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The Power of Packaging Design in Supporting Global and Local Events

ABSTRACT

Packaging design has evolved beyond its traditional role of protecting products to become a strategic communication tool that supports branding, cultural identity, and consumer engagement during global and local events. This research investigates the role of packaging design in enhancing the visual identity and promotional impact of major international and local events through the development of event-inspired packaging concepts. The study aims to identify the design elements and visual strategies that strengthen the relationship between products and event branding while increasing consumer attraction and emotional engagement. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining a literature review, analytical study of selected local and international product packages associated with major events, a questionnaire targeting consumers and design specialists to evaluate public perceptions of event-oriented packaging, and experimental design applications developed by the researcher. The experimental designs explored the integration of event visual identity, color schemes, typography, illustrations, structural packaging, and interactive features into commercial packaging to create memorable consumer experiences. The findings demonstrate that packaging inspired by global and local events significantly enhances product visibility, reinforces brand recognition, increases purchase intention, and strengthens consumers' emotional connection with both the product and the event. The analytical and experimental results further indicate that integrating cultural and event-specific visual elements into packaging contributes to effective marketing communication and product differentiation in competitive markets. The study concludes that event-oriented packaging design represents an innovative marketing and communication strategy capable of creating added value for brands while promoting cultural and sporting events. Accordingly, the research recommends encouraging collaboration between packaging designers, manufacturers, and event organizers to develop limited-edition packaging that celebrates local and global events, enhances consumer experience, and supports economic and cultural sustainability.

Khloud Khaled Nasr

Egyptian Russian University, Faculty of Applied Arts, Department of Printing and Packaging, Cairo, Egypt

KEY WORDS

Packaging design, limited-edition packaging, consumer engagement, visual communication, event marketing

1. Introduction

Packaging design has sophisticated significantly from its traditional role as a means of containing, protecting, and transporting products to become an influential medium of visual communication, branding, and consumer engagement. Contemporary packaging integrates structural, graphic, material, and informational elements to communicate product values and establish meaningful connections between brands and consumers. Recent literature demonstrates that packaging design can influence consumer perception, brand associations, attention, emotions, and purchase-related behavior, confirming its importance as a strategic component of brand communication rather than merely a functional container (Rodriguez, Antonovica & Martín, 2023).

An example of this communicative role can be observed in Heinz packaging-related visual communication, where the familiar visual characteristics of the brand are transformed into engaging and recognizable forms (The Kraft Heinz Company, 2026).

The examples demonstrate how packaging-related design can extend beyond product identification to create visual associations, attract attention, and strengthen brand recognition through distinctive colors, forms, and symbolic references, as shown in figure 1.



» **Figure 1:** *Heinz packaging inspired by football's red and yellow cards during the 2026 FIFA World Cup*

The communicative power of packaging becomes particularly significant in the context of global and local events, where visual communication plays a central role in creating recognition, expressing the character of an event, and connecting audiences with its cultural and social context.

Major international events such as the Olympic Games demonstrate how a coherent visual identity can be extended across numerous communication and design applications. The Olympic visual identity system, for example, integrates elements such as logos, pictograms, merchandise, posters, uniforms, and other visual applications to establish a consistent and recognizable representation of the host city and event. The design of such events often combines international visual trends with national and cultural characteristics, creating a visual language capable of communicating simultaneously with local and international audiences (Osterwalder, 2020).

Within this context, packaging can function as an extension of event identity, transforming products into tangible representations of a specific occasion, destination, culture, or celebration. Event-related packaging, including limited-edition packages, commemorative packages, promotional packaging, and souvenir packaging, provides opportunities for designers to integrate event themes, symbols, colors, typography, imagery, and cultural references into a physical product.

Packaging therefore has the potential to extend the visual experience of an event beyond its physical location and duration, allowing audiences to retain a tangible reminder of the event. Research on packaging and brand image supports this perspective, demonstrating that consumers interpret both practical and symbolic packaging characteristics and incorporate these perceptions into their broader associations with brands (Ghorbani & Westermann, 2024).

