Products and packaging

1. Listen to the audio

Listening for detail

3 1:28 **Listen again and mark these statements *T* (true) or *F* (false).**

1 Branding is not enough to differentiate almost identical products. ☐
2 Business guru Jack Trout thinks that companies overcommunicate their difference. ☐
3 Most customers decide which product to buy before going to the store. ☐
4 In the past, design teams were not told about financial and manufacturing problems so as not to limit their creativity. ☐
5 Creative ideas are often simplified and adapted because focus groups don't like them. ☐
6 The task force can't leave their hotel until every member of the team is enthusiastic about the new concept. ☐
7 Consumers are not always conscious of what they need. ☐
8 New China Packaging's task forces need months or years to deliver a consumer-validated package. ☐

2. Read the text.

Glossary:

focus group /ˈfəʊkəs ˌgruːp/ noun [count] a small group of people who are interviewed together and give their opinions to help a company make decisions.

frustration /frʌˈstreɪʃ(ə)n/ noun [count or uncount] the feeling of being frustrated.

interface /ˌɪntə(r)ˈfeɪs/ verb [intransitive] interact and communicate with each other.

provocation /ˌprɒvəˈkeɪʃ(ə)n/ noun [count or uncount] the act of doing or saying something deliberately in order to make somebody angry or upset. *She bursts into tears at the slightest provocation.*

rage /reɪdʒ/ noun [count or uncount] a very strong feeling of anger: MAINLY JOURNALISM angry violent behaviour in a public situation: *It is clear that air rage is now on the increase.*

resistant /rɪˈzɪst(ə)nt/ adjective able to resist something: *a disease that is resistant to antibiotics.*

trigger /ˈtrɪgə(r)/ verb [transitive] to make something happen: *to trigger an alarm.*

wrap /ræp/ verb [transitive] to cover something by putting something such as paper or plastic around it: *I wrapped my present for my sister's birthday.*

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WRAP RAGE



SURVEYS show that intense frustration and even injury caused by modern packaging is on the increase, especially amongst seniors. Seventy per cent of over 50s admit to injuring fingers, hands and shoulders as a result of 'wrap rage', a new term used to describe the irritation and loss of self-control experienced when struggling to open wrapping.

In recent years manufacturers have been under increasing pressure to keep food items sterile, to provide child-proof packaging for dangerous or toxic household cleaning products, to protect products during transport and to reduce theft from shops. At the same time, they are forced to keep costs to a minimum. As a result, packaging has become ever more resistant to fingers, nails and even teeth. In their frustration with plastic packs, which defeat all attempts to open them, even with scissors, consumers use all kinds of tools and knives. At best, the product inside the packaging is at risk; at worst, it is hardly surprising that 60,000 people a year are injured in Great Britain alone.

'... consumers use all kinds of tools and knives ...'

Some of the most common triggers of wrap rage are processed cheese packages, tightly wrapped CDs, child-proof tops on medicine bottles, and milk and juice cartons. Ring-pull cans are particularly problematic for older fingers and delicate skin. Even fighting to remove price tags from items bought as gifts can raise blood pressure, and unnecessary overpackaging is pure provocation to the ecologically-minded.

However it seems there's light at the end of the tunnel. Manufacturers are listening to customers' complaints, and some have begun to research and invest in more consumer-friendly packaging. The bottom line is that if they don't react, they risk losing sales if customers simply stop buying products with packaging that offers too much resistance.

3. Paraphrasing

Reformulate these phrases from the article in your own words.

1. to reduce theft from shops (line 10)
2. the most common triggers of wrap rage (line 22)
3. even fighting to remove price tags can raise blood pressure (line 26)
4. pure provocation to the ecologically-minded (line 28)
5. there's light at the end of the tunnel (line 29)
6. The bottom line is that if they don't react, they risk losing sales (line 32)

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