

# MaCher Australia & Flexi-Hex



**2021 SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING DESIGN OF THE YEAR - RECYCLE BRONZE WINNER**



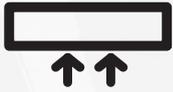
**2021 BEVERAGE PACKAGING DESIGN OF THE YEAR SILVER WINNER**



## MaCher Australia & Flexi-Hex Flexi-Hex Sleeve & Pinch Mailer System

### Key Outcomes and Measurement

#### Flexi-Hex Pinch-Top Mailer Boxes



Unique base construction that creates a 25mm protective air pocket at the bottom of the box



Pinch top box design gathers sleeve around the neck of glass bottles, securing the bottle



Provides protection & prevents movement in transit



Lid closure is secured with peel and seal double coated tissue tape

#### Flexi-Hex Sleeve



Meets crush and drop tests and standards



A expandable, honeycomb paper construction protective sleeve bonded between two rails



Product is made from 85% recycled paper, 15% FSC sustainably sourced paper



Eliminates EPS and SUP

# MaCher

**Product:** Flexi-Hex Sleeve & Pinch Mailer System  
**Company:** MaCher Australia & Flexi-Hex  
**Country:** Australia

MaCher Australia has over 35 years' experience in the design and manufacture of engaging packaging for retail products. They believe good design should be practical, effective, attractive, and most importantly sustainable. Their goal is a clear one - to remove harmful packaging materials from the environment by providing sustainable alternatives. MaCher Australia combine great design, patented technology and recycled content materials to produce sustainable packaging solutions that are recyclable, reusable or made using recycled materials.

COORDINATED BY



ANZ REGIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM



INTERNATIONALLY ENDORSED BY



EXCLUSIVE ENTRY TO



- ✓ *Flexi-Hex protective packaging is a paper-based alternative to single use plastics for protecting glass bottles during shipping.*
- ✓ *Flexi-Hex is widely accepted through kerbside recycling, making recycling easy and intuitive for the consumer.*
- ✓ *The patented honey-comb technology is highly protective, passing global drop tests.*

## In the context of your packaging innovation, what do you see as Sustainable Packaging?

MaCher see Sustainable Packaging as a category that is constantly evolving and their role as designers and manufacturers is to use their knowledge and experience of materials, manufacturing capability and end-of-use processes to develop packaging solutions that are designed with the lifecycle of the packaging in mind.

Sustainable Packaging must also consider the existing recycling infrastructure available in Australia as well as consumer behaviour. If something is easy to recycle, looks like it should be recycled and recycling instructions are clearly communicated, MaCher believe material recovery is improved significantly.

## What would you say were the decision-making drivers (Internal and External) influencing your packaging design?

MaCher have worked closely with the wine and liquor industries for many years, designing premium gift boxes that are distributed globally.

Protecting glass bottles during transit is always a priority, but for many years, foam and plastic based protective packaging offered the most reliable performance.

As a member of APCO, MaCher recognised consumers would start to demand easy-to-recycle alternatives and so they began working to find a paper-based solution that would meet the criteria for both brand-owners and consumers.

Over the past 24 months, brand-owners, wineries and distilleries have become very engaged in wanting to implement more sustainable alternatives throughout their packaging supply chain.

MaCher now find the questions 'Is it recyclable?' and 'Is it sustainable?' are asked with as much emphasis as 'Will it protect our product?'

It is exciting and rewarding to see the change in mindset and to have a packaging solution that addresses all of these needs.



## **What benefit does this new design offer your business and your consumers? Why is the pack more sustainable?**

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Flexi-Hex protective packaging is a paper alternative to plastic based protective packaging such as bubble wrap, inflatable air pillows, foam, expanded polystyrene and bio fillers/packaging peanuts. These plastics are all classified as single use and require consumers to return material back to store if/when they meet recycling requirements.

By comparison, Flexi-Hex is made completely from paper, so consumers can easily recycle it through kerbside recycling.

For brand owners, the distribution, transportation and warehouse storage of Flexi-Hex sleeves are substantially more efficient than traditional fillers such as bubble wrap, foam, polystyrene and bio fillers. With the sleeve expanding up to 35 times its compact size, storage space is minimal. Touch points during packout are minimised as the Flexi-Hex sleeve enables product to be drop filled, without the need for additional taping or wrapping.

Lastly, Flexi-Hex reduces costly product breakage.