The relationship between packaging and cultural identity is particularly important for local events and destinations. Packaging can communicate elements of local heritage through visual narratives, traditional patterns, symbols, materials, colors, and culturally significant imagery. Such approaches can transform packaging into a form of cultural storytelling that communicates the identity of a place while supporting tourism, local products, and cultural visibility.

Recent research describes packaging as a potential "cultural ambassador," emphasizing its ability to communicate regional identity, preserve cultural narratives, and contribute to tourism and local economic vitality (Aleshaiwi, 2025).

This cultural dimension is especially relevant when local heritage is incorporated into contemporary packaging design. Traditional cultural expressions may include designs, signs, symbols, handicrafts, narratives, patterns, and other artistic forms that are connected to the identity and heritage of local communities. Therefore, incorporating cultural elements into event packaging requires not only aesthetic consideration but also sensitivity to cultural authenticity, representation, and the appropriate use of traditional visual expressions.

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) emphasizes that traditional cultural expressions form part of the identity and heritage of traditional and local communities and can contribute to cultural diversity and heritage preservation when appropriately managed (WIPO, n.d.).

At the same time, the contemporary role of packaging extends beyond visual identity toward consumer experience and interaction. Packaging can attract attention, communicate information, evoke emotions, and encourage consumers to interact with the product. Recent research has increasingly examined packaging through experiential and consumer-centered perspectives, while emerging forms of interactive and smart packaging provide additional opportunities for connecting physical packaging with digital experiences. For example, the FIFA World Cup 2026 experience demonstrates how physical product packaging can be connected with digital engagement through scannable Coca-Cola labels and the FIFA Panini digital collection, creating an interaction between the physical package and a digital event-related experience (FIFA, 2026). Another critical dimension is sustainability.

The increasing scale of events and promotional activities raises questions concerning the environmental impact of temporary and commemorative packaging. Packaging for events should therefore balance visual impact, functionality, cultural communication, and environmental responsibility. The United Nations Environment Programme and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation have emphasized the need to reduce unnecessary single-use packaging, increase reuse, and move toward circular approaches to packaging (UNEP, 2022).

Accordingly, packaging design can be viewed as a strategic visual communication tool capable of supporting both global and local events by translating event concepts into tangible visual and physical experiences. Its effectiveness may depend on the ability to establish a recognizable event identity while simultaneously reflecting cultural context, attracting audiences, communicating meaningful messages, encouraging engagement, and considering sustainability. Therefore, investigating the power of packaging design in supporting global and local events can provide valuable insights into how packaging can move beyond its conventional commercial function to become an active component of event branding, cultural representation, audience engagement, and destination promotion.

2. Methods

This study adopts a mixed-methods research approach to investigate the role and potential of packaging design in supporting global and local events. The mixed-methods approach combines qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of how event-related packaging communicates visual identity, represents cultural values, enhances audience engagement, and influences consumer perception.

The study consists of four complementary stages: literature review, visual case study analysis, questionnaire survey, and applied design. Integrating these methods enables the research to examine packaging design from both a theoretical and design perspective, as well as from a consumer-perception perspective.

1. The first stage focuses on reviewing relevant academic literature addressing packaging design, visual communication, event branding, cultural identity, consumer engagement, interactive packaging, and sustainable packaging. The literature review establishes the theoretical framework of the study and identifies the key dimensions through which the effectiveness of event-related packaging can be examined.

2. The second stage focuses on the visual analysis of selected global and local event-related packaging examples. The cases are evaluated using predefined criteria to examine how packaging communicates event identity, represents cultural values, engages consumers, and creates memorable experiences (Krishna, Cian & Aydınoğlu, 2017; Yao, 2026).

The analysis considers visual identity and consistency, event recognition, graphic and structural design, cultural representation, emotional appeal, consumer interaction, innovation, sustainability, and memorability and souvenir value, as shown in figure 2.

3. The third stage consisted of a structured questionnaire designed to investigate consumers' perceptions of the role and perceived power of packaging design in supporting global and local events. The questionnaire was developed based on the variables and key themes identified through the literature review and visual case study analysis. It comprised 15 questions directly addressing the research objectives and focused on five key dimensions: packaging design, event identity, cultural representation, consumer engagement, and event promotion, shown in table 1.

