

GLASS BOTTLES: SPECIALIZED UNIT PACKAGING IN THE 18th CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

Eighteenth-century glass packaging is explored by examining origin of the product and package and the relationships between package and product. Three brief case studies examine a long-term association between a generic English-made glass bottle form used for European wines, specialized bottles used for European spa waters, and a branded bottle used by Turlington for his patented medicine, Balsam of Life. Different factors affected the role glass bottles played in packaging products, including manufacturing and production origins of both, legislation affecting movement of goods, and patent protection, where the product was packaged, and the usefulness of branded or specialized bottles to guarantee authenticity of products.

Commercial unit packaging was common-place in the 18th century. Evidence comes from many sources, including archaeological excavations in Europe and on English, French, Dutch and Spanish colonial sites, as well as English and North American newspaper advertisements, paintings and engravings, government documents, and documents from producers such as glass bottle manufacturers. By the mid 18th century, for example, English bottle glass manufacturers made bottles designed for different types of products, such as wine and cider, beer and porter, snuff, mustard, oils, olives, anchovies, pickles, preserved fruits, medicines, spa waters. Some of these packages were generic, some were specialized, and some were branded.

How the packages were used depended on many different factors and changed from one product to another, and from one country to another. By examining origin, product, and package separately, then in combination with each other, it is possible to identify the factors involved and to understand the role 18th-century glass unit packages played in marketing products. This role also changed over time.

Generic packaging. One group of bottles made by dark green glass bottle manufacturers in England was used primarily to store and ship European wines as well as English ciders; two other closely related forms were used for beer and porter. These bottles formed the backbone of production for English dark green glass bottle manufacturers. As newspaper advertisements make clear, these products were sold based on their regional origin, not by company names. As generic products they were packaged in generic bottle shapes. However, European wines were put into English bottles because of the role English merchants played in the wine trade, particularly for Spanish and Portuguese wines, and because of customs and excise duties. Using both types of duties the British government controlled the movement of wines and the production and movement of English-made glass bottles.

Specialized packaging. The trade in bottled mineral waters from springs in Britain and continental Europe brought this product to consumers who lived far away from the springs. As each spring had distinctive medicinal properties, consumers selected the water that matched their needs. Merchants marked the bottles in many different ways to guarantee the authenticity of the water. One strategy employed by those selling some famous European waters was to use a distinctively-shaped bottle and to have a glass seal embossed with a crest and the name of the water put on the bottle at the time of manufacture. Bottled water from Spa, Pymont and Driminer were sold in this type of packaging.

Branded packaging. In England and its North American colonies many different types of branded, or proprietary, products were available in the 18th century, including mustard, snuff, sauces, and especially medicines. One example of these medical preparations was Robert Turlington's Balsam of Life which he patented in 1744. By 1748 he was using a distinctive bottle and even though he held the patent, Turlington was already having difficulties with imitators ordering his vials from a London glass factory and selling their own versions of the medicine. In an attempt to protect his medicine and to guarantee the authenticity of the medicine he changed the bottle and its inscription at least four times between 1748 and 1754. He finally stopped making changes in 1745. Turlington also used newspaper advertisements and wrapped his bottle in a sheet of paper which was "signed by his own hand". The advertisements and wrapper included testimonials, gave directions for using the medicine, and stressed that consumers were to beware of counterfeit medicines. Before the end of the 18th century Turlington's Balsam of Life had become one of several English patent medicines which had been so

successful and so imitated that it had become standard stock in any pharmacy or store selling medicines. In 1824 a committee of Philadelphia pharmacists noted that the distinctive vials, the printed labels and wrappings complete with obsolete official markings were signals to consumers that they were buying the "genuine" medicine. These medicines, including Turlington's Balsam of Life, were still available in the 20th century. Although they started as branded bottles, the Turlington vials became specialized packaging through the process of imitation and consumer understanding.

