, G, 2023).

Materials such as gold can give off a warm feeling, while silver gives off a clean and sleek feel. Fabrics can add texture to an item, giving off their own unique characteristics. Designers can consider these attributes when in the product design process.

Wood is another common material that can come in premium variants, some of which are not considered sustainable. Wood manufacturing company Timberlane offers a chart of premium wood characteristics as shown in Figure 2.2.

A CLOSER LOOK AT PREMIUM WOODS

	NEMESU MAHOGANY	WESTERN RED CEDAR	SPANISH CEDAR	SAPELE MAHOGANY
COLOR	Dark reddish hardwood	Reddish to pinkish brown softwood	Light pinkish to reddish brown hardwood	Dark reddish brown hardwood
STAINING	Stains well	Stains well	Stains well	Stains well
GROWTH AREA	Southeast Asia	Pacific Northwest	Central/South America and the Caribbean	Tropical Africa
SUITABLE FOR EXTERIOR USE	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
ALSO KNOWN AS	Meranti, Dark Red Meranti, or Shorea	Thuja Plicata	Cedrela Odorata, Cedro	Sapelli
COMMON USES	Exterior construction including siding, stairs, doors, and boat building	Roof shingles and shakes, exterior finishings, utility poles, fence posts, piling, paper pulp, and various types of containers	Cabinetry, fine furniture, musical instruments, boat building, cigar boxes	Furniture, cabinetry, decorative veneers, plywood, flooring, paneling
DURABILITY	Resistant to termites	Resistant to termites	Resistant to termites	Moderate termite resistance
GRAIN	Interlocked grain, moderately coarse texture	Straight grain & medium to coarse texture	Straight or shallow interlocked	Interlocked and sometimes wavy
SMELL	No characteristic odor	Cedar-like aroma: sweet, pleasant smell	Distinctive cedar-like aroma	Cedar-like aroma
BENDING STRENGTH (DRY)	17.761 psi	7,500 psi	10,260 psi	15,930 psi
AVERAGE WEIGHT (DRY)	49 lbs./ft^3	23 lbs./ft^3	29 lbs./ft^3	42 lbs./ft^3
RADIAL SHRINKAGE	4.0%	2.4%	4.1%	4.8%
GRAIN APPEARANCE				

https://www.timberlane.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Timberlane-Premium-Wood-Comparison.pdf

Figure 2.2 Premium Woods (Inc., T , 2023)

Here, Timberlane highlights characteristics of different types of premium woods

available (Inc., T., 2023). While premium woods may not be considered sustainable, this

study is not focusing on this aspect of materials. Some of the features considered are

grain, staining ability, durability, smell, and weight. These premium woods can be a

viable option when wanting to elevate a product that is using wood.

Further studies into packaging design and product release strategies are

continued using case studies in Chapter 3.

3 Case Studies

To practically apply the design principles, values, and frameworks from Chapter 2, a review of specific cases was conducted to create strategies that will later be used in the design approach. The case studies found here are broken into the two following major categories: packaging design and product release strategies. Strategies were created by studying products and identifying specific design tactics that they each utilized.

3.1   Packaging Design

To create packaging design strategies for this approach, existing types of packaging were identified and later expanded upon. The existing types of packaging can be found in Figure 3.1. Existing functions of packaging were expanded on and adapted into an Expanded Functions of Packaging chart (seen in Appendix 1), which are later used in the design approach in Chapter 4.

Levels of Packaging

Figure 3.1 Levels of Packaging (GeeksforGeeks, n.d.)

After completing this research on functions of packaging, two further functions, titled 'Surprise' and 'Showcase', were added to these 3 existing levels for the approach discussed in Chapter 4. New and existing levels of packaging were then used to create the Expanded Functions of Packaging (seen in Appendix A) (adapted from the Levels of Packaging in Figure 3.1). All levels of packaging were adapted to utilize names beginning with the letter 'S' to create a cohesive, easy-to-read tool to follow regarding packaging design. The existing functions including 'Primary', 'Secondary', and 'Transportation' were adapted to 'Sell', 'Stock', and 'Ship', respectively and are referenced in Chapter 2, Packaging.

The following list showcases all identified functions of packaging and their adapted name for the Expanded Functions of Packaging:

- Display ⟶ Showcase – Serves new function for display after unboxing

- Unboxing ⟶ Surprise – Offers a memorable unboxing experience with presentation

- Primary ⟶ Sell – Grabs consumer's attention on shelves to encourage purchase

- Secondary ⟶ Stock – Protects and displays product on shelves for point of purchase

- Transportation ⟶ Ship – Protects product when in transport

For case studies conducted on packaging design, levels 'Sell', 'Surprise', and 'Showcase' were focused on due to their importance regarding design and marketing of products. The remaining functions, 'Ship', 'Stock', are less relevant to this study due to their primary function being simply protecting the product before the point of purchase. Therefore, these two were not explored in these case studies.

3.2   Sell

'Sell' represents the marketing of the packaging of products. The following functions for collectible products were determined and analyzed: functional, play, display, and an example of two being blended in play/display.

3.2.1 Packaging for 'Functional' Products

Figure 3.2 iPhone packaging (Apple Inc., 2021)

Apple makes high-end, functional items that may not be intentionally designed to be collectible. Still, many consumers choose to hold on to the boxes after opening their Apple product, because Apple designs the packaging to be seen as part of the entire product experience (Hisao, 2023). This unassuming packaging has become a part of the collecting experience. Factors in Apple's marketing of the packaging can be recognized and imitated.

Apple's packaging featured in Figure 3.2 keeps a minimalist theme. Apple has built a trusted reputation with consumers to the point that people know what they're getting when they are interested in getting something in that product category. The product is largely left to speak for itself. To do this, Apple simply displays a high-res image on the front of the box with no text. One side of the packaging describes the name of the model, 'iPhone', and nothing else. The bottom of the box utilizes Apple's iconic logo with nothing else. The entire packaging utilizes images, logos, and only a few pieces of

text. Products that are primarily functional and want to utilize similar, emotionally

durable marketing strategies should consider the following identified strategies:

- High-resolution hero shot on front, no words

- Simple logo on one side, no words

- Name of model on one side, few words

- Mimic design philosophy of product inside

3.2.2 Packaging for 'Play' Products

Figure 3.3 Star Wars LEGO Set (The LEGO Group, n.d.)

Shown in Figure 3.3 is a LEGO set from the Star Wars series. This example falls into

the 'play' category of this approach analysis, with this collectible product being intended

to be played with. The packages' marketing is specific to its target audience, children

ages 8+ as indicated in the top left corner of the front side of the packaging.

Aspects from this playful style of package marketing can be analyzed to create a set of packaging marketing strategies for products in this play category. First, there is a large hero shot with an in-context background that can be easier for younger audiences to see and read.

Second, the large text image at the top showcases the theme of the set, Star Wars. The Star Wars logo is prominent, making it recognizable at a quick glance on the shelves. Beside the logo is a prominent character associated with the set, which is another important **POI**, or point of identification.

The packaging largely only features text displaying the target age range and the number of pieces that are in the set. With the target audience being much younger, the packaging relies on large and engaging hero shots to communicate the product. Another point to make is that the location of these **POI**s is consistent across different sets. This can allow consumers to quickly identify the set for purchase. It also allows collectors to recognize important information that dictates value when displaying or reselling.

Marketing strategies to consider when designing emotionally durable packaging for a playful product include:

- Large hero shot with in-context background

- Large image showing theme

- Consistent location of POI's

- Smaller images with characters from the set

- Minimal text POI's

- Consistent colors across similar sets

3.2.3 Packaging for 'Display' Products

Figure 3.4 Spiderman Funko Pop (Funko, n.d.)

Funko Inc. is a toy and memorabilia company famous for its series of collectibles known as 'Funko Pops', see Figure 3.4. These products typically consist of a vinyl bobblehead or figure with an exaggerated headpiece representing its respective character (Scott, 2022). Both children and adults can be considered the target audience, with its simple design platform being easily adapted to virtually any character of choice. These products are typically intended to be collected and therefore use marketing strategies that differ from a more functional product.

Using the example in Figure 3.4, Funko's marketing on its packaging will be analyzed. First, Funko utilizes a clear window in the packaging that displays the product from within the box. This is Funko's version of a hero shot on the packaging. Products that are designed as collectibles can sometimes never leave the packaging. These

products retain the most value by remaining in the packaging (Mininni, 2023). While collectors do not always look to make money off their collectibles, preserving the value of the item can still be important because of the attachment collectors have with their items.

Funko also uses an image for a hero shot on the front, but this can be seen as more of a way to grab attention while on retail shelves. Unlike Apple, Funko uses a lot of text and imagery on the packaging. These products aren't very functional, so text and images are not used to explain how the item works. Instead, they can serve different purposes such as showing logos, make, model, year, theme, variant, and other collectibles in the set.

All these points of identification, or **POI**s, can seem redundant or repetitive at times. However, they can add more details for collectors to recognize, appreciate, and even use for authentication (Watchmaster, 2022). Over time, themes and characters can begin to overlap and repeat. By offering all this information on the packaging, collectors can have the ability to identify the make and model of each figure. When models are reproduced, collectors can sometimes want to know exactly which production run a model comes from before purchasing. Values can differ greatly based on which production run a model is from (Initial Pop Price Guide, n.d.). Typically, the original models hold higher values (Initial Pop Price Guide, n.d.). Models from different production runs can have different **POI**s on them, allowing collectors to identify the origins of that model. The strategy behind production runs, or release strategies, will be touched on more later.

In conclusion, utilizing **POI**s on the packaging can help collectors identify or estimate the desired information about the specific model. This ability can result in a better collecting experience. The packaging marketing strategies for emotional durability that can be utilized for a primarily collectible product include the following:

- Integrated window to view product through packaging

- Consistent **POI**s for marketing and collecting purposes

- Highlight the brand's logo

- Identify make, model, and year

- Identify the theme or collaborating brand

- Identify the variant of the model

- Show other collectibles in set

3.2.4   Case Study - Packaging for 'Play/Display' Products

Figure 3.5 LEGO Creator Set (LEGO, n.d.)

Figure 3.5 shows an example of a LEGO set intended for a slightly older audience, as indicated by the 14+ labeling on the top far left of the front side of the packaging. The packaging for the older audience can be recognized as more of a display piece because of the simple, elegant graphics shown. This style is reminiscent of Apple's minimalist theme mentioned earlier. The packaging shows the consumer a nice hero shot with not much of an in-context picture. The brand does not have to worry as much about grabbing the attention of an adult compared to a child who is passing it by on a shelf. Instead, LEGO can use a clean hero shot to show what the item would look like on display after being assembled.

The top right of the front of the packaging can be seen showing a graphic with the word 'expert'. This **POI** is indicating the intended skill level of the user assembling this set, but it does not exclude other ages that may want to give it a try. Rather than just a skill level indicator, someone with a lower skill level could view this as a goal to reach. As a result, one could be motivated to purchase lower skilled sets to gain experience. Later, that user could feel accomplished and experienced enough to tackle the expert level set. By doing this, it can create a level of competition for the user to push themselves to achieve a goal which could create a stronger emotional attachment to the product and brand (Collectibles Insurance Services, 2023).

The rest of the packaging marketing uses a few **POI**s such as text for the model number, total number of pieces, brand logo, brand collaborations, and more views of the product. Certain **POI**s remain consistent with other themes of LEGO's sets, such as the model number and number of pieces in the set. This consistency keeps the sets

cohesive across the board of LEGO products despite the different target audiences. This is a product meant for play and display for an older audience, and it uses a blend of minimalist, playful, and display-ready marketing packaging themes.

Packaging marketing techniques that can be used for a play and display product with an older audience include:

- Simple hero shot with little to no in-context images

- Darker background to highlight product

- Model number

- Target audience **POI**

- Skill level **POI**

- Image showing collaboration with brand

- Multiple views for smaller hero shots

- Brand logo

This product can be described as a toy meant for display for an older audience. Because of its function and target audience, the packaging marketing uses a blend of minimalist factors similar to Apple and collectible toy factors similar to Funko. Understanding strategies for different functions and audiences can allow a designer to mix and match strategies to fit their own intended audience and function.

Three different marketing strategies were identified across successful collectible products and brands. An example was given that blended two of the strategies, showing that they can be cross-collaborative. Strategic marketing on the packaging of one's

collectible product can convey the correct message of intent to the customer while also

creating a better collecting experience after the point of sale.

3.3   Surprise

The 'Surprise' of the packaging functions represents the unboxing experience. The

unboxing experience of the following products were analyzed: Apple iPhone, SCUF

Instinct Pro Controller, and Glossier Cosmetics Pack.

3.3.1   Unboxing Experience- iPhone

Figure 3.6 iPhone next to its Packaging (Schofield, 2022)

Apple executes many packaging design strategies successfully, which is why its

devices are analyzed in multiple sections of the packaging design approach. In the

marketing strategy of packaging, Apple imitates its minimalist product design through

simple graphics and little text. Here, Apple continues to imitate the minimalist product

design but through experience and feeling (Figure 3.6). Apple taps into sensations when

unboxing these devices (Hisao, 2023).

Figure 3.7 iPhone Unboxing Experience (Brockwell, 2014)

When an iPhone is being unboxed, the top layer is separated from the bottom by

gravity (Figure 3.7). When this top layer is removed, it is slowly released because of the

tight tolerances in the packaging manufacturing (Hisao, 2023). Precision in the

manufacturing process results in a satisfying and detailed unboxing experience. This

precision and attention to detail is reminiscent of the product design used in the iPhone

itself. Apple continuously mimics its product design in every aspect of its packaging.

Figure 3.8 iPhone with Factory Screen Protection (Miller, 2021)

Upon opening, the customer is immediately presented with the iPhone lying

neatly in its snug compartment. However, there is a paper screen protector on the

screen which somewhat conceals the identity of the phone (Figure 3.8). At first glance,

this could be thought of as ruining the unveiling experience because it hides the

beautiful screen beneath. Instead, the screen protector can create an anticipation and

buildup for the unboxing. Rather than being given the entire product at once, the

customer can have an extended, enjoyable presentation. The dramatic removal of the

screen protector can also convey a satisfying sound and feeling. Apple taps into many

sensations to create this high-end unboxing experience.

