

Purrfect Amazon Certified eCommerce Packaging Solutions for Pet Mate's new brand - Closer Pets

The Smurfit Kappa Beacon team works with clients to ensure they are getting the perfect packaging solutions, whatever consumers they cater for - including cats, canines and many other precious pets! Smurfit Kappa can help brands to cut costs whilst also creating innovative and effective packaging for all kinds of products. The team recently worked with Pet Mate for their packaging needs.

About Pet Mate

Pet Mate is a Pet technology company specialising in pet feeders, pet doors, and pet fountains. They create products to improve the quality of a pet's life and to help pet parents look after their animal friends. Creating products for more than 30 years, they have a number of pet-related brands under their belt and in 2021, they decided to take everything that Pet Mate, Cat Mate, Dog Mate and Fish Mate stand for and bring them together under a fresh new name, Closer Pets. Closer Pets is focused on pet technology to create great products that keep people closer to their pets, wherever they are.

The Closer Pets team had been working on a new project, developing dog and cat automatic feeding products that were being imported from China fully packaged. Faced with escalating production costs and shipping prices, the team wanted to switch to a packaging supplier closer to home.

Switching to Amazon Certified packaging

They appointed Smurfit Kappa Beacon's client Amey Plastics as their sole plastic products supply partner in the UK. One of Closer Pets' biggest requirements was for Amazon certified packaging, so they had to find a supplier who could help with certified testing and had experience in Amazon's Frustration-Free Packaging guidelines that sellers must adhere to in order to sell on their site. The Beacon team were perfectly placed to help and developed a close three-way partnership with Closer Pets and Amey Plastics for this project.

Test to be the best

The biggest challenge faced with this project was that each new pack had to be ISTA tested to ensure compliance with Amazon's shipping performance criteria. ISTA, International Safe Transit Association, is a vital testing process for eCommerce companies to sell on major online platforms (Read our ISTA testing guide for more information).

In addition to ISTA testing, the packaging needed to complement the Chinese packaging, without looking out of place. Working as a trio also brought some new challenges to the project.



Adding value, cutting costs

Committed to facing challenges head-on here at Smurfit Kappa Beacon, the team took this project on with great enthusiasm. The client wanted standard eCommerce packs for their products so we worked on creating exactly that. The Chinese packaging was lithographically printed and laminated, so they had a high-quality finish although a more expensive process.

Smurfit Kappa's solution was to use 1 colour flexo print onto a brown material and the team were able to recreate the high quality of the Chinese packs in a more cost-effective manner. While slightly different from the existing Chinese packs, this new solution looked great while also meeting all their requirements.

The ISTA testing that was required for each new pack was a brand-new challenge for the Beacon team. They worked closely with the new Smurfit Kappa ISTA lab in Northampton to provide an ISTA 6 test for this project. The end result was high-end packaging that met all of Amazon's requirements leaving the brand free to confidently and compliantly sell via the eCommerce giants platform.

More than just packaging

Weekly meetings via Teams and virtual client visits by Smurfit Kappa Beacon's Gary O'Hagen, Area Manager kept the project on track. The client team had a very systematic way of working, with several approval levels for all print and product files. Smurfit Kappa Beacon worked with a shared drive with access from all three parties to meet their expectations.

The result was printed die-cut eCommerce boxes which worked to increase brand awareness, reduce product damage, and create a memorable unboxing experience. With the help of the ISTA testing lab in Northampton, the Beacon team had the expertise required to certify their packaging for Amazon.

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