Commercial unit packaging in the 18th century responded to many different forces. Examining the package, the product and the origin of both through time help us understand what some of those forces were. Legislation affected such things as size, what was imported or exported in unit packaging, how packaging industries operated. Merchants used specialized or branded packaging to help guarantee the contents and to control sales of those products although without the necessary legal protection they were not able to maintain exclusivity of sales. Changing social expectations supported the development of specialized and even branded products, including those sold in bottles. Merchant networks helped establish patterns in trade and usage and through efficient distribution systems were able to supply products in recognizable unit packages to consumers all over the world. Newspaper advertisements helped establish the links between products and packages and their origins to consumers far from production centers.

PERIODIZATION SCHEMES IN MARKETING HISTORY: A DRAMA IN X ACTS

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ABSTRACT

Periodization is defined as the dividing up of large and small segments of marketing history into relatively homogeneous periods. Periodization is one of the historian's major tools for organizing historical narrative, reporting and analysis. In spite of several weaknesses identified by Stowe (1983), periodization enables events to be placed in appropriate temporal and sequential context. Social scientists and marketing historians have used a variety of periodization schemes for this purpose. This paper will assemble, collate, and analyze attempts to periodize marketing history.

Nineteen works were analyzed from the areas of anthropology, economics, advertising, and marketing. The data were divided into 12 long period schemes and 7 short period schemes. The number of periods for each scholar varies from 3 to 11. The length of individual periods range from one decade to several centuries. Matching periods scholars descriptions was made difficult because some authors did not date their periods.

In analyzing the long period schemes, there appears to be commonalities in descriptions of successive periods across the authors. There also appears to be agreement on the progression of marketing over time, if not the dates of arrival (which differ by country). Since the studies originated in different academic disciplines, the descriptions complement each other and provide a rounded view of centuries of marketing history.

The short period schemes cover a more recent span of time, the last century and one-half. There was much more certainty among the short period scholars as to the dating of occurrences. While this precision creates ease in classification, it also creates the potential for arbitrariness. Often ten year periods were used for purposes of exposition, and yet contrary to this purpose, they have been interpreted as analysis. The periodization of marketing thought is especially problematic because some periodization schemes concentrate on text books (e.g., Bartels, 1976), whereas others use journal articles (e.g., Kerin, 1996). Comparisons between these two types of schemes are hampered by a number of problems, such as the time lag before journal material enters textbooks, among others. The short periods models also concentrate more on the history of thought than on the history of marketing.

The authors draw some conclusions from this collection of periodization schemes. One obvious difference between the long periods models and the short periods models is the difference between a telescopic and a microscopic point of view. The long periods models emphasize major shifts in economic relationships. However, generalizations get broader and descriptions more vague the farther back in time a period occurs. Thus, descriptions of periods prior to the 15th century are especially vague. It is apparent that the closer an author is to the period under description, the more detail the author is able to provide. So that authors from earlier in this century appear to have a clearer telescope on historical periods of several centuries ago than do more recent authors. In the short periods models, small differences seem to loom much larger. In all periodization models, contemporary prejudices and interest loom large. The time of the writing affects the author's impression of the occurrences in the recent past. The contemporary bias may be even more pronounced in the short periods. Thus, while contemporary authors may have a clearer picture of periods in their recent past, single issues can color the lens.

There are clear benefits to studying periodization schemes. Cumulatively they provide a guide to what the profession regards as an acceptable view of its past and progress at any particular time. The collection provides scholars with a rich collection to help organize data and acts as a useful teaching tool. Overall, schemes reveal dominant patterns worthy of further research. Care must be taken, however, because not all schemes are of equal merit. Moreover, in general, periodization focuses on discontinuities, not continuity.