Figure 3.9 iPhone and Packaging Contents Unboxed (Pacdora, n.d.)

The next piece to Apple's unboxing experience is the accessories included with the

product. The chargers, cables, and pamphlets are hidden underneath the phone, which

creates another layer of anticipation and unveiling. All the accompanying accessories

have their own compartment in the packaging that keeps them neat and organized for

the unboxing (Figure 3.9). Being organized serves little to no function, as the accessories

do not need a high level of protection during transport. However, pieces rattling around

in the box during transport would interrupt the unboxing experience Apple wants to

achieve. Just as they imitate the sleek, clean product design with the rest of the

packaging, creating compartments and a nice layout for the accessories ensures the

message and experience is carried out to the very end (Hisao, 2023).

Figure 3.10 Stickers from iPhone Unboxing Experience (Apple Explained, 2021)

Finally, Apple traditionally includes stickers featuring the brand's iconic logo

(Figure 3.10). These stickers cannot be purchased alone, rather they are seen more as

an exclusive gift to the customer. The stickers can be thought of as a little show of

gratitude by Apple to the customer. It can be the thought that counts when showing

customers extra levels of care outside of the product itself. These small stickers can add

emotional value to the entire experience that is created for the product and its

packaging.

3.3.2   Unboxing Experience- Scuf Controller

Figure 3.11 Scuf Instinct Pro Packaging (Murphy, 2022)

Scuf is a company that makes high-end video game controllers for PC, Xbox, and

PlayStation consoles. Controllers from this brand typically cost between $200 and $300

(Scuf Gaming, n.d.) while standard controllers are around $60 (Microsoft, 2023). Like

before, high-end products should be preceded with high-end packaging and unboxing

experiences. Scuf creates an experience that is worthy of its high dollar price tag.

Figure 3.12 Scuf packaging sleeve design (VSG, 2020)

Scuf's packaging uses a sleeve design which allows most of the marketing to be separate from the box itself (Figure 3.12Figure 3.12). This sleeve can act as a cost-efficient way to modify or update packaging marketing without remanufacturing the entire packaging. Scuf has an internal package that is somewhat universal to the different brands it designs for, while the outer sleeve can be more interchangeable and cost-effective. This packaging method shows that high-end unboxing experiences do not always require the most expensive means. Instead, the experience created can be valued higher than the cost of materials.

Figure 3.13 Scuf Instinct Pro Reveal on Opening (Murphy, 2022)

Next, Scuf takes a similar strategy to Apple's with the unveiling of the device

immediately (Figure 3.13Figure 3.13). To open, the box uses a fold over design that can

offer a satisfying reveal of the product. After opening the box, a customer is

immediately greeted with Scuf's slogan, 'Change Your Game.' This is a good location to

make a first impression statement about the product one is delivering. Simultaneously,

the product is revealed in a displaying fashion. The device is tucked nicely in a

compartment customized to the device's dimensions. Here, Scuf could have followed in

Apple's shoes and covered the controller in a bag or sheet to create even more

anticipation. Still, the compartment holding the controller creates a nice presentation

that seems as if it has been waiting excitedly for its new owner. Consider the emotions

felt when opening gifts for a special event. The unboxing experience can help create the

emotional attachment that later encourages consumers to want to hold onto packaging

rather than throwing it away. The act of holding onto packaging can be considered a

sustainable strategy, because packaging waste is now reduced. Also, as a result, the

product and packaging can now be considered a collected item. When others share that

same experience of holding onto these items, the product can come to be known as a

commonly collected item.

Figure 3.14 Scuf Instinct Pro Controller Packaging Contents Unboxed (Daniel, 2021)

Figure 3.15 Pamphlet from Scuf Unboxing Experience

Finally, the extra accessories and cables are revealed beneath the controller

(Figure 3.15). Like Apple's packaging, this layer of the unboxing experience does not fall

short. Included with the accessories is a pamphlet where Scuf gives illustrations of how

to operate the device. Scuf missed out on this opportunity to give the customer a story

about the device, its design, the team that created it, and any other information that

could create a deeper connection between the designers and the customer. Still, nearly

to the last detail this experience is a complete presentation. Each accessory is secure in

its own compartment, adding to the presentation.

3.3.3   Unboxing Experience- Glossier

Figure 3.16 Glossier Packaging Opened (Berg, 2019)

Some designers may not have access to funds for fully custom packaging. Options exist to bring a premium, caring feel to conventional packaging without breaking the bank. Glossier is a beauty company that ships its products in a more traditional cardboard packaging. This style of packaging is cardboard on the outside, but the consumer is hit with vibrant colors when the box is opened (Williams, 2020). On the inside of the packaging, Glossier uses lithographic printing to cover the packaging in its eye-popping pink color head to toe (Figure 3.16). This strategy means one can use conventional packaging while still making it their own in a cost-effective way.

Figure 3.17 Statement Shown on Inside of Packaging (Berg, 2019)

When the customer opens the box, he/she is greeted with a friendly statement in bold text (Figure 3.17). This area on the box is a good opportunity to convey a message to the consumer about one's brand and its beliefs. Utilize the space on packaging to convey a desired message to the customer. Next, the contents are immediately presented to the customer. Glossier does not utilize the compartments as shown in the previous examples, but one large, empty compartment is a cost-efficient method that can accommodate the many different products Glossier ships. Besides the products that were ordered, Glossier includes extra contents within the box to create a more personal connection with the customer. These extra efforts by companies will be known as **connection points**. Similar to Apple, Glossier uses a sheet of stickers that can be used by the customer. These stickers are not paid for by the customer. Instead, Glossier chooses to go the extra mile to show the customer gratitude for doing business with them. As an

extra benefit, the company can now gain free advertisement when the stickers are

placed somewhere. The company also includes a card that markets other products

offered by Glossier. The card then has a sample of the product attached to it. Cards like

these can also be used to offer a personal story about the company or the product.

Sharing stories can create a more personal connection with the customer. While small

gestures, it can truly be the thought that counts when trying to create a meaningful

unboxing experience from start to finish.

Figure 3.18 Glossier Resealable Bubble Wrap Bag (Claire, 2017)

Glossier also uses resealable bubble wrap packaging to house the products in

shipment. These pink disposable bags can then be used by customers after the unboxing

experience is finished (Figure 3.18). This extra function of packaging will be touched on in 'Showcase' section of the Expanded Functions of Packaging case studies. Still, this is another way Glossier is enabling customers to continue to associate with the brand even after the products themselves have been used.

Creating a premium unboxing experience does not mean the designer must use the most expensive materials. Find ways to create a personal and memorable unboxing experience with the resources available.

3.3.4 Unboxing Experience- ThinkPad X1 Carbon 9th Gen

Figure 3.19 ThinkPad Packaging (Jacques, 2020)

Now that products with successful unboxing experiences have been analyzed, it is important to look at a less successful unboxing experience. IBM's ThinkPad is a high-end business laptop starting around $1,000 and going upward of $2,200 (Lenovo, 2023). Such a high dollar price tag, according to previous examples, should point towards a similarly high-end unboxing experience. However, this high-end ThinkPad is delivered with a standard cardboard box with only one repetitive graphic to differentiate it from any other generic package in shipping (Figure 3.19).

Figure 3.20 ThinkPad Interior Packaging (Loyolan Ventures, LLC, n.d.)

Once opened, the laptop is secured with foam cutouts loosely holding the device

in place (Figure 3.20). The device is then wrapped loosely in a plastic bag. The

accessories with the device are stored loosely in a smaller cardboard box wherever it

will fit within the packaging. These accessories are also kept in a clear plastic bag with

no experience of a reveal or unveiling.

In an unboxing video on YouTube, popular unboxing channel Mash IT unboxed a

ThinkPad X1 Carbon 9th Gen. After retrieving the laptop from the packaging, the

content creator had this to say about the unboxing experience:

> *And that is it. Quite a bare bones experience. It's not even a nice box*
>
> *like you get with the X1 series or laptops. Quite disappointing, right?*

Considering this is £1500 in the U.K., that's a bit of a disappointing

unboxing experience (Mash IT, 2021).

This quote from the content creator emphasizes the thought that a high-end product should have a high-end unboxing experience. Instead of delivering such an experience, the ThinkPad is presented to the customer in as little packaging as possible. Giving Lenovo the benefit of the doubt, it is possible that the brand is using this minimal packaging as a sustainability strategy. However, if this is the case, then ThinkPad's designers should highlight this in some way. One does not necessarily have to tell everyone when they are trying to be more sustainable. However, it is important here to justify the otherwise random, cost-reducing design decisions when creating the unboxing experience, or lack thereof. If the same cardboard packaging was kept, then ThinkPad could print graphics explaining the benefits of this sustainable packaging. A story about what this packaging is helping do for the world would be a compelling story that may lead to a customer being content with the lack of an unboxing experience. However, it is not made clear by ThinkPad whether this is the reason for the unboxing design decisions.

From the product packaging that was analyzed, a list of unboxing experience strategies was created (seen in Appendix 2). These strategies aim to help a designer design an unboxing experience that creates a memorable presentation for the product inside.

'Surprise' Strategies for Creating an Unboxing Experience

- Create a memorable unboxing experience

- Create a presentation with story, anticipation, mystery, and organization

- Choose a type of reveal:

  o Shoebox lid

  o Telescope lid

  o Hinged lid

  o Sleeve

  o Custom (Marion Box Paper Company, n.d.)

- Statement on packaging sharing brand's message to customer

- Reveal product on opening, but keep hidden via bag, sheet, etc.

- Compartments for all contents for presentation and organization

- Include exclusive gifts or connection points

  o Stickers

  o Coins

  o Letter

  o Story about brand or product

  o Ways to connect with brand

3.4   Showcase

Next, the 'Showcase' component of the packaging chart represents ways that

packaging can be used to display products or brands after the packaging has been

opened. The extended function of the packaging aims to encourage consumers to keep

the packaging by protecting the product during transport, creating a display for the

product, and preserving its value. By examining products with extended packaging

functions, a list of common functions was created for methods of display after the

unboxing is completed. The functions identified were transportation, storage, display,

and DIY.

3.4.1   Beats by Dre Extended Function- Transportation

Figure 3.21 Beats by Dre Packaging Contents (Paul, 2018)

Beats by Dre is a very popular, trendy brand of headphones and other audio

devices (Figure 3.21). Now owned by Apple, Beats' packaging has been designed to be

reminiscent of its parent company. Still, the brand retains its core design strategies in its packaging. The brand can be known for its bold colors and trendy aesthetics compared to the traditionally less stylish competitors in the audio industry.

Figure 3.22 Beats by Dre Headphones in Carrying Case (Paul, 2018)

Beats by Dre, or known simply as Beats, creates a secondary function for packaging after unboxing by including a carrying case for the headphones (Figure 3.22). Even more, they include a carabiner on the case that allows the case to be attached on the outside of travel bags which allows it to be displayed even when not in use. Beats commonly utilizes black and red color schemes in its brand language (Lambrechts, 2018). A red stripe along the zipper is commonly found on the carrying case of Beats' products. Consumers can quickly recognize this striking color on the case as a Beats product. The case is serving as a protective solution during transport, but it is also

serving as a display and advertisement for the product. As a result, customers can be encouraged to hold onto these cases to be associated with this recognizable brand.

3.4.2   Rolex Packaging Extended Function - Storage

Figure 3.23 Rolex Packaging Contents (HG Milton, n.d.)

Rolex is a classic, luxurious watch brand with a rich history. Its iconic crown logo and green color are easily recognized worldwide. The brand's unboxing experience is equally high-end. The brand goes a step further and creates a second function for the packaging (Figure 3.23 and Figure 3.24). Rolex creates its own display out of the packaging it delivers its watch to the customer in. So, after the unboxing experience is over, the same packaging serves a new function that encourages the customer to keep the packaging along with the product. Rolex designs its packaging with more than just the unboxing experience in mind. By using the highest quality materials, the packaging

can last as long as the product. Rolex uses premium materials that tap into the

sensation of touch, but the smell of these premium materials can also play a role. Like

Apple, Rolex can tap into different sensations in order to deliver a luxurious and

collectible experience.

Figure 3.24 Rolex Box Opened (Watchmaster, 2022)

Because this repeating storage function is intended, the way the box is opened

and accessed must come into consideration. The box cannot have a complicated

opening function that requires removing pieces to access the product. Instead, the

opening of the box should be simple. The product should immediately be revealed and

accessible. Earlier in the unboxing experience, it was mentioned that anticipation and

mystery can add to the unboxing experience. This is still true. However, once the

packaging begins to serve as a place for storage between uses, it needs to be quickly

accessible. This may seem contradictory, but there is a simple solution. For the unboxing experience, a protective bag or sheet can be used to create the anticipation or mystery for the unboxing. Once the unboxing has occurred, that item can be discarded or repurposed. From then on, the product can now be immediately revealed and accessible. As a result, both the unboxing experience and storage function can be achieved within the same packaging.

3.4.3   Funko Pop! Extended Function- Display

Figure 3.25 Captain America Funko Pop (Amazon.com, Inc., n.d.)

Funko Pops, having already been analyzed previously, are an intentionally collectable figure that serves the purpose to primarily be collected and displayed. A product like these fits into the 'Showcase' level of the Functions of Packaging chart because the product's packaging serves a lasting function for the product. Once out of

its secondary packaging, the packaging in Figure 3.25 often does not leave the side of the figure inside. Because of its collectible nature, the packaging of these products is often seen as an essential component to the overall value of the collectible, especially in secondary markets (Watchmaster, 2022).