A comparative dimension was also included to examine participants' perceptions of packaging associated with global and local events. The questionnaire was distributed to 130 participants from diverse backgrounds.

Participants were asked to evaluate the main statements using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The questionnaire was administered electronically using Google Forms.



» **Figure 2:** *Selected event packaging analyzed based on visual, cultural, functional, and sustainability criteria*

Table 1

Questionnaire Statements and Research Dimensions

(The following table presents the 15 statements developed to investigate the role of packaging design in supporting global and local events. The statements were structured according to the principal dimensions identified in the research framework)

No.	Questionnaire Statement	Research Dimension
1.	Event-related packaging can enhance the visual recognition of an event.	Event Recognition
2.	Packaging design can effectively communicate the identity and character of an event.	Event Identity
3.	A well-designed package can strengthen the visual connection between a product and the event it represents.	Product–Event Connection
4.	Packaging can extend an event's visual identity beyond the event venue and duration.	Event Promotion
5.	Distinctive event-related packaging can attract audience attention more effectively than conventional packaging.	Visual Attraction
6.	The use of event-related colors, typography, symbols, and imagery can strengthen event recognition.	Visual Communication
7.	Packaging design can effectively communicate the cultural identity of a local event.	Cultural Identity
8.	The appropriate incorporation of local patterns, symbols, and traditional visual elements can strengthen the connection between packaging, cultural heritage, and the event.	Cultural Representation
9.	Cultural elements incorporated into packaging can increase its appeal to tourists and international audiences.	Tourism and Cultural Promotion
10.	Packaging can communicate cultural stories and values associated with local events.	Cultural Storytelling
11.	Event-related packaging can create an emotional connection between consumers and the event.	Emotional Engagement
12.	Interactive packaging features, such as QR codes and digital content, can enhance the audience's experience of an event.	Interactive Experience
13.	Innovative packaging can increase the memorability of event-related products and experiences.	Innovation and Memorability
14.	Sustainable and reusable packaging can increase the long-term value of event-related products.	Sustainability
15.	Event-related packaging can contribute to promoting an event and maintaining audience awareness after the event has ended.	Long-Term Event Promotion

Data were collected during the International Exhibition for Paper, Board, Carton, Tissue, Printing, and Packaging Industries in Egypt (Paper Middle East Exhibition 2026), providing an appropriate context for reaching participants with diverse backgrounds and interests related to packaging, printing, and product communication.

Participation was voluntary, and respondents were invited to complete the questionnaire through a digital link or QR code. A total of 130 valid responses were collected and included in the analysis.

4. The fourth stage involved an applied design study that translated the findings of the literature review, visual case study analysis, and questionnaire survey into a practical packaging design solution. The study was developed to examine how the identified design principles could be applied to event related packaging and to demonstrate the potential of packaging as a strategic communication and promotional medium for global and local events.

The applied design process focused on integrating the key dimensions identified through the previous research stages, including event identity, cultural representation, visual communication, consumer engagement, innovation, and sustainability. The design solution aimed to establish a clear relationship between the product, the event, and its target audience while extending the event experience beyond its temporary physical context.

The resulting packaging prototype was developed based on the findings and design principles derived from the preceding research stages. The design development and resulting prototype are presented and discussed in the Results section.

3. Results

Based on the findings of the questionnaire survey and visual case study analysis, the applied study identified key design and symbolic elements that can effectively communicate the identity, cultural character, and legacy of global and local events. These findings informed the selection and development of the packaging concept. The main design challenge was to translate the identified elements into a contemporary packaging solution that establishes a meaningful connection between the event, the product, and its target audience.

3.1. Questionnaire Results

The questionnaire was completed by 130 participants and consisted of 15 statements developed to investigate the role of packaging design in supporting global and local events. The responses were analyzed using frequencies and percentages. The findings are presented according to the main research dimensions.

3.1.1. Event Recognition and Identity

The results indicate a high level of acceptance regarding the role of packaging in communicating event identity. 106 participants (81.5%) strongly agreed that event-related packaging can enhance visual recognition of an event. Similarly, 109 participants (83.8%) supported its ability to communicate the identity and character of an event, while 106 participants (81.5%) recognized its role in strengthening the connection between the product and the event. Furthermore, 102 participants (78.5%) agreed that packaging can extend an event's visual identity beyond its venue and duration.