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING IN PRE-REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA: A RESEARCH ESSAY

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ABSTRACT

Historians have documented the birth of Mother Russia and the rise and fall of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Sovietologists and marketing scholars have dissected the concept of Communism in politics, economics, and foreign relations. But little research has been directed at uncovering and contextualizing the entrepreneurial spirit of the advertising industry in Pre-revolutionary Russia (prior to 1917)¹. From the reign of industrialist Peter the Great, to the Romanov autocracy, to the 70-year Communist Interlude, to *Glasnost* and *Perestroika* in 1985, advertising has in fact been an institution of social and economic influence in Russia. This essay highlights some milestones in the development of Russian newspaper advertising in Pre-revolutionary Russia.

MESSENGERS AND MESSAGES

The first newspaper advertising section, *For News*, appeared in a March edition of the St. Petersburg Gazette that began publishing in 1728. Keeping pace with economic and trade development, newspaper advertising continued when the Moscow Gazette began publishing in 1756. In the late 19th century, after the 1861 economic reforms, it proliferated. During that period advertisements were adorned with more creative typefaces, illustrations and attention-getting elements to differentiate it from simple information, buy/sell announcements, government proclamations and acts, and bank statements. Advertisements became an important component of newspapers as well as a source of revenue for them.

Editors became concerned about the interdependency between editorial content and advertising. "In order to increase editorial material, we must first reduce the number of advertisements and then consider whether to allocate more or less space for articles"². Soon the appearance of newspapers changed. Advertisements placed on the front page were overpowering editorial content. News articles were split and continued on inside pages to make room for ads and satire on the front page. That change was not difficult for the Russians. They simply adopted the newspaper style and "effective" advertising that had evolved in the United States during the same period of time. In 1909, V.A. Anzimirov announced in Moscow that his progressive daily newspaper Day would be a "new kind of newspaper similar to American newspapers," like the Daily News. Quickly, Russian newspapers began to follow the style of the so called *penny press*³ with other variations such as *For the Streets*, *the Most Read*, and sensationalized news about murders, robberies, and muggings.

ADVERTISING OFFICES, THE PREDECESSORS OF FULL SERVICE AGENCIES

Advertising offices had its own specialization and offered selected services for only one medium. Placing ads in newspapers and magazines was difficult in part because of geography and inadequate postal services. Initially, there were only 11 offices in Moscow and six in St. Petersburg. By 1917, more than 100 offices were offering a variety of services, including placement of ads on hotel and restaurant bills.

Ludwig Moritsovish Metzl pioneered and opened the first full service agency. His slogan was, "Advertisements are the engine of trade." It was later modified to "Advertising is the engine of trade."⁴ He had offices in Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia as well as a branch in Warsaw, Poland, and had contracts with newspapers having the most provincial and rural editions with a clause that would not let them accept ads from competitors. Metzl initiated perhaps the first contracts with newspapers that guaranteed them a predetermined volume and revenue from advertising. But the 1917 Revolution put to an end to Metzl's enterprises as well as to the advertising industry in Russia.

The archives of Russia and the AVRORA Museum of Russian Advertising are rich with historical advertisements, packaging, direct mail pieces, and trade cards, but are accessible only with great difficulty and are not well organized. Still, they provide vivid evidence of the rapid growth and influential role of the advertising industry in Russia's developing economy and expanding international trade prior to 1917. The industry parallels between the United States and pre-

Revolutionary Russia are striking. Contrary to what many American advertising scholars and practitioners seem to believe, Russia's advertising industry has a rich history and tradition of entrepreneurial enterprises on which to build a in the post-Communist era.

ⁱ With permission, the historical information for this research essay, translated from Russian by the author, was drawn from the personal archival research notes and writings of Sergei Cherednichenko, Curator and Director of the AVRORA Museum of Russian Advertising, Moscow. Reconstruction of his source citations was impossible.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Michael Schudson, Discovering the News (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 14-31.

^{iv} Ludmilla Gricenko Wells, "The Socioeconomic Culture and the Advertising Process in the Soviet union," in Proceedings of the American Academy of Advertising Conference in Reno, Nevada, April 1991, edited by R. Holman, 203-212.