Figure 3.26 Stack of Assorted Funko Pops (Studdard, 2023)

Because the product may never leave the packaging, it is important the designer consider that as a possibility when designing the packaging. Due to this function, the packaging in Funko Pops features a large, wrap-around window that displays the product without being taken out of the box. Notice how the Funko Pops in Figure 3.26 are being stacked in their packaging. Because the packaging could serve as the display amongst many others like it, it is important that they can be stacked on each other or placed seamlessly beside one another. As a result, the greatest number of products in that line can be collected and displayed simultaneously. The front of the

package still features a hero shot off to the side, but the greatest attention is brought to the physical product itself within the window. The hero shot to the side is used primarily as a POI as discussed in previous sections. **POI**s serve the purpose of marketing first and foremost. Then, they serve the purpose of providing collectors instantly recognizable points of identification to check the condition or authenticity of products. Strategies for **POI**s will be discussed even further in the next section. Regarding the showcasing of the product, **POI**s should be consistent in location and size on the packaging across other models, but they should also be unique in colors and images to the specific model. Themes of the character or product being displayed can be complimented through unique colors, text, and images used on the packaging.

Figure 3.27 Funko Pops for Sale at a Convention (ToyDrops, 2019)

While this product is meant for display only (Figure 3.27), it does not mean it will remain in one location for its entire life cycle. Rather, products that are commonly collected can be frequently bought, sold, and traded amongst other collectors. Funko Pops are a highly collected item because of its massive reach across many fandoms such as Marvel, DC, Star Wars, Disney, Harry Potter, and many more. These collectible figures are used almost as a currency amongst fans, which means they can trade hands often. The packaging now needs to survive the possibility of being sent through the levels of the Functions of Packaging chart multiple times. Products that are intended only to be collectibles must survive the test of time so that they can be enjoyed for as long as possible. By surviving for longer periods of time, the product and brand have the chance to be relevant for longer as well.

3.4.4 Altoids Packaging Extended Function - DIY

Figure 3.28 Altoids Cans being Repurposed (Seacrest, 2016)

If a designer does not have an intended function in mind for his/her packaging after unboxing, then an easy strategy can be to allow the customer to choose a new function, or DIY.

Altoids is a famous mint brand that began in 1780 (Mars, n.d.). The brand has long used a tin can for its packaging which has since become synonymous with the brand. The product itself is quite useful, but the tin packaging has seemed to outlast even the strength of its bad-breath-fighting mints inside. Consumers have discovered many different uses for this durable packaging after the mints have been exhausted (Group, S.M., 2019). Whether Altoids intended for a DIY function after use is uncertain. Regardless, the tactic has now become a successful packaging strategy that allows

customers to continue to use the packaging for a long time (Figure 3.27). Even more, the

Altoids brand can continue to maintain relevance while also getting free advertisement.

In Figure 3.29 a user has taken the empty Altoids can and turned it into a travel

palette for painting. The can contains cups of paint that can be quickly accessed on the

go. Another user has converted an empty Altoids can into a survival kit (Figure 3.30).

Many emergency tools can be fit inside the can, creating a useful and portable new

function for the mint packaging.

Figure 3.29 Repurposed Altoids Container (Seacrest, 2016)

Figure 3.30 Altoids Can Repurposed into a Survival Kit (Blade HQ, 2022)

Figure 3.31 Altoids Packaging being Redecorated and Repurposed (Amy Anderson Crafts LLC, 2023)

A final example in Figure 3.31 shows the can simply being redecorated and

repurposed. While the Altoids logo is no longer visible, the brand has established itself

to the point that other people still recognize what the original design and use of the tin

can. The tin can design is simple in its design, creating an easy platform for consumers to modify and make their own after use.

For whatever reason, if packaging does not have an intended second function, a designer can take advantage of a DIY strategy to achieve the 'Showcase' tier of the Expanded Functions of Packaging chart. By designing a durable and simple platform of packaging, the consumer can easily manipulate or modify it to meet his/her own new desired function. As a result, the brand can continue to be recognized without making much of an effort in the design process. Altoids brand does not necessarily promote this extended use, which could be a missed opportunity. A designer can push this DIY functionality because it can encourage creativity by the consumers to find new uses for the product. This could be seen as an effort for sustainable design. In conclusion, a designer can encourage the customer to come up with his/her own new function for the packaging, achieving the highest level of packaging.

When achieving the 'Showcase' function of packaging, designers should consider different functions the packaging can serve to display the product and/or brand after the unboxing experience. A chart seen in Appendix 3 summarizes the identified extended functions that a designer can utilize to encourage longer consumer interaction and service.

3.5   Product Release Strategies

Case studies were conducted for products that utilize different strategies for being released for sale, making them exclusive in different ways. These product release strategies were identified and compiled into a chart in Appendix D that offers a tool for

quick access to product release strategy considerations when creating exclusive

products.

3.5.1   First Editions

Figure 3.32 First Edition Pokémon Booster Pack (Heritage Auctions, 2020)

When releasing a product for the first time, it is important to acknowledge this as

being the first release. Collectors, especially in the Pokémon community, care deeply

about purchasing cards from the first edition release of trading cards. Boxes of First

Edition Pokémon cards are highly coveted and sought after by collectors (Santiago,

2021). There are a few reasons collectors may be motivated to acquire first editions of

products. Some collectors are **fans** and want to own a piece of history from the brand's

beginnings (Collector's Guide, Literature, 2011). Other collectors may have a **nostalgic**

connection to a product they had when they were younger and want to reconnect with

those memories (Collectibles Insurance Services, 2023). Another reason could be an

investment strategy (Collectibles Insurance Services, 2023). Because first editions of a

product can become rarer over time, collectors can choose to invest in a first edition of

a product on release in hopes of the product becoming popular and increasing in value.

Whatever the motivation for these collectors, it is important for a designer to take

advantage when releasing a product for the first time.
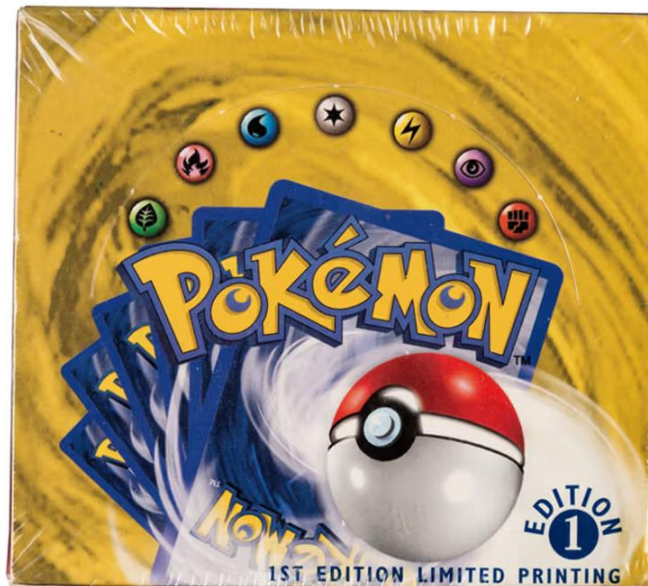
Figure 3.33 First Edition Labeling on Pokémon Booster Pack (Heritage Auctions, 2021)

To capitalize on this craze for first editions, a designer can simply make it known

on the packaging. Adding a **POI** to recognize the item as a first edition can ensure that

collectors on release or many years later can distinguish which items belong to the first

release of the product. In the figure above, Pokémon chose to identify the box of trading

cards with an image stating, 'Edition 1', and text stating, '1st Edition Limited Printing'.

These **POI**s offer both an image and text for collectors to identify. A designer should

utilize an icon, text, or both to identify the product as a first edition. This is very simple

to do, but it can make a significant difference in the immediate or future value of the

product.

Release Strategy: First Edition

Motivations Identified: Fandom, Nostalgia, Investment

3.5.2   Seasonal

Companies can choose to release products only during certain times of the year,

known as seasonal releases. Brands can take advantage of changing markets at different

times of the year (Tran, 2023). Angie Tran with AdRoll gives examples of businesses that

would likely be more successful in different times of the year.

For instance, a flower shop would probably see a surge in sales during

Valentine's week, and a bathing suit retailer would find great success

during the summer. This is called seasonal marketing (Tran, 2023).

Since more people are more willing to spend money during holiday seasons,

therefore it is important for brands to prepare ahead of time to secure a purchase from

these consumers (Tran, 2023).

Figure 3.34 2002 Christmas Coke Bottle (Jennifer's Store Goods, 2022)

Coke is famous for its Christmas themed advertisements and products. From polar

bears to Santa Claus, the brand has covered it all in its seasonal releases. The Coke

beverage does not even change. It is simply the packaging that is altered for the

seasonal releases. Still, people can have a more positive view toward the product

because of its association with the holiday season. Consumers can become **nostalgic**

during holiday seasons which can lead to more incentive to purchase products that tap

into the holiday season theme (Rose, 2022). By releasing only during certain times of the

year, it can also encourage consumers to go on the **hunt** for these products while they

are still available.

Figure 3.35 Samuel Adams Fall Seasonal Release, Sweater Weather (Mass Brew Bros, 2020)

Samuel Adams is another beverage company that builds beyond the efforts of Coca-Cola. Instead of just changing packaging for the holiday season, the company actually releases different flavors of the beverage. Packaging and variations of the product itself can give consumers more incentive to purchase these exclusive products while they are available.

Release Strategy: Seasonal

Motivations Identified: Nostalgia, Hunt

3.5.3   Anniversary

Another popular strategy is for brands to release exclusive items on anniversaries or special dates pertinent to the brand. LEGO releases an exclusive set every decade of the brand's founding anniversary. For its 90th anniversary, LEGO offered a castle set that could only be purchased at Walmart (Tran, 2022).

Figure 3.36 Lego 90th Anniversary Collection (Tran, 2022)

Figure 3.37 Inside LEGO's 90th Anniversary Exclusive Set (Tran, 2022)

LEGO created an exclusive item by producing it for a limited time and releasing it only at one retail provider. The packaging identifies the product as an anniversary release with a custom '90 Years of Play' logo. Anniversary releases can bring generations back to products they may have used as children, creating a sense of nostalgia (Collectibles Insurance Services, 2023). Because these items release on a date that will

never occur again the same way, this creates great incentive for collectors to go on a hunt for these items while they last.

Release Strategy: Anniversary

Motivations: Nostalgia, Hunt

3.5.4 Sets

A common method of creating a chase for products is to offer them in sets. Creating a multitude of models that belong to a specific set or series can encourage collectors to seek out purchasing the entire set. Selling the models of a set individually creates an opportunity for collectors to go on a **hunt** to complete the set. This creates a challenge for collectors, which can spark even more hype around exclusive items. **Completing** a set can create a satisfactory psychological effect that leaves collectors both content and wanting to find the next set to complete (Collectibles Insurance Services, 2023). Creating this chase for collectors can be both beneficial to the brand and the collector. Profits for the brand are beneficial, while the collector gets a new opportunity to satisfy their craving for the next hunt. Completed sets can also go for higher values in secondary markets (Carey, 2007). Therefore, completing a set can be seen as an **investment** opportunity for collectors.
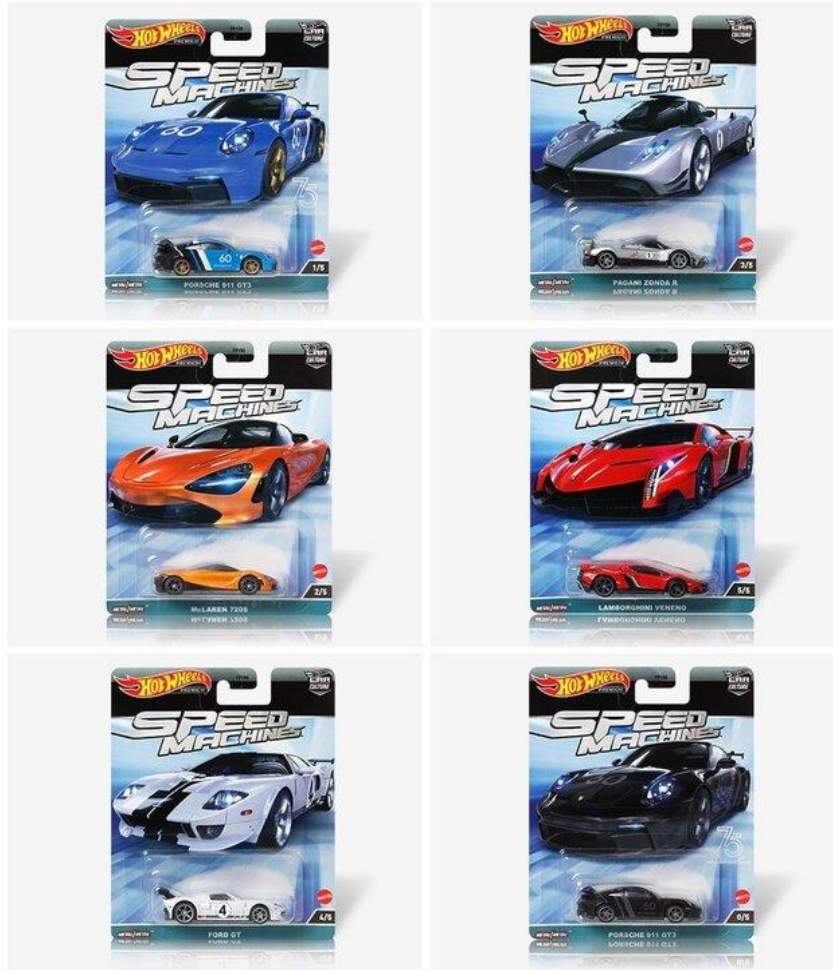
Figure 3.38 Hot Wheels 'Speed Machines' 2023 Set (Wood, 2023)

Figure 3.38 shows a series of sets created by Hot Wheels for collectors in 2023, titled 'Speed Machines'. These sets include Hot Wheels models of iconic supercars, with a mystery car being released as well (Wood, 2023). Hot Wheels is creating a hunt for dedicated collectors.

Figure 3.39 Stranger Things Funko Pop (Entertainment Earth, 2023)

Funko Pops are often released in sets as well. Typically, these are models of

characters from a popular TV show or movie series. Shown on the back of the packaging

in Figure 3.39, someone purchasing one of the models can see the rest of the set they

can pursue.

A designer can create a series of related models that can be collected as a set. It is

important to market the rest of the set that is available on the packaging of the models.

Completing the set can offer a hunt for collectors while also bringing in more revenue

for the brand.

