

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

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Report description:

The United Kingdom Packaging Market size is worth USD 60.94 Billion in 2025, growing at an 2.27% CAGR and is forecast to hit USD 68.18 Billion by 2030.

Key Highlights

- The packaging market in the United Kingdom has been witnessing significant growth owing to increased manufacturing activities. In February 2024, Coca-Cola planned to temporarily remove labels from Sprite and Sprite Zero on-the-go bottles in a limited trial of "label-less" packaging for 500-ml bottles with an embossed logo on the front of the pack in the United Kingdom, which shows the demand for the packaging market in the country.
- The growth of e-commerce sales, increased demand from food and beverage manufacturers for eco-friendly and recyclable packaging, increasing demand for product personalization, and the growing industrial packaging sector are driving the growth of the packaging market in the country. In November 2023, the International Trade Administration reported that the United Kingdom has the third-largest e-commerce market in the world after China and the United States, which is expected to support the demand for packaging solutions in the country in the coming years.
- The increase in regulations for plastic use is anticipated to affect the market significantly. By disincentivizing the usage of unsustainable materials, the UK government is simultaneously incentivizing the market value of recyclable plastic, fostering a sustainable circular economy that will have global repercussions. In April 2024, the United Kingdom launched the Circularity in Primary Pharmaceutical Packaging Accelerator (CAPA) initiative to develop and implement strategies for the end-of-use recycling of medicinal devices and pharmaceutical packaging, fueling the country's recyclable packaging solutions.
- The conflict between sustainability and affordability in packaging choices has been increasingly evident in the UK packaging market. As consumers grapple with the financial implications of eco-friendly alternatives, a trend toward cheaper, non-sustainable options is becoming more prevalent, impacting a rising market challenge for adopting sustainable packaging solutions.

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- However, with the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the market studied, multiple companies in the market shifted toward the usage of single-use plastics. Supply chains strained to meet a surge in demand for single-use plastic packaging and medical supplies. Such a significant spike in plastic demand is likely to lead to a temporary change in the short-term initiatives and goals of transitioning toward a circular economy. Apart from this, it is also expected to put pressure on the plastic packaging manufacturing chain. Furthermore, the war between Russia and Ukraine has an impact on the overall packaging ecosystem.

United Kingdom Packaging Market Trends

Food Segment Expected to Drive Market Growth

- The increasing demand for processed food and the growing adoption of lightweight, flexible packaging drive the market, with varying impacts over the short, medium, and long term. The market for frozen food packaging is witnessing an upsurge due to the country's consumer appreciation of product quality. The demand for frozen food packaging has increased in the United Kingdom due to changing lifestyles.
- The country's food manufacturers are increasingly replacing plastic-based products in line with their paper-based counterparts for sustainability, which is expected to fuel the market's growth. For instance, in September 2023, Mondi, a global leader in sustainable packaging and paper, launched paper-packed dry rice in the United Kingdom for the first time by collaborating with award-winning rice supplier Veetee, showing the market's growth in the food packaging segment.
- Stand-up pouches are anticipated to become a standard form of packaging throughout the forecast period due to their capacity to maintain the freshness of food products and increase product shelf life. Furthermore, the pouches also offer a great visible aesthetic, which adds to the product's marketing benefits. This has led to the wide adoption of pouches as a stable alternative to other formats and is expected to take further momentum in terms of demand and customer acceptance during the forecast period.
- In the United Kingdom, sustainability and recyclability play a significant role in raising consumer preference for brands. Responding to the expanded market demand for post-consumer recycled (PCR) packaging solutions, a flexible packaging company, ProAmpac, announced the launch of its ProActivePCR Retort pouches. The retort pouches are intended for pet and human food packaging and are both FDA and EU-compliant for food contact in retort applications. They provide packaging with a post-consumer recycled (PCR) content of 30% or more, minimizing the use of virgin resins. These inventive pouches also adhere to United Kingdom Plastics Packaging Tax regulations (PPT).
- The percentage change in annual internet food sales has reached a pre-pandemic level after a significant increase during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has raised consumer behavior to prefer online ordering of foods. In December 2023, Eviosys relaunched Eviosys's R&D center in Wantage, Oxfordshire, to become the food industry's sustainable packaging partner of choice, which shows the demand for the market in the country.

PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate) Expected to Hold Major Market Share

- Plastic bottles are widely used in various industries in the United Kingdom due to the beverage companies' growing use of recyclable plastics. The food and beverage market is one of the major users of plastic bottles and containers. The rising use of PET bottles drives the country's plastic bottle market due to their low cost and lightweight in various end-user applications, including food, beverage, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals.
- Furthermore, newer filling technologies and the development of heat-resistant PET bottles provided new possibilities and options in the market. While PET bottles are standard in multiple segments, beverages, cosmetics, sanitary products, and detergents are largely sold in polyethylene (PE) bottles, which is supporting the market's growth in the country.

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- PET plastic materials sustain high demand from FMCG brand owners in the United Kingdom. In May 2024, the recycling technology firm Polytag named the UK retailer M&S as a founding member of its Polytag Ecotrace Programme, an initiative set to optimize the tracing and recycling of single-use plastic packaging in the United Kingdom. The Polytag Ecotrace Programme would deploy a vast network of Polytag's invisible UV tag detection equipment in strategically chosen recycling centers that handle high volumes of waste, which would support the recycled PET bottles in the country.
- The market has been registering advancements in the design of bottles to make them easy to load onto pallets and transport to supermarkets, which shows the demand for PET bottles in the market. For instance, in March 2024, Aldi in the United Kingdom launched its own-brand flat recycled PET wine bottles, which it said are made from 100% recycled PET, showing the market's future growth potential.
- The Office for National Statistics (United Kingdom) reported that consumer spending on food and non-alcoholic beverages in the United Kingdom has been increasing, which would support the demand for bottle packaging and fuel PET adoptions in line with the demand for recyclable PET and the advantage of PET material in beverage packaging.

United Kingdom Packaging Industry Overview

The packaging market in the United Kingdom is fragmented and consists of several global and regional players. Some of the players currently dominate the market in terms of overall share. These major players with prominent market share focus on expanding their customer base across end users. These companies, such as Amcor PLC, DS Smith PLC, AptarGroup Inc., Sealed Air Corporation, and Sonoco Products Company, leverage strategic collaborative initiatives to increase their market share and profitability.

- February 2024: The European paper and packaging company DS Smith PLC planned to invest about USD 60 million in a new fiber preparation line at its Kemsley recycled paper mill in southeast England. This would enable the company to deliver returns through improved efficiency and reduced costs. This shows the investments by the market vendors to support their organic growth in the market studied.
- November 2023: Amcor and Saputo Dairy UK won 'Flexible Plastic Pack of the Year' at the UK Packaging Awards. The companies were recognized for developing new, recycle-ready grated cheese packaging for the nation's favorite cheese brand, Cathedral City. This shows the demand for dairy product packaging in the country and the collaborations among the stakeholders to be competitive in the United Kingdom.

Additional Benefits:

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

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