3.1.2. Visual Communication and Audience Attention

A strong level of agreement was also observed regarding visual communication. 112 participants (86.2%) agreed that distinctive event-related packaging can attract audience attention more effectively than conventional packaging. The same proportion, 112 participants (86.2%), agreed that event-related colors, typography, symbols, and imagery can strengthen event recognition. These findings emphasize the importance of visual design elements in communicating and reinforcing event identity.

3.1.3. Cultural Representation and Local Identity

The cultural dimension received particularly strong support. 108 participants (83.1%) strongly agreed that packaging can communicate the cultural identity of a local event. Moreover, 112 participants (86.2%) supported the use of local patterns, symbols, and traditional visual elements to strengthen the connection between packaging, cultural heritage, and the event.

In addition, 106 participants (81.5%) agreed that cultural elements can increase the appeal of packaging to tourists and international audiences, while the same number recognized its ability to communicate cultural stories and values.

3.1.4. Emotional Engagement and Event Experience

The findings show that packaging can also contribute to audience engagement. 101 participants (77.7%) agreed that event-related packaging can create an emotional connection between consumers and the event. This indicates that packaging has the potential to contribute to a more memorable relationship between the audience, the product, and the event.

3.1.5. Interactive and Innovative Packaging

The results demonstrated positive acceptance of interactive and innovative approaches. 103 participants (79.2%) agreed that interactive features, such as QR codes and digital content, can enhance the audience's event experience. Furthermore, 110 participants (84.6%) agreed that innovative packaging can increase the memorability of event-related products and experiences.

3.1.6. Sustainability and Long-Term Event Promotion

Sustainability and long-term promotional value were also strongly supported. 108 participants (83.1%) strongly agreed that sustainable and reusable packaging can increase the long-term value of event-related products. The strongest response in this dimension was recorded for the promotional role of packaging, with 112 participants (86.2%) agreeing that event-related packaging can promote an event and maintain audience awareness after the event has ended.

Overall, the findings reveal a high level of positive acceptance, with the proportion of participants who selected Agree or Strongly Agree ranging from 77.7% to 86.2% across the 15 statements. The strongest levels of acceptance were associated with visual communication, cultural representation, and long-term event promotion, each reaching 86.2%. These findings support the central premise of the study that packaging design can function beyond its conventional product-related role to become a strategic medium for event recognition, cultural representation, audience engagement, and event promotion.

3.2. Applied Study

Based on the findings of the questionnaire survey and visual case study analysis, the applied study translated the identified design principles into practical packaging solutions associated with four selected events.
Two local Egyptian events and two global events

were selected to examine how packaging design can communicate different forms of event identity, cultural representation, and audience engagement across local and international contexts.

The selected events were the International Date Palm Festival of Egypt and the Cairo International Film Festival as local events, and the FIFA World Cup 2030 and World Packaging Day 2026 as global events. The selection provided diverse contexts for exploring the ability of packaging to reflect cultural identity, event characteristics, visual identity, promotional objectives, and audience expectations.

For each event, the applied design process followed a consistent framework. The process began with identifying the event's distinctive visual and symbolic characteristics, followed by selecting and interpreting relevant cultural or thematic elements. These elements were then translated into contemporary packaging through graphic composition, color, typography, imagery, pattern, structural design, and, where appropriate, interactive, innovative, or sustainable features.

The application aimed to establish a meaningful relationship between the event, the product, and its target audience while demonstrating how packaging can extend event communication beyond the physical event itself. The four design applications are presented below, with each case examined in terms of its conceptual development, visual language, cultural or thematic representation, and packaging outcome.

3.2.1. Local Event Packaging

The applied study explored the potential of packaging design to support the identity and communication of selected Egyptian local events through contemporary and culturally relevant design solutions. Two local events were selected: the International Date Palm Festival of Egypt and the Cairo International Film Festival. The selection provided two distinct contexts for examining how packaging can communicate cultural heritage, event identity, and thematic characteristics while creating a tangible connection between the event, the product, and its audience. For each event, the design process focused on identifying its distinctive visual and symbolic elements and translating them into contemporary packaging solutions that support event recognition, cultural representation, promotion, and audience engagement.