Release Strategy: Sets

Motivations Identified: Hunt, Completion, Investment

3.5.5   Regional

Designers can release products regionally, creating exclusivity simply by location. Starbucks has created a series of mugs, titled the 'Been There Series', that represent the respective state in the U.S. it is being sold in (PrairieGrit, 2022).

Figure 3.40 shows mugs from Connecticut within the series. Each mug can only be bought in the state it is representing. This may or may not be provocative enough for customers to intentionally travel across the country for, but it at least offers the customers a chance to purchase an exclusive, **unique** souvenir at their favorite coffee spot while traveling.

Figure 3.40 'Connecticut' Mug from Starbucks Been There Series (PrairieGrit, 2022)

With most collectibles, there is likely to be a niche group that in fact does travel with the intent to gather these releases and complete the mugs from each state. These niche groups are good for the brand, because they create a **community** of collectors that can develop a passionate **fandom** for the brand (Collectibles Insurance Services, 2023). It is important to continue to create products that can keep these passionate collectors and fans on the **hunt** for the next item. Designers can choose to create **unique** variants of a model to be sold exclusively in certain regions.

Release Strategy: Regional

Motivations Identified: Completion, Hunt, Fandom, Community, Uniqueness

3.5.6   Collaboration

Collaboration is an important strategy designers can use to bring awareness and popularity to a product (Hecto, n.d.). Supreme, an exclusive streetwear brand, collaborated with Nabisco to create a Supreme x Oreo collaboration (Hoeffner, 2021).

Figure 3.41 Supreme Collaborations (Manning, 2020)

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Hoeffner writes about the release and reaction to this unexpected collaboration. Hoeffner says,

> *As of Tuesday afternoon (before the official drop), Eater reported a*
>
> *pack of Supreme Oreos already listed on the secondary market, for*
>
> *$500. By noon, bids for a special sleeve of cookies had reached $4,000*
>
> *in two different eBay auctions for the exclusive treats. As of Friday,*
>
> *February 21, the highest bid has increased to $52,100, and is rising,*
>
> *with eight days left in the auction (Hoeffner, 2021).*

A collaboration between two dissimilar brands resulted in cookies, commonly sold for under $5, being resold for almost $100,000 (Hoeffner, 2021). Cheap cookies quickly turned into a **luxurious** item for the most dedicated collectors to **hunt** down. Collaborating can bring together **fan bases** from two different brands, resulting in new business (Hecto, n.d.).

Release Strategy: Collaboration

Motivations Identified: Luxury, Hunt, Fandom

3.5.7 Rereleases

Chapter 2 discusses the trend of rereleasing successful toys from the past. If it is not broken, do not fix it. Thanks to **nostalgia**, new generations can then be introduced to these toys through their parents. Rereleasing a product can be considered a release strategy designers can use.

In 2016, a General Grievous Funko Pop was released exclusively at Walgreens, seen in Figure 3.42. The exclusive model reached resale prices of up to $160 (Initial Pop

Price Guide, n.d.). Later, variations of the General Grievous Funko Pop were released in

higher quantities. While these figures represented the same character, a slight redesign

for the new model helped preserve the resale price of the 2016 model. Today, the

original General Grievous Funko Pop from 2016 can be purchased for a little over $50, as

seen in Figure 3.42. A rereleased model from more recent years can be purchased for

around $25, as seen in Figure 3.43.

Figure 3.42 First Release General Grievous Funko Pop (Pop Sneaks, 2023)

Figure 3.43 Second Release of General Grievous Funko Pop (Plastic Empire, n.d.)

Rereleasing a model can potentially hurt a product's resale value due to higher supply now being available. To avoid this, a designer can slightly alter the model's design before rereleasing. By doing this, collectors who purchased the exclusive original model can still be protected from depreciating value by remaining **unique**. Simultaneously, consumers who may have missed out the first time around can now have a second chance to own it, only with a slight variation from the original.

Release Strategy: Rerelease

Motivations Identified: Nostalgia, Uniqueness

3.5.8   Prototypes

To appeal to the most dedicated **fans** of a brand, designers can release prototype versions of a popular model. Prototypes will be created before products are released.

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Most of these may be discarded. Therefore, it could be a less wasteful strategy to release these prototypes to consumers that will likely place a very high value on them.

Looking at Funko once again, the company occasionally releases prototype models of Funko Pops to the public. Some models are gifted to friends and family, while others can be sold at special events. Shown in Figure 3.44, a prototype of a Thanos Funko Pop can be purchased for $800, while its standard retail model (Figure 3.45) is available for $35. The exclusivity exponentially increases the value of the item.
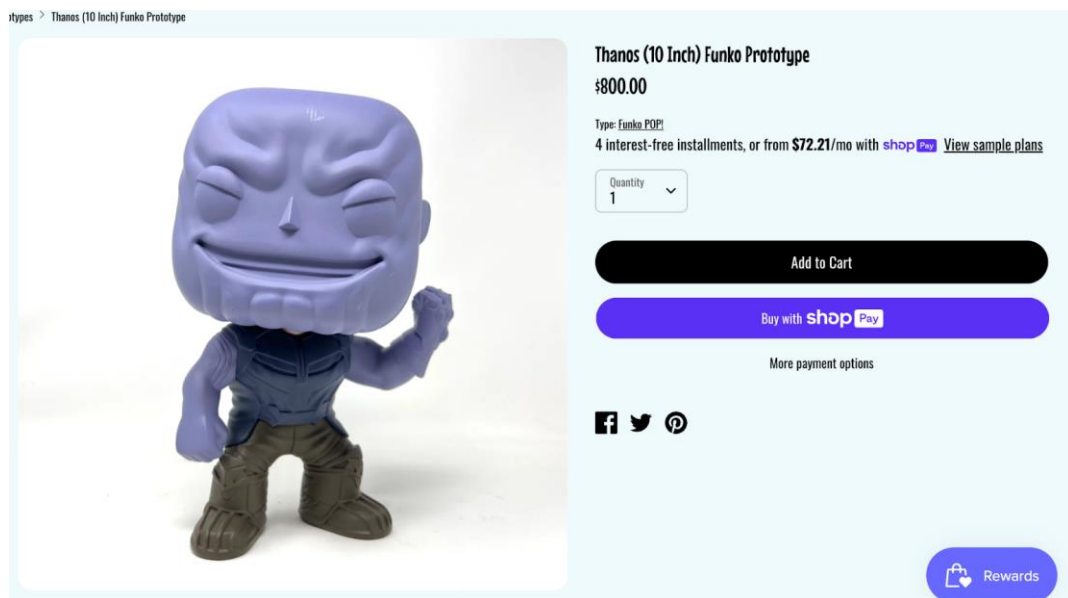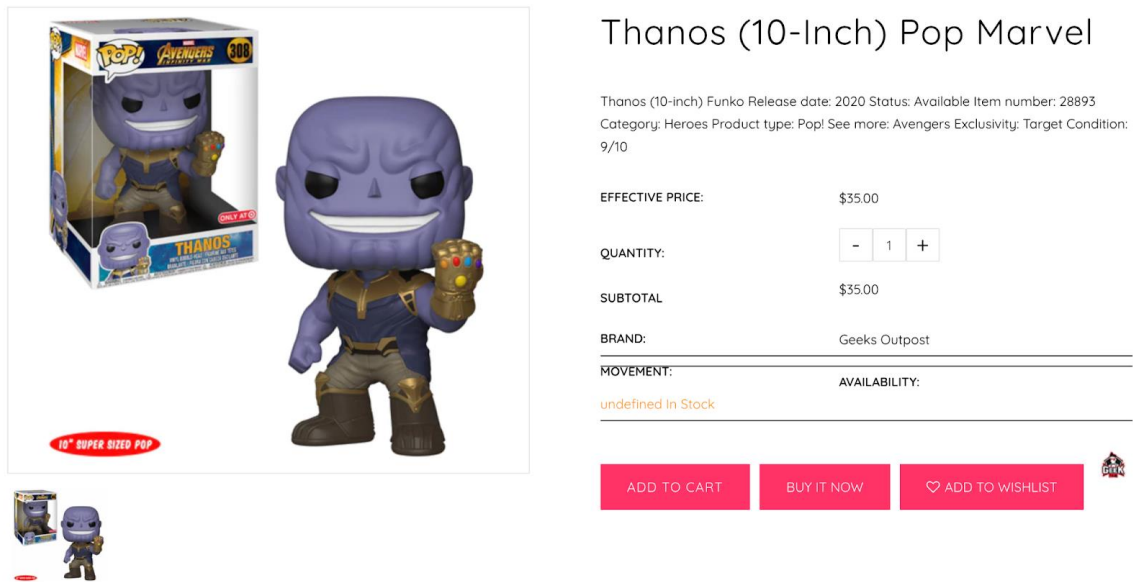

Figure 3.44 Prototype of a Thanos Funko Pop (Smeye World, 2019)

Figure 3.45 Funko Pop Thanos Final Production Model (Geeks Outpost, 2023)

Prototypes are obviously pre-production versions that are not ready for official release. If prototypes will be used as a release strategy, a designer must ensure these are safe for public release. The exclusivity of a prototype can drive the hype and value of an item, making them **unique** and good as **investments**. Designers can consider releasing these prototypes as a way of reducing waste and creating exclusive products for **fans** for collectors.

Release Strategy: Prototype

Motivations Identified: Fandom, Uniqueness, Investment

3.5.9 Variants

Designers can release the same model in different variants to achieve both exclusivity and mass production. Yeezy, an exclusive sub brand of Adidas, has released variants of the same shoe. Both variants are the same colorway, but one variant comes

with reflective material on the upper of the shoe (HypeBeast, n.d.). The model with

reflective material is seen as a more premium, **luxurious** edition of the standard model.

This slight difference in build results in over double the resale value on secondary

markets for the reflective model seen in Figure 3.46 and Figure 3.47. The reflective

model was more exclusive with a more limited production quantity, leaving the non-

reflective model more accessible to consumers with a higher production count. As a

result, casual consumers can be pleased with access to the standard model, while

collectors can also be pleased with a more exclusive version.

Figure 3.46 Standard Variant of Yeezy 'Static' (StockX, 2018a)

Figure 3.47 Reflective Variant of Yeezy 'Static' (StockX, 2018b)

Funko follows a similar strategy in releasing variants of certain models, except it

puts a twist on it. Funko sells one standard model of a character. However, there is a

small chance that the consumer can receive a rare version of the model labeled the

'Chase' version (Funko, n.d.). These variants have an exclusive **POI** sticker, but they also

have a slight difference in the build of the model. Some models will come with a mask

on the character, while others will be an unmasked version. Other models can come in a

glow in the dark version. No matter the differences, the exclusive 'Chase' variant creates

a mystery hunt for consumers. If given the mystery 'Chase' variant, the secondary

market value increases compared to the standard model. Dedicated collectors can be

motivated to obtain every variant, **completing** the set.

Figure 3.48 Funko defining 'Chance of Chase' (Funko, n.d.-a)

A designer can choose to offer multiple variants of the same model to appeal to both collectors and the general population. One can also follow a similar strategy as Funko and mix in rarer versions into the pool of standard models. No matter the strategy, variants of similar models can be used to create a higher perception of value by consumers.

Release Strategy: Variants

Motivations Identified: Luxurious, Completion

3.5.10 Product Production Errors

Beanie Babies had a hold on consumers in the 1990's. Beanie Babies are plush toys that come in a vast number of colors, animals, and variants. With HistoryChannel.com, author Natasha Frost says,

Divorced couples fought over their Beanie Baby assets, and children were

trampled by stampeding collectors. Some families sank their entire life savings

into acquiring the rarest examples, hoping to fund retirements and put kids

through college (Frost, 2023).

The rise and fall of Beanie Babies deserve its own documentary, but only one

characteristic of Beanie Baby collecting will be analyzed here. Research on valuable

models revealed that models with manufacturing errors can bring incredible asking

prices on secondary markets. The Beanie Baby shown in Figure 3.49 has, according to

the listing, all the known errors from that production run of that model. The list is

extensive and very particular. For example, the seller notes in Figure 3.50 there is an

extra space between an exclamation point at the end of a sentence on the tag. A highly

coveted error from this run was the misspelling of the location of origin on the tag. The

entire list of errors is listed in Figure 3.52. The accumulation of these errors results in

the model having an asking price of over $2,400 (Figure 3.49).

Figure 3.49 Rare Beanie Baby with Errors (neonp-46, 2023)

Figure 3.50 Swing Tag (neonp-46, 2023)

Figure 3.51 Loop (left) and Tush Tag (right) (neonp-46, 2023)

Description ^

Original Ty Valentina Bear Beanie Baby 1998
Retired and Rare Tag Errors in Mint Condition.
Valentina Bears are currently selling for up to 50k
with tag errors.

Tag Errors & Details:
Mismatched DOB: Swing Tag 1998 and Tush Tag
1999
Swing Tag: Extra space between end of poem and
"!"
Tush Tag: 1999 TY - All caps
No red stamp inside the loop - no mass production
Hologram on Tush Tag

Less

Figure 3.52 Seller's List of Errors and Misprints (neonp-46, 2023)

As a designer, it should not be a goal to have errors in production. However, errors will happen. After seeing resale values of these error models, it is possible the designer can get ahead and take advantage of these errors. When error models are detected, a designer could consider releasing these with the intent of creating a **unique**, exclusive item in the collecting community. Because models with errors can bring such high asking prices in secondary markets, they could be seen as an **investment** strategy for collectors. Error models could be released with no indication of the errors, or a designer could market the model as an error and make it an exclusive release.

The ethics of releasing misprinted or error models can be questionable, but this thesis is analyzing methods that can bring more value to products. Mistakes such as grammatical errors or slight manufacturing defects could potentially be used. However, products with faulty functionality should not be considered safe for release. Errors should be primarily in aesthetics only. Products with these defects in aesthetics can demand high asking prices in secondary markets, and it is possible for designers to begin taking advantage of this upon release.

