50 YEARS OF SIMPLY GREAT IDEAS

When examining the origins of success in companies like Hi-Cone, the key is often found in how well they have been able to meet their customers’ needs, how much value they have provided and their ability to adapt. As Hi-Cone celebrates its 50th Anniversary, its record of innovations, problem solving, and design smarts exemplifies the customer focus of highly successful companies today. Fifty years of simple, ingenious solutions have helped drive profitable growth.

In the late 1950s, inventor Jules Poupitch was searching for a way to hold soft drink and beer cans together without the flimsy metal clips or heavy, wooden boxes beverage manufacturers used. He shoved a few cans through a sheet of plastic and pushed them off a table. To his satisfaction, the cans tumbled down together intact. The idea turned into the Hi-Cone beverage carrier: a simple yet elegant packaging solution that transformed the beverage industry. In the 50 years following the original carrier, Hi-Cone evolved the original design, anticipating the industry’s evolution from glass bottles to cans and plastic bottles and then diversifying with carriers for non-beverage consumables. Hi-Cone developed marketing features used by companies worldwide, such as the Promotional Panel Carriers and brightly colored ColorPak® carriers. The newest generation of Hi-Cone machines offers automatic orientation of the containers as they are multipacked, which ensures that they are always faced properly for a consistent brand presentation.

Hi-Cone’s leadership in beverage packaging brought an obligation to educate the public about proper disposal of six-pack rings. Hi-Cone responded with a highly successful consumer recycling program called Ring Leader. Now in its 20th year, the program teaches the proper disposal of six-pack rings and encourages recycling. Looking at the recent trends in manufacturing toward product stewardship, it is clear that Hi-Cone was decades ahead of most companies. Hi-Cone also changed the formulation of its plastic to make it photodegradable. For more than 25 years, Hi-Cone plastic beverage carriers have been made with 100% photodegradable plastic and become brittle when exposed over time to the sun’s ultraviolet rays.

As major brands continued to focus on their environmental impact, Hi-Cone was there to assist. Hi-Cone products, long a sustainable choice in multipacking, are able to consistently demonstrate substantial score improvements in Life Cycle Analysis when products are packaged in ring carriers as opposed to other multipackaging methods that use more materials.

Today, the simple but ingenious plastic six-pack ring design is ubiquitous, so most of us think it has been around forever. A testament to its timeless ingenuity is its recent inclusion in an international tour of the Vitra Design Museum’s exhibition: “Hidden Heroes: the Genius of Everyday Things.” Throughout its history, Hi-Cone has succeeded by anticipating and responding to the new trends and developments in the global beverage industry. Hi-Cone is continually developing innovations and looks forward to providing the next generation of great ideas for multipackaging products.