3.2.1.1. International Date Palm Festival of Egypt

The International Date Palm Festival of Egypt, was selected as a local application due to its strong association with Egyptian date cultivation, agricultural heritage, and oasis culture (International Date Palm Festival of Egypt, n.d.), as shown in Figure 3. The date palm was identified as the primary symbolic element for translating the festival's identity into a contemporary packaging solution.



» **Figure 3:** *Event context and visual identity of the International Date Palm Festival of Egypt*

The design analysis focused on extracting the palm's recognizable characteristics including its silhouette, leaves, trunk, and organic forms and reinterpreting them through contemporary graphic elements, patterns, color, and typography. Visual references from the oasis environment and Egyptian cultural heritage were selectively incorporated to strengthen the sense of place while avoiding literal reproduction of traditional motifs, as shown in figure 4.



» **Figure 4:** *Cultural and visual references of the Egyptian oasis environment*

The resulting packaging concept positions the product as an extension of the event identity, integrating cultural storytelling with product communication. Through the relationship between symbol, visual identity, product, and packaging structure, the application demonstrates how event-related packaging can transform a culturally significant product into a tangible medium for event recognition, promotion, and audience experience. The applied design presents an event-related date packaging concept inspired by the cultural and environmental identity of Siwa Oasis. Date palms, traditional geometric patterns, Siwan architecture, and desert landscapes create a distinctive visual narrative that connects the product with local heritage.

A clear die-cut window shaped as a date palm leaf provides direct product visibility while enhancing consumer engagement and reinforcing the packaging's cultural and structural concept. A clear visual hierarchy further strengthens event communication and promotional value, transforming the package into a tangible representation of the event and its local identity, as shown in Figure 5.



» **Figure 5:** *Proposed event related packaging design for the International Date Palm Festival of Egypt*

3.2.1.2. Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF)

The Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF), established in 1976, is a major Egyptian cultural event with a strong international presence. It brings together filmmakers, film professionals, and audiences from around the world, contributing to Egypt's cultural and cinematic visibility.

From a packaging design perspective, CIFF provides a relevant local case study for exploring how event identity can be extended to product packaging. Event related packaging can integrate cinematic visual language, Egyptian cultural references, typography, colors, symbols, and festival graphics to strengthen event recognition and create a connection between the product and the audience.

As an applied example, a proposed limited edition Corona chocolate package can be developed specifically for the Cairo International Film Festival, as shown Figures 6 and 7. The concept integrates the festival's cinematic identity with the visual identity of the chocolate brand, transforming the conventional package into an event related product. The limited edition approach enhances the package's exclusivity and collectible value while supporting visual identity, cultural representation, audience engagement, brand recognition, and memorability.



» **Figure 6:** *Limited Edition Corona Chocolate Packaging Inspired by the Cairo International Film Festival (First Proposal)*



» **Figure 7:** *Limited Edition Corona Chocolate Packaging Inspired by the Cairo International Film Festival (Second Proposal)*

3.2.2. Global Event Packaging

Global event packaging refers to the adaptation of product packaging to reflect the identity, themes, and visual language of major international events. By integrating event-related symbols, cultural references, and communication elements, packaging can extend the event experience while maintaining the product's brand identity and functional requirements.

In this study, global event packaging is explored through two selected global events: World Packaging Day 2026 and the FIFA World Cup 2030.The proposed designs examine how packaging can communicate event identity, cultural representation, audience engagement, innovation, and sustainability through limited-edition and event specific visual solutions.

This approach demonstrates the potential of packaging to function not only as a product container but also as a visual communication medium that connects brands with major global events.

3.2.2.1. World Packaging Day 2026

World Packaging Day 2026 was selected as a global event context to explore how packaging design can visually communicate the role and value of packaging in contemporary society. Officially celebrated on 6 September 2026, the initiative is led by the World Packaging Organization (WPO) and focuses on four main pillars: Packaging for Progress, Packaging Against Food Waste, Packaging and Economic Growth, and Packaging and Sustainability.

For the applied study, these themes were translated into a limited-edition packaging concept that combines the visual identity of the event with the identity of the selected product. The design incorporates visual elements representing innovation, sustainability, food protection, economic development, and the wider social role of packaging.