Release Strategy: Errors

Motivations Identified: Uniqueness, Investment

3.5.11 Customization

A designer can consider offering a customization option for a release strategy. Allowing customers to interchange parts of a product to their liking can keep the customer engaged with the product for much longer. SCUF, as shown in Figure 3.53, uses magnetic face plates on their controllers (SCUF Gaming, n.d.). These faceplates can

come in virtually an infinite number of styles, offering the customer endless choices

(Figure 3.54). Customers can choose **aesthetics** that please them while also creating a

unique product for themselves. Once the customer is ready for a new style as their

tastes change, he/she can order a new faceplate rather than an entirely new controller.

The customer can hold onto the functional part of the device, and he/she can continue

to customize the aesthetics to their liking. As a result, the brand can receive continued

business with an infinite number of styles that can be produced.

Figure 3.53 Exploded View of Magnetic Faceplate (SCUF Gaming, n.d.)

Figure 3.54 Branded Magnetic Faceplate (Corsair Memory, Inc., n.d.-a)

Figure 3.55 Faceplate Packaging (Amazon.com, Inc., n.d.-b)

A designer can consider this modular aspect of interchanging pieces to an existing framework of a device over time. Rather than waiting on the product to break to get new business, a designer can incorporate modular, customizable design into the device. Customers can continue to upgrade or stylize their device over time, bringing the brand recurring business.

Release Strategy: Customization

Motivations Identified: Uniqueness, Aesthetics

3.5.12 Special Events

Similar to regional releases, designers can choose to release products only at certain events. Funko takes great advantage of this by releasing Pops exclusively at

different events such as Comic Cons around the United States (Funko, n.d.-b). Funko

distinguishes these models by using sticker **POI**s for each event. Each Comic-Con

location gets its own exclusive sticker that is placed on the product. Standard versions of

the models can also be released, but they will not have the exclusive stickers included.

The lack of stickers can drive the value of these standard variants down. Conversely, the

models with the exclusive stickers can bring in resale values much higher than the retail

price due to their rarity.

Figure 3.56 Toucan Comic-Con Exclusive Funko Pop (Amazon.com, Inc., n.d.-a)

Figure 3.57 Comic-Con Exclusive Sticker for Funko Pops (funkodojo, 2020)

Figure 3.58 Paulie Pigeon New York Comic-Con Funko Pop (The Cardboard Connections, 2022)

A designer can choose to release specific models exclusively at certain events. This

can encourage collectors and fans to go on a **hunt** by traveling to events and interacting

with the brand in person. Creating and maintaining a relationship with a brand's

community of **fans** is important to the life of these collectible products. If using this strategy, it is important to utilize a distinguishing **POI** on the product or its packaging. It is important consumers are able to recognize the models as exclusive to those events.

Product Release: Special Events

Motivations Identified: Hunt, Community, Fandom

3.5.13 Mystery Items

Lastly, a designer can choose to release products in the style of mystery items. Mystery items are products purchased by the consumer without knowing which make or model he/she will receive. Using this strategy can create an entertaining thrill, or hunt, of the unknown that consumers enjoy buying into (HelloBox, 2023). The contents of the box are typically of equal or greater value than the mystery item price. This strategy gives the consumer the opportunity to obtain a much more valuable, premium, or luxurious item at a lower price (HelloBox, 2023). The contents of the items are typically hidden using packaging that prevents a consumer from revealing what the product is without opening. This strategy can be an opportunity for consumers to possibly obtain an item that was released using other strategies and was unable to get. Designers can also use this strategy to sell overstock items. It is important to use a mix of high and low value items in the pool of products available. Designers should mix in high-value items to encourage collectors to continue the chase. This mystery strategy can also create a new type of unboxing experience for consumers to enjoy.

Product Release: Mystery Items

Motivations Identified: Entertainment, Hunt, Luxury

Figure 3.59 Star Wars Mystery Bobble-heads (Brooks, 2017)

3.5.14 Product Release Strategies

After studying specific cases of products using different product release strategies,

a summarized list was created and included in Chapter 4 so that designers can quickly

access these strategies to release their products in ways to achieve the best chance at

market success. These strategies include first edition, anniversary, rerelease, variants,

sets, regional, product production errors, collaborations, prototypes, seasonal, special

events, customization, and mystery item. A graphic representation of these strategies

can be found in Appendix D.

In Chapter 3, case studies were conducted using collectible products to identify

packaging design strategies and product release strategies utilized by each product.

These identified strategies will be used in the design approach in Chapter 4.

4 Approach to Design for Enhancing Product Collectability and Attachment

4.1 Collectable Design Approach Overview

The collectable design approach has been created for designers who want to enhance an existing product line's collectability. This approach can be used by designers who want to implement collectable design into products to achieve longer life cycles, grow stronger user attachments, and build higher perceived values.

Figure 4.1 Stages of Collectable Design Approach

4.2 Stages of Collectable Design Approach

Product Development

1. **Select Product:** Select an existing product for a collectable enhancement

2. **Analyze Product State:** Study the current state of the selected product's form, function, packaging, and marketing

3. **Create New Platform:** Design a standard product platform from which to build variations

Marketing

4. **Choose Motivations:** Select target audience through knowledge of why people

   collect

5. **Select Release Strategies:** Select product release strategies that best align with

   the selected target audiences

4.3   Collectable Design Approach Intent

This collectable design approach aims to extend a product's life cycle by

enhancing its collectability and user attachment. This approach has been developed

with existing products and products soon to be released in mind. It begins with product

development that results in a new design platform for a product line. The product line is

then further developed using marketing strategies that include motivations for

collecting and product release strategies to achieve enhanced collectability and longer

life cycles.

4.4   Step 1. Product Selection

Figure 4.2 Step 1 of Collectable Design Approach

When selecting a product to enhance its collectability, this guideline suggests

criteria to implement this approach most effectively. Because consumers commonly

display products that can portray their personalities to others (Ethan, 2015), it is

recommended that products are able to fit on shelves, desks, and workspaces, and other areas used for display. The determined dimensions a product should fit within is **12" D x 32" W x 12" H**, which can be visualized in Figure 4.3. These dimensions can give a product the best opportunity to be presented within a consumer's areas for display.
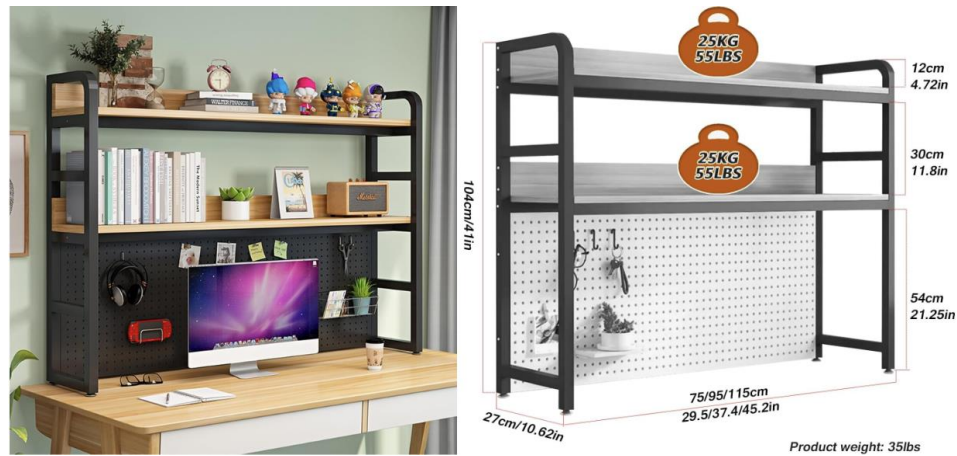
Figure 4.3 Approximate Dimensions Visualized (FPIGSHS, n.d.)

There are several reasons a designer may want to select a product for a collectable enhancement. Products that can potentially benefit from this approach could include products that are:

- losing market relevance
- selected for a design refresh
- failed and/or have surplus inventory
- soon to be released

Once a product is selected, it will be subject to a study of the product's current state which will be discussed in the next step of this design approach.

4.5   Step 2. Analyze Current Product State

Figure 4.4 Step 2 of Design Approach

After product selection, the next step is to study the current state of the product by identifying areas in need of design reconsideration. As with traditional design methods, a design intent should also be established so that the product's design can achieve the desired form and function while also conveying the desired experience to consumers. Once established, product category research should take place to study existing products that utilize similar design intent. Aspects of the product's current state include the following:

Product Design Considerations (see table in Appendix G)

- Form:

Is the current form...			
Classic?	Outdated?	Failed?	New?

- Function:

Is the current function...		
Unique?	Outdated?	Failed?

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- CMF (color, material, finish)

Does the current CMF…		
Convey the desired product experience?	Compliment the product's function?	Utilize durable materials?

Packaging Design Considerations (See chart in Appendix A)

- o How does the current packaging test against the Expanded Functions of Packaging chart?

Product Category Research

- Study product and packaging design of products that are in the desired product category for the collectable enhancement.

Results of Product State Analysis

- Identify points of product and packaging design that the researched products may utilize to be successful in the desired product category.

- Compare the identified points of product and packaging design to the current state of the product selected for the collectable enhancement.

- Plan which aspects of the product selected should be given attention going forward to meet the design standards of the product category represented by the products that were studied.

4.6   Step 3: Create New Platform

Figure 4.5 Step 3 Design Approach

Once the current state of the product has been analyzed, the next step of this

design approach is to create a new product line platform that other models can be

created from. The product platform should include design intent, product design, and

packaging design, concluding with prototyping. A standard platform for product lines

will ensure consistency for consumers and collectors to expect from a product. It will

also create a consistent platform for designers to create new products while remaining

true to the established brand identity standards.

Design Intent

When designing the new platform, it is important to consider the product's

design intent. The product and packaging design should align with design characteristics

present in the desired product category. For example, if the design intent is to create a

more premium, high-end product using this approach, then the design of the new

platform should mimic that of other premium, high-end products within similar product

categories.

Product Design (see table in Appendix H): Regarding the product's design, a standard

for what the product's form, function, and CMF needs to be created. Designs should

align with the desired design intent.

- Form: Should the form be redesigned, retained, or refreshed?

    o Utilize answers from the table in Step 2

- Function: Should the function be redesigned, retained, or refreshed?

    o Utilize answers from the table in Step 2

- CMF: Select colors, materials, and finishes that best convey the desired product experience while utilizing the brand's identity standards.

    o Utilize answers from the table in Step 2

Packaging Design: Packaging can be considered as important as the product inside. The amount of detail put into a product's design should be replicated in the packaging design. A packaging platform should be designed using the Expanded Functions of Packaging (seen in Appendix A). Using this packaging design process can encourage consumers to hold onto packaging rather than discarding. Holding onto packaging can preserve a collectible's value while promoting the user's attachment to the product.

Expanded Functions of Packaging Process

Showcase: Include a second function for packaging after unboxing to encourage consumers to hold onto packaging rather than discarding. Additional functions for packaging can make consumers more inclined to keep the packaging rather than discarding. This can help the user build a stronger product attachment can be achieved with the user. Options for the second functions of packaging can include:

- Transportation (e.g. Beats by Dre headphones)

- Storage (e.g. Rolex packaging)

- Display (e.g. Funko Pop)

- DIY (e.g. Altoids)

Surprise: Introduce an unboxing experience that creates a presentation for the consumer when opening the product. Strategies for creating the unboxing experience strategies have been identified (seen in Appendix B).

'Surprise' Strategies for Creating an Unboxing Experience

- Create a memorable unboxing experience

- Create a presentation with story, anticipation, mystery, and organization

- Choose a type of reveal and consider standard box sizes (Marion Paper Box Company. (n.d.)

  - Shoebox lid

  - Telescope lid

  - Hinged lid

  - Custom

  - Other

- Statement on packaging sharing brand's message to customer

- Reveal product on opening, but keep hidden via bag or sheet, etc.

- Compartments for all contents for presentation and organization

- Include points of connection

  - Stickers (e.g. Apple stickers with iPhone)

  - Letter (e.g. Rolex)

  - Story about brand or product

  - Ways to connect with brand

Sell: Plan a consistent platform for the marketing of the packaging including graphics, text, etc. Marketing strategies can differ depending on the design intent of the product. Popular functions across categories of collectible products have been identified, with design strategies being developed from each (Case Study 3.2 Sell).

- Play

    - Use large hero shot with in-context background

    - Show large image showing theme of set

    - Use consistent location of **POI**s

    - Smaller images with characters from the set

    - Show minimal text **POI**s

    - Keep consistent colors within sets

- Display

    - Highlight the brand's logo

    - Identify make and model

    - Identify the theme or collaborating brand

    - Show the production number of model

    - Identify the variant of the model (limited edition sticker)

    - Show other collectibles in that set

    - Identify the year this model was produced

- Functional

    - High-resolution hero shot on front, no words

- Simple logo on one side, no words

- Name of model on one side, few words

- Mimic design philosophy of product inside

With a selected marketing design strategy, develop and layout locations of **POI**s such as logos, colors, text, and graphics that will remain consistent between each variation of the product. Once decided, these locations will remain constant while the content within it can be interchanged. For example, a location should be chosen for where the description of the colorway of a model should appear. Once selected, that colorway location should remain the same across variants, while the text itself can be changed to represent the respective colorway.

Stock: Product packaging in stores also offers opportunity for point of purchase displays.

When designing a point of purchase (P.O.P) display, follow similar marketing design strategies used in the previous 'Sell' section of the packaging design process. For example, If the marketing of the packaging utilizes strategies for a 'play' functionality, then the P.O.P display should utilize similar 'play' design strategies as well.

Ship: Packaging for shipment should primarily be protective to ensure it arrives in the same state it left the manufacturer in (Premium Packaging, n.d.). Protection inside the packaging can include options such as packing peanuts, foam, bubble wraps, and more. While packaging should be protective for most products, packaging for collectibles

should prioritize protecting both the internal packaging and product due to the significant impact that the condition of a collectible's packaging can have on its value.

The platform created for the product's collectable enhancement begins with the design intent and proceeds through product development and prototyping. This is intended to establish a template that future releases from that product line can follow. This includes specific aspects of product and packaging design that will remain consistent across models and which design aspects should be interchangeable such as **POI**s. As a result, consumers and collectors can come to expect a consistent and reliable product from the brand. Collectors can then use the consistency of **POI**s to authenticate items if they become collectable (Watchmaster, 2022).

