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Branding. By Design

The Holidays, By Design

It's that time of year: Store windows and front lawns are adorned with decorations. Family tables are graced with the special china that only makes an appearance once a year. Main streets are stippled with twinkling lights. Everywhere we go, there are signals that it's the most wonderful time of the year. Even the cup of coffee that you pick up on your way to work is flaunting a holiday sweater pattern, and when you log onto Google, one of the O's is a turkey or a Christmas wreath. The holidays are here, and marketers everywhere know that design is an integral part of the season. According to Reuters, the holiday shopping season is "a crucial period for retailers that can account for up to 40 percent of annual sales." It's no wonder that consumers buy during the holidays, as luxe seasonal colors and cheerful imagery ornament every retail shelf and online store.

Businesses know well that the resources spent on holiday design consistently yield large returns. During seasonal promotions like Black Friday,

Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday, consumers scramble to sift through seas of giftable items in hopes of finding the perfect presents. Enter design—in an ocean of household items, cosmetics, and confectionary treats, a glistening bow or a jubilant cartoon snowman might be the eye-catching point of difference in the mind of the consumer.

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While seasonal colors and imagery can seem enticing, it is treacherously easy to stumble into the territory of tackiness. Mick Clark, managing director at the UK packaging enterprise WePack, observes that while such changes as color shifts and the addition of glitter and ribbons can add the "touch of luxury people are looking for during this period... we are seeing more and more companies trying not to steer

too far away from the original design and only making minor changes during the festive seasons." This way, if companies are left with overstock after the holidays have passed, the items are still sellable and don't seem completely seasonally irrelevant. Brands must also make an effort to maintain their core identifiers, despite temptations to swap colors and use flashy seasonal shapes and symbols.

This year, even OTCs are joining the packaging festivities. Brands like Vital Proteins (a line of collagen supplements recently popularized by a partnership with Jennifer Aniston) are offering "holiday exclusives" in seasonal scents and flavors such as Vital Proteins' Peppermint Mocha. The brand's holiday line features vibrant festive hues as well as a tasteful snow-like pattern in the background. Even small touches like these allow us to see our favorite products dressed up for this special time of year, bringing smiles to our faces and joy into our hearts.



Vital Proteins' holiday designs feature a sparkling burst of snow—a subtle and cheery addition to last the entire holiday season.

This is the ever-giving gift of great design: its ability to bring joy to the otherwise mundane, forging lasting, personalized brand-to-consumer relationships. Great agencies strive to achieve this level of visual appeal year-round, because when all of the wrapping paper has been tossed and the china has been stored, consumers still want to feel like their holiday purchases belong in their homes.

From our family at GGB to yours, happy holidays! 🎁

If you think your brand should be featured in the next column, contact me at terri@goldsteingroupbranding.com