The proposed packaging demonstrates how an existing product package can be transformed into an event related communication tool, while maintaining its functional purpose and recognizable brand identity.

The design therefore connects the product, packaging industry, event identity, and audience within one visual solution, as shown Figures 8 and 9.



» **Figure 8:** *Proposed KitKat packaging for World Packaging Day 2026*



» **Figure 9:** *Proposed Nature Valley Granola packaging for World Packaging Day 2026*

3.2.2.2. FIFA World Cup 2030.

The FIFA World Cup 2030 will be a major global sporting event and a special centenary edition, celebrating 100 years since the first World Cup in Uruguay in 1930.

For the applied study, the event provides an opportunity to develop limited-edition packaging inspired by football, the centenary celebration, and the cultural identities of the host countries. This approach demonstrates how packaging design can support event identity, cultural representation, audience engagement, brand recognition, and memorability.

The applied study explores two approaches to packaging development:

1. Modifying the graphic design while maintaining the original structural form of the package, as shown in Figure (10).
2. Modifying both the graphic and structural design to create a new packaging form, as shown in Figure (11). These two approaches demonstrate how event-inspired packaging can be developed through either visual transformation alone or through an integrated graphic and structural redesign.



» **Figure 10:** *Graphic redesign of adidas packaging inspired by FIFA World Cup 2030.*



» **Figure 11:** *Graphic and structural redesign of the Adidas shoe packaging inspired by the FIFA World Cup 2030.*

4. Discussion

The findings highlight the significant role of packaging design in enhancing the relationship between products, brands, events, and audiences. The high level of participant agreement across the five investigated dimensions packaging design, event identity, cultural representation, consumer engagement, and event promotion suggests that event related packaging can extend beyond its traditional functional role to become an effective visual communication medium.

The applied design studies support these findings by demonstrating how integrating event identity with brand identity can transform conventional packaging into a

distinctive event-related experience. The incorporation of event specific visual elements, cultural references, storytelling, and limited-edition concepts provides opportunities to increase visual appeal, strengthen product event association, and encourage audience interaction.

The study also indicates that the effectiveness of event-related packaging depends on its ability to achieve a balance between recognizable brand identity and relevant event representation. In global events, this requires a visual language that can communicate across diverse audiences, whereas local events allow packaging to incorporate distinctive cultural and place-based elements that strengthen local identity and emotional connection.

Overall, the results indicate that packaging can serve as a strategic extension of event communication, allowing event identity and values to be experienced through a tangible product. Thus, event related packaging represents an opportunity to connect visual communication, cultural identity, brand engagement, and event promotion within a single design solution.

5. Conclusions

This study concludes that packaging design has the potential to play a significant role in supporting and communicating the identity of both global and local events. By integrating event identity, brand identity, cultural representation, and functional packaging requirements, packaging can extend beyond its conventional role as a product container to become an effective medium of visual communication.

The findings from the visual analysis and questionnaire indicate that event-related packaging can contribute to strengthening event recognition, enhancing consumer engagement, communicating cultural values, and promoting the associated event. The high level of participant agreement across the five investigated dimensions packaging design, event identity, cultural representation, consumer engagement, and event promotion supports the relevance of these dimensions in developing event-related packaging solutions.

The applied design studies further demonstrate that adapting conventional packaging to specific event contexts can create distinctive and meaningful visual experiences. The integration of limited-edition concepts, event specific visual elements, cultural symbols, storytelling, and interactive features provides opportunities to connect the product with the identity and values of the event while maintaining its brand recognition and functional requirements.

The study also highlights the importance of adapting packaging strategies according to the nature of the event. Global events require visual solutions that communicate effectively across diverse audiences, while local events provide opportunities to emphasize cultural heritage, local identity, and place-based narratives. This demonstrates the flexibility of packaging design as a tool for communicating different levels of event identity.

Overall, the research establishes that event-related packaging can serve as a tangible extension of event communication, creating a connection between the event, brand, product, culture, and audience. Therefore, incorporating event identity into packaging design represents a valuable design strategy for enhancing communication, engagement, and the overall visual experience of both global and local events.

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