## **What volumes of materials, packaging and waste have you saved by designing this new packaging?**

### **Did you do this through changing materials, lightweighting, recycled content, making the packs recyclable or reusable?**

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Flexi-Hex protective packaging removes the need for single use plastics in the transport/shipping of breakable bottles. It reduces plastic from the supply chain, using paper as a material alternative.

Distribution, transportation and warehouse storage of Flexi-Hex sleeves are substantially more efficient than traditional fillers such as bubble wrap, foam, polystyrene and bio fillers due to the compressed size of Flexi-Hex sleeves prior to use. For example, a flat single sleeve (protection for 1 wine bottle) has a cubic size of 206cm. The equivalent amount of bubble wrap required to protect a single bottle has a cubic size of approx. 2000cm

A single pallet holds approximately 7200 Flexi-Hex sleeves, saving space within dispatch warehouses and storerooms. When used, Flexi-Hex sleeves expand up to 35 times their compact size.

Preventing over-packing was one of the core considerations when designing Flexi-Hex. Their sleeves are a simple single-piece layer of protection that is strong enough to take impact alone, with no need for reinforcement or multiple layers of additional packaging material. The MaCher pinch top mailer boxes are innovatively designed for simplicity and minimal material usage.

Being flexible, the MaCher 1 size fits all approach has simplified packaging inventory for many customers.

## **How much on-pack and off-pack information do you provide your customers?**

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MaCher work with brand owners to implement the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) when they prepare pack graphics. On-pack graphics and messaging are customised for each brand they work with.

Both the Flexi-Hex Sleeve and Pinch Top Box are classified as recyclable (widely accepted kerbside) using the PREP tool.



## Please share a little bit about each of the partners/collaborators who worked on this packaging design.

### Can you explain each of their roles?

MaCher Australia - evaluating the needs of the Australian wine and liquor market for a sustainable solution to protect glass bottles. Also assessing the transit and performance tests to determine packaging suitability. Ensuring the refinement of the pinch top mailer box design to accommodate product returns/second use.

Flexi-Hex UK - The design and product development of the patented honeycomb sleeve design and pinch top mailer box.

## What do you feel will be needed to further improve packaging design in the future? (e.g. education, investment, policy/legislation, tech, etc?)

*"Synergy between material innovation and kerbside recycling capabilities - material collection, recovery and processing, including innovation to support compostable solutions."*

The region also needs to see above-the-line consumer education campaigns, reaching those not currently engaged with kerbside recycling best practice.

Lastly, legislation preventing use of problematic packaging materials when commercially viable, sustainable alternatives are available.

## What does your company have planned in the future? Any new innovations on the horizon?

The Flexi-Hex technology has broader applications for use in packaging and MaCher look forward to seeing how they can apply this technology to other categories and markets.

They are also looking at other problem areas of product protection, where plastics have traditionally been the most popular solution, but consumers are now demanding brands change to sustainable alternatives.



## As a winner of the PIDA awards, how valuable is the award to your organisation?

*Nadia Klaczkiewicz, MaCher Australia, Creative Services Manager says, "We are an Australian owned business and are honoured, humbled and proud that our sustainable packaging solution has been nationally recognised amongst such incredibly innovative, market-leading businesses. Winning this award has given us a great opportunity to engage our customers in broader initiatives on developing sustainable packaging solutions for their business."*



The Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Awards are an Australia and New Zealand program that is coordinated by the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP). The awards recognise companies and individuals who are making a significant difference in their field across Australia and New Zealand. The PIDA Awards are the exclusive entry point for Australia and New Zealand for the prestigious WorldStar Packaging Awards.

The Design Innovation of the Year company awards recognise organisations that have designed innovative packaging within each of these six manufacturing categories:

- Food
- Beverage
- Health, Beauty & Wellness
- Domestic & Household
- Labelling & Decoration
- Outside of the Box

There are four special awards available:

- Sustainable Packaging Design
- Save Food Packaging Design
- Accessible & Inclusive Packaging Design
- Marketing Award

The **Sustainable Packaging Design Special Award** is designed to recognise companies that have developed innovative packaging solutions that incorporate sustainability considerations. All entries are judged on Sustainable Packaging Design considerations such as social impact, material, source reduction, energy and recovery and what packaging changes the company is undertaking to meet the 2025 National Packaging Targets. This is also a WorldStar Packaging Awards category.



The Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) is the peak professional body for packaging education and training in Australasia. The AIP helps shape the careers of generations of packaging professionals – from packaging technologists to international packaging business leaders along with a host of people in associated disciplines – sales and marketing, purchasing, production and environment.

**Australian Institute of Packaging**

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