4.7   Step 4: Choose Motivations

Figure 4.6 Step 4 of Design Approach

Once a standard platform has been created, developed, and prototyped for the product line, the next step in this design approach is to select specific target audiences using the identified motivations for collecting.

Human Motivations for Collecting

- **Nostalgia**- collecting objects that tap into a past event or memory

- **Entertainment**- collecting simply for enjoyment of pleasure

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- **Community**- collecting to be a part of a social group obtaining similar items

- **Luxury**- collecting high-end items, portraying a luxurious lifestyle

- **Investment**- collecting with the intent to buy, sell, trade to earn a profit

- **Uniqueness**- collecting unique or rare items out of curiosity or desire to be set apart

- **Hunt**- collecting for the thrill of the hunt or chase

- **Aesthetics**- collecting items for their beauty or visual appeal

- **Completion**- collecting items to complete an entire set

- **Fandom**- collecting out of support or fandom for a person, brand, team, etc.

- **Social Status**- collecting to elevate or maintain a social status

Designers can use the Human Motivations for Collecting to brainstorm new pairings for the identified product release strategies (graphic shown in Appendix E was adapted from Collectibles Insurance Services, 2023).

Selecting specific motivations to target will result in suggested product release strategies that should be used, which are introduced in the next step of this design approach. Utilizing 'Human Motivations for Collecting', different product release strategies can be determined to best reach target audiences for collectability and attachment. Based on patterns seen across these case studies, most examples utilized one to two motivations. If criteria do not conflict, then multiple motivations can be

utilized to target specific audiences. Utilizing multiple motivations can result in a broader reach of consumers.
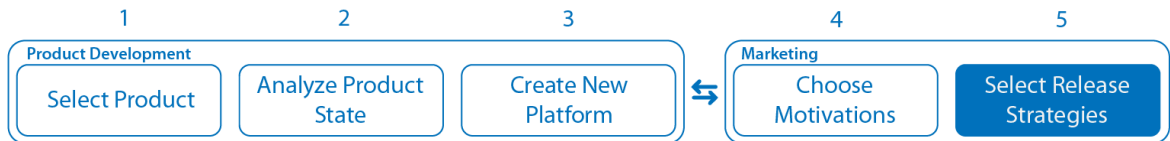
4.8   Step 5: Select Release Strategies

Figure 4.7 Step 5 of Design Approach

After selecting a target audience, the next step is to select ways to strategically release the product for the best opportunity for market success and collectability. Products should have a reason for being considered limited editions, or exclusive, to have the best chance of success as a collected item. These identified release strategies are believed to better target specific audiences. Motivations that were selected in the previous step will influence corresponding product release strategies a designer can use. Multiple strategies can be utilized at once as long as they do not have conflicting criteria. However, utilizing too many at once could saturate the design intent of specific release strategies. Products shown in case studies typically utilized two to three. Therefore, it is believed that this is an optimal number range of release strategies to use at once. A list below provides the possible release strategies that can be used (seen in Appendix D).

Product Release Strategies

- **First Edition**- market first releases with exclusive points of identification

- **Anniversary**- release unique models for special dates

- **Rerelease**- rerelease popular models with slight alterations to preserve exclusivity

- **Variants**- release alternate styles of one model, possibly higher-end options

- **Sets**- release products in sets or series to give collectors a hunt to complete

- **Regional**- release models exclusively in certain locations

- **Errors**- release models with defects such as grammatical or aesthetic errors

- **Collaborations**- collaborate with like or unlike brands to reach new customer bases

- **Prototypes**- release prototype models as exclusive, limited editions

- **Seasonal**- release unique models at certain times of the year such as holidays

- **Special Events**- release products exclusively at specific events such as conventions

- **Customization**- allow customers to customize the design, creating a more personal product

- **Mystery Item**- releasing items in hidden fashion to create another style of chase or hunt
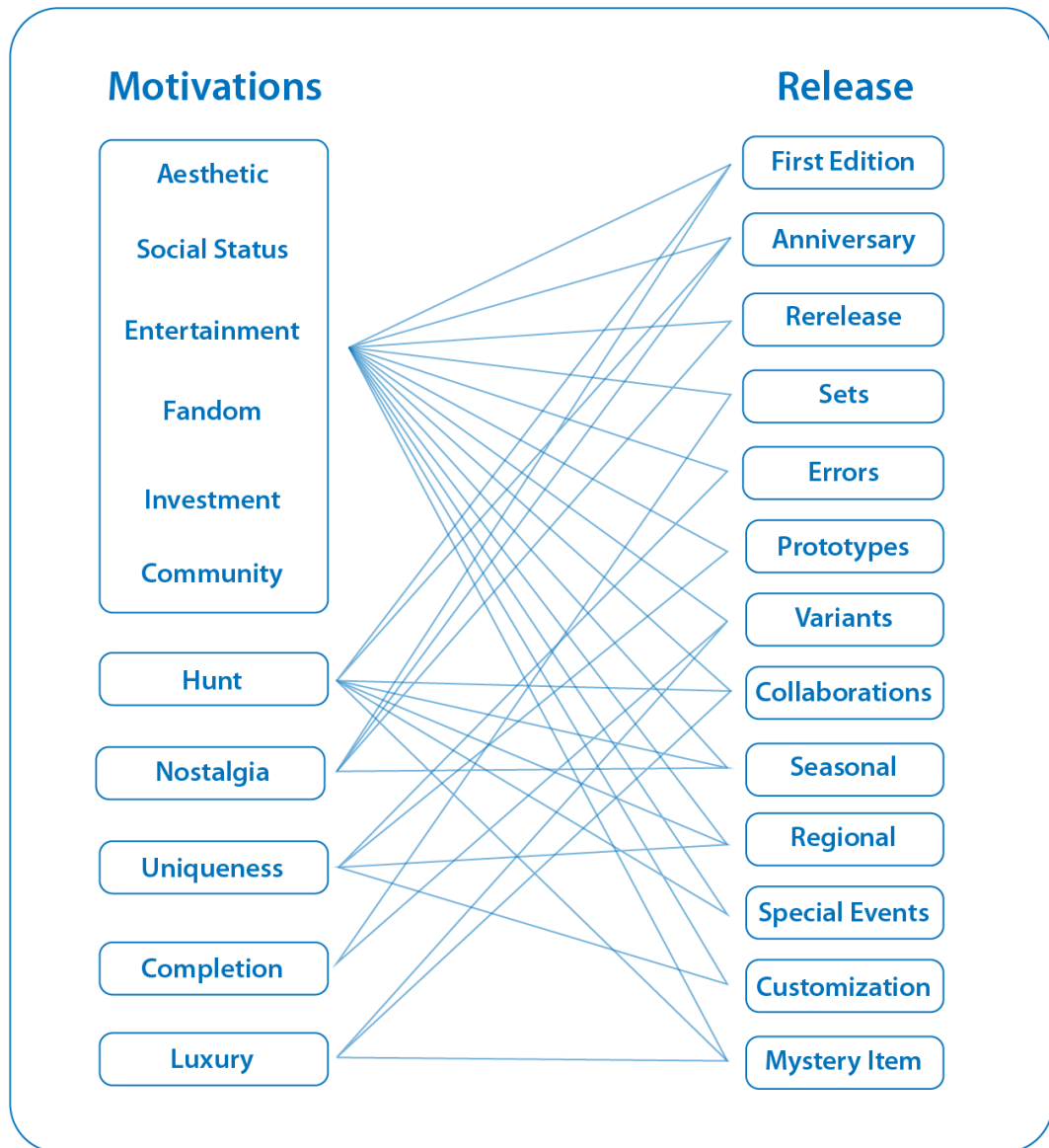
Figure 4.8 'Motivations and corresponding 'Release' Strategies Chart

This connection of human motivations to release strategies was developed from

the analysis and synthesis of case studies (Case Study 3.5 Product Release Strategies)

The chart in Figure 4.8 can be used as a creative framework for generating relevant

ideas for promoting attachment in product and packaging design (brainstorming,

etc.). The connections between motivations and their release strategies should be considered strong suggestions rather than a formula.

Within the chart (Figure 4.8), several motivations have been grouped together as they are believed to be generally applicable to all release strategies. These motivations include the following:

- **Aesthetics**

- **Social Status**

- **Entertainment**

- **Fandom**

- **Investment**

- **Community**

The remaining motivations in the chart (Figure 4.8) can best be paired with specific release strategies. Remaining possible motivation and release strategy pairings can include the following:

- **Hunt:** First Edition, Anniversary, Collaboration, Seasonal, Regional, Special Events, Mystery Items

- **Nostalgia:** First Edition, Anniversary, Rerelease, Seasonal

- **Uniqueness:** Errors, Prototypes, Regional, Customization

- **Completion:** Sets, Variants

- **Luxury:** Variants, Collaboration, Mystery Item

With specific selected motivations and product release strategies chosen, develop iterations based on the standard platform created in the third step. Here, interchangeable design aspects, or **POI**s, can be modified according to the motivations and release strategies chosen. Release strategies suggest the best time, manner, and/or methods which to release products into the markets. As long as criteria from multiple motivations and/or release strategies do not conflict, then it is possible to achieve even more outcomes. As with typical design methods, iterations and prototypes should be explored until the design intent of the collectable enhancement is achieved.

This design approach should help designers, product managers, marketing teams, and anyone involved in product development to create a product with a collectable platform. Once a standard base is generated, the marketing strategies created should allow a design team to craft various iterations that remain consistent across models while remaining true to the established brand identity standards.

5 Design Application

The design application illustrated here is used under the context of a brand wanting to refresh an existing product of its own using collectability. The purpose of this design application is to enhance an existing product by implementing collectability and attachment into its design. The brand used in this project is BIC, an established and iconic company known for its popular, disposable products. A current product was selected from this brand to undergo a 'collectable enhancement' utilizing this design approach.
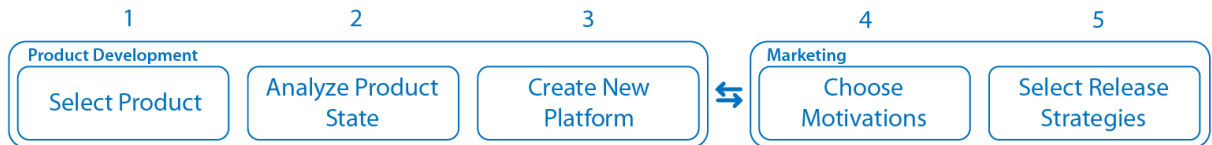
5.1   Step 1: Select Product

For this project, BIC's 4-Color Pen was selected as an existing product in need of a design refresh. The 4 Color was chosen because it has a classic design, long history, and a disposable function. These characteristics, along with good sales and its continued appeal to consumers, gave it a solid platform to best showcase this design approach.

Figure 5.1 BIC 4-Color Pen (Giuffre, 2023)

5.2 Step 2: Analyze Product State

The BIC 4 Color Pen's product design and packaging were analyzed in their

current states. For this project, the packaging design will only focus on the following

levels of the Functions of Packaging chart: Sell, Surprise, and Showcase. These functions

of packaging are heavily design oriented. The remaining functions of packaging are

primarily focused on protection during shipment, which leaves it less relevant to design

and this design approach application. Therefore, these remaining functions of packaging

are not utilized in this approach application. However, a design team should utilize the

entire Expanded Functions of Packaging in a professional product development process.

Product Design

Figure 5.2 Original BIC 4-Color Pen Advertising (Giueffre, 2023)

- **Form**: The form of the BIC 4 Color Pen has been largely the same since its release in 1970. The pen has a classic design that is very recognizable amongst the endless world of writing pens.

- **Function**: The pen is famous for its unique '4 Color' function. Its unique capabilities currently set it apart from most pens.

- **CMF**: There are multiple colors and finishes currently offered but there is little correlation between each. The materials remain similar across most models.

Packaging Design

Figure 5.3 Variations of Packaging for the same 'Original' BIC 4-Color Pen (Staples, n.d.) (left) and (Amazon.com, Inc., n.d.-a) (right)

- **Sell**: Graphics are inconsistent. Multiple styles of logos are used with little correlation between models. The **POI** revealing the variant of the model is inconsistent across models.

- **Surprise**: The pen is completely revealed in its most common packaging. This is undesirable because it is a functional product and not meant purely for display in its packaging. A consumer must also destroy the packaging to retrieve the product. No exclusive gifts or connection points are included.

- **Showcase**: There is currently no further function for the packaging across most models.

Product Category Research

Product Category Research

Name	Image	Price Range	Takeaways
Parker 51	https://www.pwakkerman.com/en/parker-51-deluxe-black-gt-fountain-pen-(c)2123512/info	$50-$80	-color combination -premium materials
Fisher Space Bullet	https://www.knifecenter.com/item/FP400RC/fisher-red-planet-translucent-bullet-space-pen	$30-$40	-vibrant colors -premium materials
Caran d'Ache Leman	CARAN D'ACHE Genève https://www.fourteenninetytwo.com/en-us/collections/caran-dache-collection/products/copy-of-caran-dache-silver-plated-rhodium-coated-leman-bicolor-turquoise-ballpoint-pen	$450-$875	-unboxing experience -premium materials
LAMY Safari	https://choosingkeeping.com/products/black-lamy-safari-fountain-pen	$25-$30	-high-end packaging -premium materials

Figure 5.4 Product Category Research Matrix

Product Category Research

- Parker 51 utilizes simple, beautiful color combinations with premium materials.

- Fisher Space Bullet uses vibrant colors, simple design, and premium materials.

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- Caran d'Ache Leman has a high-end unboxing experience with a high-end price tag.

- LAMY Safari uses a high-end unboxing experience with a 'sneak peek reveal' and a much lower price tag than the Caran d'Ache.

