

## CASE STUDY

# EnviroGuard® The Sustainable Alternative for Carmex®



Company Name:  
**CARMA LABS, INC.**

Location:  
**FRANKLIN, WI USA**

## OVERVIEW

*How can an iconic brand design a more sustainable package without sacrificing sales?*

This was the question facing Carma Labs, the makers of Carmex® Lip Balm. As a small, family brand with roots tracing back to 1937, they care deeply about loyal customers, while also wishing to broaden their reach to a younger audience. In an effort to drive sustainability, Carma Lab's sales and marketing team turned to Colbert Packaging for an alternative to the plastic blister for Carmex Minis—a package of five flavored, moisturizing lip balms.

Consumers are highly familiar with the Carmex brand—it's a well known go-to for lip therapy. Who hasn't reached for the little yellow tube with the red cap to soothe chapped lips, at least once? The transparent blister covering assures the consumer of what's inside at the point of purchase.

Since the beginning, Carma Labs has been consistent about what it delivers for its consumers...**It's All About Comfort.**

## CHALLENGE

Replacing the plastic bubble could result in a negative sales impact. Therefore, the requirement was to find a sustainable solution that would attract new users, without confusing loyal customers.

"Today's shoppers rely on visual cues to hasten the hundreds of decisions they need to make," said Wanda Speer, Marketing Manager for Colbert Packaging. "Once they've made a commitment to brand loyalty, their eyes search for the familiar package. If they don't see it quickly, the searched-for brand risks competitive encroachment into the decision process. When Carma Labs asked for a sustainably-sourced alternative to the plastic blister, our packaging engineers looked to our EnviroGuard® product, a 100% paperboard, formed tray packaging solution."

*How did EnviroGuard solve the Carmex packaging challenge for sustainability?*

## THE CRITERIA

### *How did Colbert break through the gates for a total packaging solution?*

**1** For secondary package designers, the first gate is internal. Is the package brand-worthy? While it may support the organization's sustainability initiative, does it properly display the value proposition? Of equal importance, is it within budget? The answer is yes, yes and YES! First of all, the formed tray can be custom-shaped to accommodate contents for optimal presentation and pack configuration. Next, the outer surfaces provide expanded graphic real estate, compared to a plastic bubble. The inside of the tray may also be printed with instructions, coupons or QR codes, saving on the cost of package inserts. The powerful graphics and brilliant colors of the Mini's design made for standup, knockout product appeal! From a budget perspective, the EnviroGuard solution requires a tooling investment for a customized formed tray. This allows for existing manufacturing lines to be fully automated for maximum efficiency.

**2** The next gate involves satisfying Retailers' requirements. Blister pack plastic is durable. Would EnviroGuard's formed paperboard solution stand up to the rugged terrain of pegging, shelving and bins? And, relative to sustainability, not only did Carma Labs need to support its own vision toward greener manufacturing, but it also wanted to align with retailer requirements for materials and specifications. Once again, Colbert fit the bill. The Mini's secondary packaging is perfectly sized, durable and fully recyclable, all key features to present in collaboration with various retailer objectives.

**3** At the end of the sales funnel, would the Consumer recognize her favorite lip treatment in a new container? Or, would a prospective purchaser be curious enough to pick it up and enter the buying process? As the saying goes, "The proof of the pudding is in the tasting." Sales of the Mini 5-pack have been strong. Colbert has received reorders and Carma has extended the EnviroGuard solution to include three more SKUs.



## THE SOLUTION

When it comes to sustainability, paperboard packaging is fully recyclable and may even be sourced from recycled pulp. Carma Labs' initial goal was to seek an alternative to plastic blisters that allows for a larger graphic area to communicate product features to consumers, as well as fitting more product in the package. "We sought the most environmentally friendly packaging solution, while carefully maintaining brand identity," said Kristen Gourlie, Carmex® Assistant Brand Manager. "Colbert's ability to provide the right solution helped us achieve that goal."

As a business best practice, Colbert continues to innovate with paperboard packaging solutions using less material, increased recyclability, water- and agri-based inks, coatings and adhesives. From the consumer perspective, the entire package is recyclable—no need to separate paper from plastic. "Colbert's formed tray solution is continuously improving and evolving, based on customer demand," says John Lackner, Colbert President. "We can emboss for an upscale or 3-D effect, add cold foil decoration, pilfer-resistance, anti-counterfeiting or security devices. There is no limit on creativity with this product."

One 7-second TikTok video post by a delighted young consumer captured more than 30,000 views.  
<http://bit.ly/2LLPhLJ>

