

Kansei Engineering: Nestlé embraces the Kansei design method for a better emotional connection with consumers



Kansei engineering is a Japanese design philosophy that is based on blending design with consumers' instinctive emotional connection to products.

The methodology was developed in the seventies by Professor Mitsuo Nagamachi, formerly Dean of Hiroshima University and was initially applied to car design. Kansei is based on translating into design attributes the meaning, and use, of words that consumers choose to describe how they feel about brands and products. This generates a range of data, which are statistically analysed to define the optimum combination of design criteria. The processed data

provide clear directions for designing new packaging solutions that will reflect the product and brand values.

Nestlé Packaging and Design

Nestlé has a strong capability in packaging and design, and has a large global network of more than 500 packaging experts. Packaging serves a number of purposes, such as:

- Product protection during distribution and storage
- A vehicle for communication about the product and related matters, such as its nutritional attributes
- Functionality for the user, such as easy-to-open, re-sealable, portion controlled
- Attractiveness, which consumers expect in good products

Design is therefore a key component of a packaging solution. In addition to its internal design teams, Nestlé works with several Universities and Design Colleges, world-wide, as well as with selected Design Agencies.

Nestlé and Kansei

Nestlé has been exploring the opportunities that the Kansei engineering approach brings to packaging design, with the support of Professor Nagamachi as well as Design Perspectives from Faraday, and has done pioneering work in applying this technique to package design. Today, Kansei is one of the specific tools in Nestlé's Packaging and Design toolbox for consumer centric development. However, it does not replace the need for experienced industrial designers, graphic designers or packaging engineers whose skills are still needed to turn Kansei-generated data into tangible product packaging.

Consumer benefits

The Kansei approach results in a packaging solution that matches the way that consumers feel about a particular brand, and product.

"Kansei is a scientifically based structured methodology. It helps to take the guess work out of designing new packaging solutions that will meet consumer expectations"

Daniel Magnin, Packaging, Nestec Ltd.