Results of Product State Analysis

Plans were created to use products studied in the previous steps as inspiration to create a pen that could exist in the high-end pen category with a not so high-end price tag. Simple, but vibrant color combinations, such as combinations seen in the Parker 51, would be created for both standard and various pen models. Another iteration of a model could utilize more premium materials, such as materials and colors seen in the Fisher Space Bullet pen. Both the LAMY and Caran d'Ache utilized high-end, memorable unboxing experiences that would inspire the packaging design process.

5.3   Step 3: Create New Platform

Design Intent

The design intent of the BIC 4-Color pen collectable enhancement is to create a high-end, collectable pen experience with a low-end price point to remain consistent with BIC's typical, disposable price points. Still, the design intent and product development should result in a pen that consumers are less likely to discard so readily.

Product Design

- **Form**: The form and silhouette of the pen was **retained** to preserve its history of a classic design.

- **Function**: Its function was **retained** due to its unique function and classic design.

- **CMF**: Certain models would benefit from color, material, and finish **refreshes**, while a standard model should **retain** classic CMF currently used.

Packaging Design

Packaging design for this approach application focused on categories 'Sell', 'Surprise', and 'Showcase' of the Expanded Functions of Packaging chart. Remaining functions of packaging, including 'Ship', 'Stock', were excluded for being less relevant regarding the design and marketing of the product.
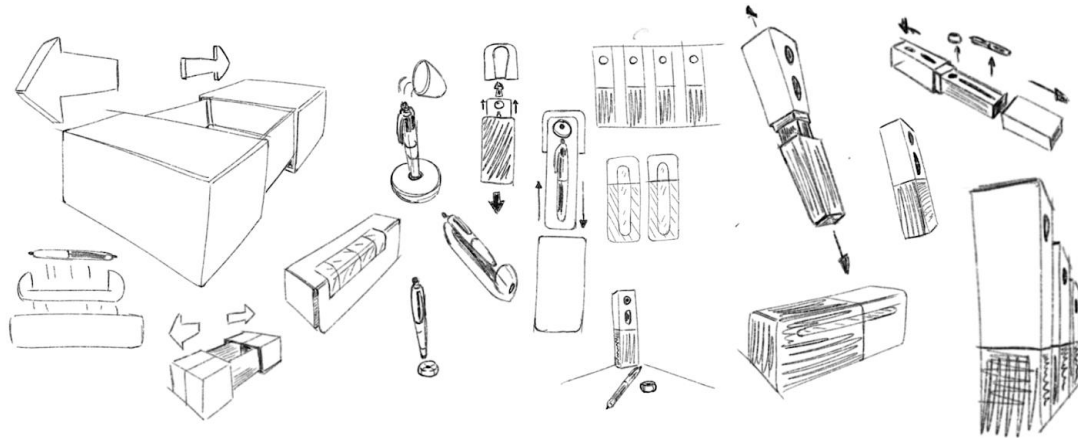
Figure 5.5, Packaging Design Sketch Ideations

Figure 5.6 Physical Model Packaging Prototyping

Packaging design was conceptualized using sketch ideation, physical model making, CAD modelling, and digital rendering. When ideating, concepts needed to meet the design intent of creating a more premium, collectable pen.

The form was redesigned to mimic the pen's iconic form and color scheme layout. The bottom half of the packaging reveals the color of the pen's barrel according to the model that is inside. The top half mimics the pen's white color that typically stays the same across current models of the pen.

Figure 5.7 New BIC 4-Color Pen Platform Back, Front, and Side View (left to right)

Sell: For graphics and text, the marketing of the packaging was chosen to be

modeled using design aspects from both 'functional' and 'display' categories from the

functions of packaging identified in Case Study 3.2.2. Seen in Figure 5.7, a minimalist,

'functional' design was utilized on the front and side of the packaging, while a more

'display' design functionality was utilized on the back of the packaging. **POI**s (points of

identification) were created to establish consistent brand identity standards. Locations

of these **POI**s remain constant, while the content of each may be interchanged across

models. Figure 5-8 as well as a list below, highlights the location of each of these

determined **POI**s.

Figure 5.8 Locations for each POI identified on New Platform

**POI locations corresponding to** Error! Reference source not found.

1. BIC's '4' logo

2. Logo identifying the collection series or collaborating brand

3. Colorway title

4. Profile silhouette hero shot

5. List of all models in the corresponding set

6. QR code for discovering other models and sets

7. Quote about the pen's iconic history

8. Showing four colors used in corresponding model

Windows were implemented into the packaging which showcases part of the pen and its stand while sitting on the shelf. The window design also feeds into the design of the unboxing experience.

Surprise: The unboxing experience continues to mimic the pen's existing design by separating in a similar fashion. The pen separates where the barrel meets the ink cartridge, which is also where the colors of the pen bodies meet. The packaging was designed to open similarly where the two halves, or colors, meet. The packaging uses a durable chipboard material with lithographic printing to achieve the desired color graphics.

The next step of the unboxing experience design was to create anticipation for the presentation. Windows were included to tease the look of the product without revealing it completely. These windows work as a physical hero shot for the product

within the packaging, with the possibility of the product never being opened by

collectors being considered.
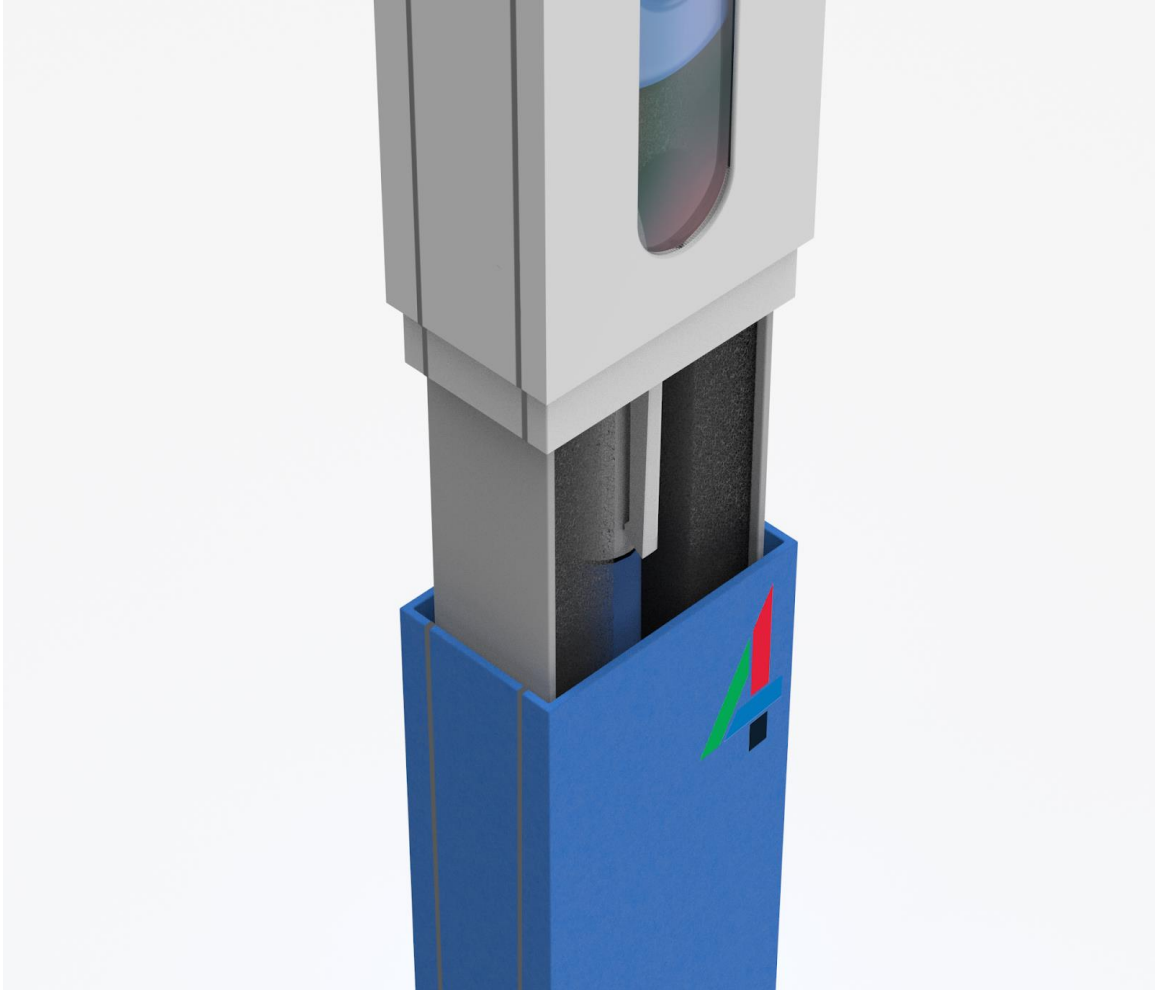
Figure 5.9 Unboxing Experience Reveal

Once opened, the top half of the packaging is removed, revealing the pen and its

stand. However, the barrel of the pen is still concealed, which continues to create

anticipation and add mystery to the presentation.

After the inner packaging is removed, the pen and stand are completely revealed.

The presentation of the product is continued by utilizing snug compartments for each

item within the packaging. As connection points, stickers from BIC will be included in the packaging to show extra levels of gratitude from the brand.

Figure 5.10 BIC Sticker Included in proposed 4-Color Pen Packaging (Couleur Course, n.d.)

Figure 5.11 Exploded View of Packaging

Showcase: The next step of the packaging design process is to give the packaging an extended function after opening. This function was accomplished by creating a pen stand that is included in the packaging and has been referred to in previous steps. The design of the pen stand is also inspired by BIC's logo, seen in Figure 5.12.

Figure 5.12 BIC Boy Logo (left) and Pen Stand (right) (1000logos.net, n.d.)

Figure 5.13 BIC 4-Color Pen with proposed Pen Stand

Figure 5.14 Proposed 'Blue' BIC 4-Color Pen Hero Shot

Utilizing the Expanded Functions of Packaging chart (seen in Appendix A) a complete packaging design was created to enhance the overall product experience with collectability and attachment.

Once the new platform was created for this product enhancement, various models could be created from this platform. Motivations and product release strategies would be used next to create these various models.

5.4   Step 4: Choose Motivations and Step 5: Product Release Strategies

Once a standard platform had been created, developed, and prototyped for the product line, the next step of the design application process was to choose from the motivations of collecting represent potential audiences for this product redesign to be

marketed toward. Product release strategies were chosen that work in tandem with the

selected motivations. Figure 5.15 highlights (in green) all 'Motivations' and

corresponding 'Release Strategies' that were utilized in this approach application.

For this step of the design process, multiple examples were created from the new

platform to best showcase the different outcomes possible from this approach. Each of

the four examples shown indicate the motivations and the influenced product release

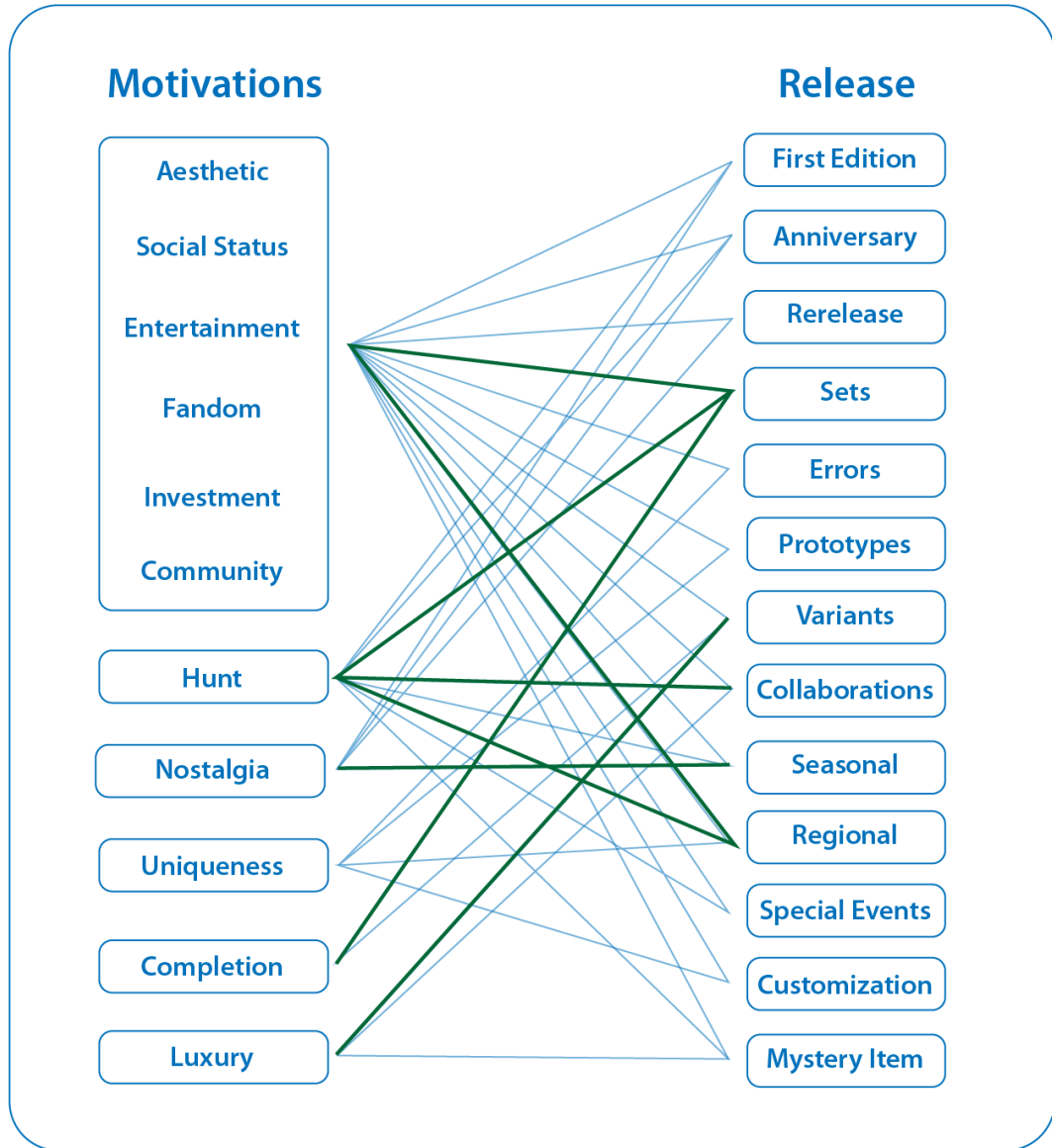strategies were used to create these new models.

