

Europe Contract Packaging - Market Share Analysis, Industry Trends & Statistics, Growth Forecasts (2025 - 2030)

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Report description:

The Europe Contract Packaging Market size is worth USD 27.03 Billion in 2025, growing at an 8.55% CAGR and is forecast to hit USD 40.74 Billion by 2030.

Key Highlights

- Effective product packaging is essential for the secure storage and transportation of tangible goods. However, product packaging involves significant upfront costs and resource allocation. As a result, manufacturers often rely on contract packaging firms, also called third-party packaging companies, to manage their product packaging, ensuring efficiency and cost-effectiveness. These firms provide the necessary expertise and tools for optimal packaging solutions. The increase in small and medium-sized enterprises, coupled with the benefits offered by contract packaging companies, is expected to drive growth in the contract packaging market.
- The expansion of the e-commerce industry has also contributed to an increase in the need for tertiary packaging in the region, which favors the contract packaging business. Additionally, due to increased disposable incomes, population growth, and business-friendly government regulations in many countries, demand for various packaging-intensive industries, including pharmaceutical, consumer goods, food and beverage, and electronics, is rising across Europe. Thus, the growth of the abovementioned industries is projected to impact the contract packaging market favorably.
- Furthermore, associations and organizations are increasingly emerging to enhance awareness in the market studied. The European Co-Packers Association (ECPA) and the Contract Packaging Association are among a few examples. Europe hosts approximately 1,000 active contract packaging vendors, with 40-50% being small companies. According to Pharmapack Europe, the 2024 outlook for pharma services has been promising: 94% of industry players are either 'moderately positive' (37%) or 'highly positive' (37%) about growth in contract packaging.
- The increasing consumer awareness about environmental concerns, along with producers' demand for economical packaging

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options, is compelling contract packagers to adopt eco-friendly alternatives and eco-sensitive package designs. Sustainability and customization are likely to continue to positively impact the contract packaging market. These trends are most likely to influence consumer-packaged goods, such as personal care items and food and beverages, over the forecast period.

- Adopting innovations for the first time becomes challenging, particularly due to the significant capital expenditure required for equipment acquisition and installation. To address these challenges, an increasing number of pharmaceutical companies are forming strategic partnerships with expert contract packaging organizations (CPOs). By doing so, these companies are leveraging the latest packaging innovations without substantial individual investments. These strategic alliances are transforming the industry's trajectory, enhancing efficiency, and delivering improved patient experiences.

- However, stringent regulatory compliance requirements, particularly in the pharmaceutical and food industries, are impeding market growth. These industries are subjected to rigorous regulations governing packaging materials, labeling, and hygiene standards, requiring companies to invest heavily in quality control systems, certifications, and resources to meet these stringent requirements.

Europe Contract Packaging Market Trends

Pharmaceutical Industry to Propel Market Growth

- In Europe, increased pharmaceutical spending on research and development (R&D) is driving significant growth in new medicine development. This surge is increasingly relying on support from contract packagers across various European nations. According to data from the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), from 2014 to 2018, pharmaceutical R&D in Europe grew at a rate of 3.7%. However, between 2019 and 2023, this annual growth rate surged to 6.7%.

- Pharmaceutical industries in the region are accelerating their adoption of technological advancements. Increasing awareness of smart packaging, which monitors storage and temperature conditions, is driving innovation in contract packaging services. Additionally, advancements in sensor technologies and the development of the Internet of Things (IoT) are enhancing smart packaging through cloud platforms.

- In 2023, Pharmapack Europe announced plans to launch two new zones at its 2024 event. This initiative is aimed at meeting the increasing demand for biologics, mRNA therapeutics, and contract packaging. Additionally, to help the industry find ideal partners and sustain demand growth, Pharmapack is introducing dedicated zones for exhibitors specializing in these solutions.

- Several vendors operating in the market are engaging in strategic partnerships. For instance, in January 2024, SteriPack, a contract packing organization serving the pharmaceutical industry, strategically partnered with SHL Medical, a provider of advanced drug delivery systems. This collaboration establishes a pre-validated, highly flexible final assembly and secondary packing service at SteriPack's facility in Poland. This service will support SHL's second-generation Molly 1.0 ml autoinjector platform, enhancing SteriPack's small to mid-volume offerings in Europe.

The United Kingdom Expected to Witness Significant Growth

- The packaging industry in the United Kingdom has been experiencing significant growth due to increased manufacturing activities. Additionally, rising e-commerce sales, higher demand from food and beverage producers for eco-friendly and recyclable packaging, a growing interest in product personalization, and an expanding industrial packaging sector are driving the country's contract packaging market forward.

- According to the Office of National Statistics (United Kingdom), in November 2023, internet sales as a percentage of total retail sales in Great Britain stood at 30.7%, indicating a significant increase compared with the previous month when online retail sales

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accounted for 26.30% of total retail sales. The rise further boosts the demand for contract packaging in the region.

- To establish themselves as comprehensive contract solution providers, vendors of consumer-packaged goods (CPG) in the country are increasingly pursuing vertical integration. This strategy includes offering packaging solutions, acquiring raw materials, and managing logistics. Due to constraints in OEMs' manufacturing capacities and the rise in food producers, manufacturers are turning to outsourcing. This shift enables food enterprises to expand rapidly, leveraging the value-added services provided by food contract manufacturers, such as packaging, research, consulting, and warehousing.
- In the United Kingdom, pharmaceutical contract packaging is rapidly embracing diverse methods to meet shifting consumer preferences. Growing environmental concerns are prompting the pharmaceutical industry to adopt sustainable contract packaging solutions. Additionally, the increasing use of automation in pharmaceutical contract packaging is reducing human errors, thereby driving market growth in the country.
- The United Kingdom is also now committed to environmental conservation and sustainable development at the highest levels of government. Contract packaging is a good combination of efficiency and effectiveness for CPG companies aiming to avoid significant capital expenditure and instead focus on innovation, sustainable practices, customer experience, and speed-to-market. Supply chain efficiencies contribute to material and structural improvements such as cost reduction, waste reduction, and production cycle optimization. According to a report by Sustainable Plastics in September 2023, online shoppers across the United Kingdom showed a clear preference for high-quality packaging that is recyclable or reusable while also minimizing unnecessary waste.

Europe Contract Packaging Industry Overview

The contract packaging market in Europe is fragmented due to the presence of many vendors. The report offers information about the competitive environment among players in this market. Major players include Budelpack Poortvliet BV, Cygnia Logistics (Dalepak Ltd), and Complete Co-Packing Services Ltd.

- In February 2024, WePack, a UK-based contract packaging provider, announced a new partnership with software provider Nulogy at Packaging Innovations & Empack 2024 to enhance its agility and responsiveness. WePack opted for Nulogy's Shop Floor Solution. WePack works with brands across the food, cosmetics, high-end consumer goods, and agriculture industries. The firm offers various services, including bottling, sachet and pouch filling, hand assembly projects, rework, and rectification.
- In August 2023, Minor, Weir & Willis (MWW) Ltd announced the renewal of its collaboration with Conti-Frucht in Germany for Aldi Salad contract packaging. This partnership highlighted MWW's industry expertise, unwavering commitment, and superior quality standards. The company initiated this collaboration to offer better quality in all aspects of operations and set new standards for quality and efficiency in the industry.

Additional Benefits:

- The market estimate (ME) sheet in Excel format
- 3 months of analyst support

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