Paper Cups Industry - Market Share Analysis, Industry Trends & Statistics, Growth Forecasts (2025 - 2030)

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Report description:

The Paper Cups Industry is expected to grow from USD 14.57 billion in 2025 to USD 17.62 billion by 2030, at a CAGR of 3.87% during the forecast period (2025-2030).

The demand for paper cups has increased over the past few years due to increased international pressure to replace single-use plastic with sustainable materials in the food and beverage industry and to create efficient waste management and recycling systems for environmentally friendly products.

Key Highlights
- Various government initiatives and regulations call for reduced carbon footprints, providing a robust push for packaging manufacturers to sell eco-friendly paper cups. As per the survey presented by the packaging manufacturer Mondi on 6,000 European adults, around 73% and 68% of the population from France and Germany, respectively, gave more importance to sustainable packaging. Therefore, the consumption of paper is also increasing globally.
- The beverage industry is growing worldwide, and it is expected to play a significant role in the paper cups market. As the beverage industry develops and provides a greater variety of drinks, the need for carriers also increases. There is a growing demand for to-go and home delivery options. This transition includes packaging producers with several options for meeting innovative packaging needs in the food and beverage industry.
- Quick service restaurants (QSRs) offer low-cost food options, focusing on the speed of service. The relationship between quick service restaurants and sustainability has been steady. The growing consumption of beverages and fast food due to the fast-paced lifestyle in the cities of the most developed countries has led to new coffee shops and quick service restaurants. This trend is gradually penetrating developing regions. In addition, people's rising inclination to eat outside as part of their leisure activities adds to growth.

- Paper coffee cups are incinerated or sent to landfills since most paper recycling machines cannot recycle them properly. The hindering process involved in recycling, like separating the plastic liner from the paper cup and chemically sterilizing them, needs advanced machinery.
- This is expected to increase the company's operating expenses and reduce profit significantly. Hence, recycling these paper cups poses a significant indirect threat to the environment, thereby acting as a major challenge to the growth of the market studied.
- However, the food service industry heavily relies on disposable cups and scorching beverages like coffee and tea. The food service industry's growth suggests an expanding market for coffee shops and similar businesses, contributing to the demand for paper cups. In the post-pandemic era, people continue using single-use paper cups, keeping hygiene in mind.

Paper Cups Industry Trends

The Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs) Segment Holds a Significant Market Share

- Quick service restaurants offer fast service for food items prepared with minimal time. QSRs are also known as fast-food restaurants, and the growing number of QSRs globally has boosted the demand for paper cups. According to the International Franchise Association, QSRs offer economical menu options and are likely to expand due to strong demand for food deliveries.
- Fast food and fast-service restaurants are becoming popular across the globe as they offer convenient food options and speed of service to individuals. Furthermore, the growing consumption of beverages and food in restaurants, coupled with the busy lifestyle of millennials, has led to significant growth of quick service restaurants globally.
- The increasing popularity of the franchise model is also boosting the number of quick service restaurants. According to the International Franchise Association, franchise outputs in the QSR industry were projected to increase by 2.5% in 2023, boosting the market's growth.
- Quick service restaurants use disposable paper cups for serving hot or cold beverages. The paper cups are single or double poly-coated or wax-coated, offering rigidity and leakage protection for beverages. These cups vary in patterns, colors, sizes, and shapes, depending on the restaurant's servings.
- The rise in sustainable packaging trends in QSRs has led to the growing trend of take-out food and beverage options and delivery options. Increasing consumer awareness regarding single-use packaging has also prompted companies to invest in alternatives that minimize environmental impact.
- For instance, in April 2024, New York Fries (NYF), a Canadian quick service restaurant, partnered with SOFi Products, a Canada-based manufacturer of paper cups and lids, to provide a paper cup that is 100% compostable and biodegradable.
- According to AFRY and Suzano PaperLine, the global consumption of paper is expected to increase from 417 million metric tons in 2021 to 476 million metric tons in 2032. This spike in paper consumption is anticipated to be bolstered by the demand from the packaging industry, which primarily includes disposable paper cups. This constant demand rise for sustainable paper packaging is likely to continue during the forecast period, driving the paper cup industry forward.

Middle East and Africa to Witness Major Growth

- The Saudi Arabian paper cups market is expected to grow significantly due to increased travel and social media usage, exposing a significant segment of Saudi society to Western culture. Technology and increasingly relaxed social norms have amplified freedom of choice, benefiting the hospitality industry by facilitating a growing consumer base, sales, and transaction volumes.
- The growth of the food and beverage service market in Saudi Arabia creates an environment for expanding the paper cups market by increasing demand, promoting sustainability, fostering product diversification, facilitating branding opportunities, and

potentially driving regulatory changes favoring eco-friendly packaging solutions. According to the General Authority for Statistics (Saudi Arabia), the revenue of the food and beverage service market in Saudi Arabia is estimated to amount to USD 16.03 billion in 2025 compared to 2020, which was USD 14.46 billion.
- Rising awareness of environmental issues may influence consumer preferences toward eco-friendly packaging options. Paper cups are biodegradable and renewable, aligning with the sustainability concerns of environmentally conscious consumers. As the CPI increases and consumers become more price-sensitive, businesses may prioritize environmentally friendly packaging solutions like paper cups to appeal to this growing market segment.
- According to Statistics South Africa, as of February 2024, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in South Africa, an economic indicator providing information on the change of prices over time, was measured at 113.9 points regarding food and non-alcoholic beverages. This was an increase of 1.1 points from the previous year.
- Egypt's urban population is increasing as more people migrate to cities for better opportunities. Typically, a higher demand for disposable food and beverage containers is observed in urban areas due to the prevalence of fast-paced lifestyles and the popularity of cafes, restaurants, and street food vendors. Thus, this trend contributes to the growth of the paper cups market.

Paper Cups Industry Overview

The paper cups market is semi-consolidated, leading to several small players entering the emerging markets. However, the market remains relatively consolidated in developed economies compared to developing economies. The key players operating in the paper cups market include Huhtamaki oyj, Kap Cones Private Limited, Graphic Packaging International LLC, Dart Container Corporation, and Converpack Inc.

- In January 2024, Go-Pak Group, a manufacturer of paper cups and other food service packaging products, announced a three-year strategic partnership with H&M Distribution, marking a pivotal milestone in enhancing customer service by prioritizing delivery efficiency, bolstering reliability, and actively reducing carbon emissions.
- In September 2023, Graphic Packaging International announced its plans to build a facility in Waco, Texas, to produce recycled paperboard, a responsible packaging alternative. The plant is slated to ramp up production in 2026. The Waco facility will leverage the industry's modern technology to produce recycled paperboard to package standard products ranging from cereal to pasta. When complete, the cutting-edge facility is anticipated to recycle fiber from about 15 million paper cups daily, increasing the company's capacity to provide high-quality recycled paperboard to customers across the United States.

Additional Benefits:

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

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