Figure 5.15 Motivations and Release Strategies used in Design Approach Application

5.5   Example 1: Standard Set

Motivation: Hunt, Entertainment, Completion

Release Strategy: Sets

A standard set of BIC 4 Color pens were created for consumers to collect. These four models are produced in high quantities and can be commonly found in retail stores.

This standard set is an easy introduction into the idea of collecting these BIC 4 Color

pens.

Based on the platform created in Chapter 3, the following **POI**s were modified for each:

- Colorway text

- Color on barrel, packaging, and pen stand

- Ink colors

Figure 5.16 Proposed 'Standard' Line of BIC 4-Color Pens

5.6   Example 2: Premium Set

Motivation: Luxury, Social Status, Aesthetics, Hunt, Completion

Release Strategy: Variants, Sets

A premium set was created for consumers wanting an elevated experience but the same functionality of the original BIC 4 Color Pen. This set is produced in a more limited number than the standard set, but they can still be found at the same retail stores. The following POI's and design aspects were modified for this model:

- Colorway text

- Metal material replaces plastic barrel

- Color and finish shared across pen, packaging, and stand

- Ink colors to match colorway as well as premium colors

- '4' logo replaced with elegant script lettering

- BIC Boy Logo replaces BIC logo from standard sets

Figure 5.17 Proposed 'Premium' Set of BIC 4-Color Pens

5.7   Example 3: BIC x Fanatics MLB Series

Motivations: Fandom, Hunt, Entertainment, Completion

Release Strategies: Collaboration, Sets, Regional

For this example, a series of BIC 4 Color pens was created in collaboration with Fanatics, a sports merchandising company. This line of products offers a pen created for MLB teams that can be released regionally at each MLB organization's stadium team shop. This regional release can reward fans for coming to support their cities' teams. This can also create a hunt for sports enthusiasts or travelers to visit each stadium to collect pens from every MLB team.

The following **POI**s and design aspects were modified:

- Colorway text (MLB team name)
- Color of body, packaging, and pen stand
- Logo added to barrel of pen
- Fanatics logo replaces BIC logo
- Ink colors

Figure 5.18 Chicago Cubs (left) and New York Yankees (right) Colorways

Figure 5.19 Advertisement Example of Three Models for MLB Teams

5.8   Example 4: Holiday Collection

Motivations: Nostalgia, Completion, Entertainment, Hunt

Release Strategies: Seasonal, Sets, Variants

For the final example, a series titled the 'Holiday Collection' was created to

showcase what a seasonal release could look like. Three models were created for this

Holiday Collection, with Figure 5.20 showcasing the 'Reindeer' and 'Blizzard' colorway.

The 'Blizzard' colorway is an even more exclusive variant titled 'Blizzard' from the

Holiday Collection, creating a further hunt for collectors to pursue. Holiday Collection

creates a product line opportunity to celebrate any desired holiday with an exclusive for

collectors, consumers, and enthusiasts to look forward to.

The following **POI**s and design aspects were modified:

- Colorway text

- Color of body, packaging, and pen stand

- Holiday Collection logo replaces BIC logo

- Ink colors

Figure 5.20 Reindeer (left) and Blizzard (right) Colorway from Holiday Collection
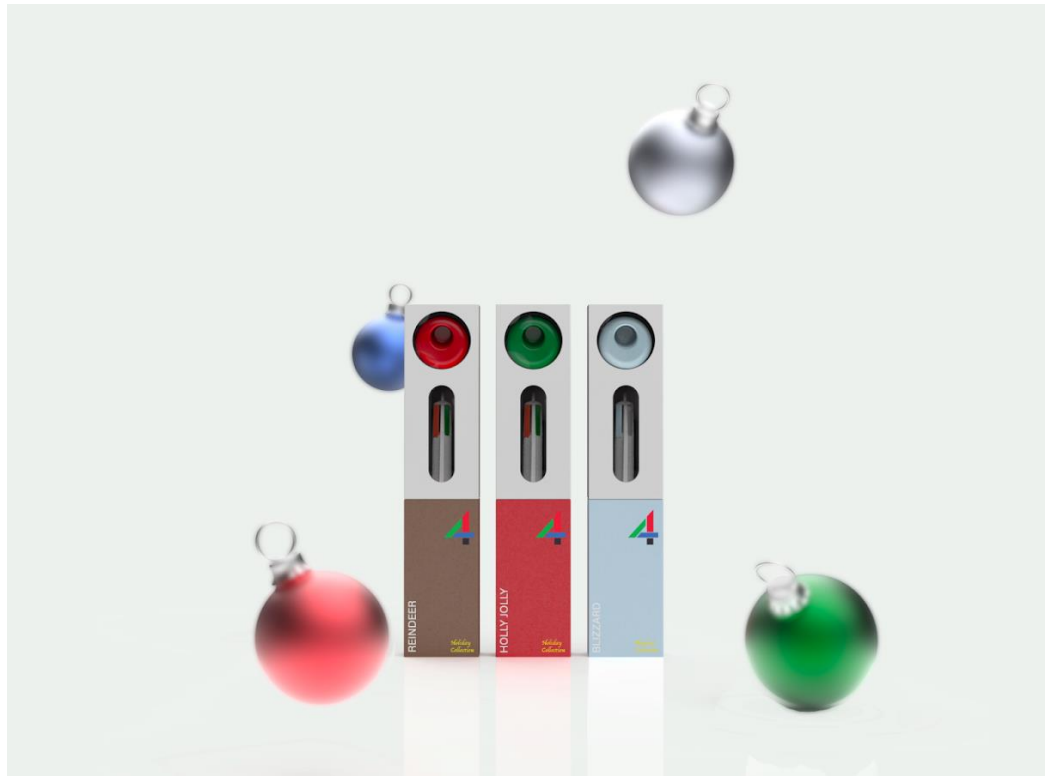
Figure 5.21 Advertisement Example for Holiday Collection

5.9   Approach Application Conclusion:

Utilizing the design approach created in Chapter 4, an existing product was enhanced using collectable design with the hopes of achieving a deeper product attachment to the consumer. A new platform was created for the product so that other designers could expand on product variations while maintaining a consistent brand identity. A series of product release strategies using the motivations for collecting were utilized to illustrate potential product iterations for a BIC 4-Color pen showcasing both standard and premium sets as well as sets collaborating with the MLB, and a Holiday Collection.

6 Conclusion

Products sometimes suffer the fate dying out after release and have a short lifetime. Collectable products have been known to defy these life cycles, occasionally achieving higher perceived values long after their release. Products with strong user attachments can be considered more desirable or collectable. By studying both collectable products and how users gain attachment to them, a design approach was created to allow designers to implement collectible design into existing or new products to achieve deeper consumer attachment, resulting in longer life cycles and higher perceived values.

This study focused on small products that could be displayed on desks or shelves. Larger collectable products such as automobiles and furniture were excluded. However, starting with the approach discussed here, a designer could explore larger products and their collectable characteristics. This approach is potentially applicable to extending the life cycle of both existing products and creation of new products.

From this study and its design approach development, it is believed that designers can better understand the benefits of collectable design and its ability to create longer lasting products through user attachment.

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8 Appendix

Appendix A: Expanded Functions of Packaging

Expanded Functions of Packaging

Showcase
(Display)
Serves new function for displaying after unboxing

Surprise
(Unboxing)
Offers a memorable unboxing experience with presentation

Sell
(Marketing)
Grabs consumer's attention on shelves to encourage purchase

Stock
(Point of Purchase)
Protects and displays product on shelves for point of purchase

Ship
(Transport)
Protects product when in transport

Appendix B: Surprise Strategies

Surprise Strategies

- **Create a memorable unboxing experience**
- Create a presentation with **story, anticipation, mystery,** and **organization**
- **Choose a type of reveal**
    - Shoebox lid
    - Telescope lid
    - Hinged lid
    - Sleeve
    - Custom
    - Other
- **Statement on packaging** sharing brand's message to customer
- **Reveal product on opening**, but keep hidden via bag or sheet, etc.
- **Compartments for all contents** for presentation and organization
- Include **points of connection**
    - stickers
    - coins
    - letter
    - story about brand or product
    - ways to connect with brand

Appendix C Showcase Strategies

Showcase Strategies

Display	Storage	Transportation	DIY

- Viewing window
- Durable materials
- Consistent POI's
  ▪ make
  ▪ model
  ▪ release date
  ▪ graphics
- Hero shot
- Show other models to collect
- Stackable
	- Ease of access
	- Beautiful aesthetics
	- Premium materials
	- Brand identity
	- Protective
	- Abbreviated unboxing experience
		- Protective case
		- Durable materials
		- Ease of access
		- Brand identity
		- Travel-conscious
		- Clips or straps
			- Simple construction
			- Durable materials
			- Easy disassembly
			- Easy to modify
			- Promote DIY functionality

Appendix D: Release Strategies

Release Strategies

First Edition- market first releases with exclusive points of identification

Anniversary- release unique models for special dates

Rerelease-rerelease popular models with slight variances to preserve exclusivity

Variants- release alternate styles of one model, possibly higher-end options

Sets- release products in sets or series to give collectors a hunt to complete

Regional- release models exclusively in certain locations

Errors- release defect models with grammatical or aesthetic errors

Collaborations- collaborate with like or unlike brands to reach new customer bases

Prototypes- release prototype models as exclusive, limited editions

Seasonal- release unique models at certain times of the year such as holidays

Special Events- release products exclusively at specific events, such as conventions

Customization- allow customers to customize the design, creating a more personal product

Mystery Item- releasing items in hidden fashion to create another style of chase or hunt

Appendix E: Human Motivations for Collecting

Human Motivations for Collecting

Nostalgia- collecting objects that tap into a past event or memory

Entertainment- collecting simply for enjoyment or pleasure

Community- collecting to be a part of a social group obtaining similar items

Luxury- collecting high-end items, portraying a luxurious lifestyle

Investment- collecting with the intent to buy, sell, trade to earn a profit

Uniqueness- collecting unique or rare items out of curiosity or desire to be set apart

Hunt- collecting for the thrill of the hunt or chase

Aesthetics- collecting items for their beauty or visual appeal

Completion- collecting items to complete an entire set

Fandom- collecting out of support or fandom for a person, brand, team, etc.

Social Status- collecting to elevate or maintain a social status

Product Selection Process

Reasons for selecting a product could include:

- losing market relevance
- needing a design refresh
- failing in market
- possess surplus inventory
- releasing soon

Product Design Considerations

The current form is...

Classic	Outdated	Failed	New

The current function is...

Unique	Outdated	Failed

Does the current CMF...

Convey the desired product experience?	Compliment the product's function?	Utilize durable materials?

Product Design

The form will be...

Retained	Refreshed	Redesigned

The function will be...

Retained	Refreshed	Redesigned

CMF should utilize...

colors, materials, and finishes that best convey the desired product experience while utilizing the brand's V.B.L (visual brand language)

Appendix I: Entire Collectable Enhancement Process

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

Product Development

Select Product

Analyze Product State

Create New Platform

⇄

Marketing

Choose Motivations

Select Release Strategies

Product Selection Process

Reasons for selecting a product could include:
- losing market relevance
- needing a design refresh
- failing in market
- possess surplus inventory
- releasing soon

Product Design Considerations

The current form is...

| Classic | Outdated | Failed | New |

The current function is...

| Unique | Outdated | Failed |

Does the current CMF...

| Convey the desired product experience? | Compliment the product's function? | Utilize durable materials? |

Packaging Design Considerations

Showcase
(Display)
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Sell
(Marketing)
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Product Design

The form will be...

| Retained | Refreshed | Redesigned |

The function will be...

| Retained | Refreshed | Redesigned |

CMF should utilize...

colors, materials, and finishes that best convey the desired product experience while utilizing the brand's V.B.L (visual brand language)

Packaging Design

Showcase Strategies

Display	Storage	Transportation	DIY

-Viewing window
-Durable materials
-Consistent POIs
  • make
  • model
  • release date
  • graphics
-Hero shot
-Show other models to collect
-Stackable
	-Ease of access
	-Beautiful aesthetics
	-Premium materials
	-Brand identity
	-Protective
	-Abbreviated
		-Protective case
		-Durable materials
		-Ease of access
		-Brand identity
		-Travel-conscious
		-Clips or straps
			-Simple construction
			-Durable materials
			-Easy disassembly
			-Easy to modify
			-Promote DIY functionality

Surprise Strategies

- **Create a memorable unboxing experience**
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  - Shoebox lid
  - Telescope lid
  - Hinged lid
  - Sleeve
  - Custom
  - Other
- -**Statement on packaging** sharing brand's message to customer
- -**Reveal product on opening**, but keep hidden via bag or sheet, etc.
- -**Compartments for all contents** for presentation and organization
- -Include **connection points**
  - stickers
  - coins
  - letter
  - story about brand or product
  - ways to connect with brand

Sell Strategies

Play	Display	Functional
-Use large hero shot with in-context background -Show large image showing theme of set -Use consistent location of POIs -Smaller images with characters from the set -Show minimal text POIs -Keep consistent colors within sets	-Highlight the brand's logo -Identify make, model, year -Identify the theme, series, or collaborating brand -Show production number -Identify the variant of the model (i.e., limited edition sticker) -Show other collectibles in that set	-High-resolution hero shot on front, no words -Simple logo on one side, no words -Name of model on one side, few words -Mimic design philosophy of product inside

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Motivations

- Aesthetic
- Social Status
- Entertainment
- Fandom
- Investment
- Community
- Hunt
- Nostalgia
- Uniqueness
- Completion
- Luxury

Release

- **First Edition**
- **Anniversary**
- **Rerelease**
- **Sets**
- **Errors**
- **Prototypes**
- **Variants**
- **Collaborations**
- **Seasonal**
- **Regional**
- **Special Events**
- **Customization**
- **Mystery Item**