

Pharmaceutical Packaging Iteration

THE HISTORY OF PHARMACEUTICAL PACKAGING

1401 White Clay

FOR CENTURIES, LOCAL PEOPLE HAD CONTAINED OR WRAPPED UP THEIR MEDICINE IN WHITE CLAY. SOME EGYPTIANS SHAPED THE CLAY INTO SMALL, PORTABLE CONTAINERS, USED TO HOLD OINTMENTS, HERBS, OR OTHER MEDICINAL SUBSTANCES. THESE CONTAINERS, MADE FROM LOCALLY AVAILABLE POROUS CERAMICS OR STONES, WERE FRAGILE AND LABOR-INTENSIVE TO PRODUCE, YET THEY WERE AMONG THE MOST EFFECTIVE OPTIONS AVAILABLE AT THE TIME.

1777 Bark

AS IT TRAVELED FROM TROPICAL AND SUBTROPICAL AREAS, THE EUROPEAN POWER BEGAN TO EXPLORE BARK. THEY FOUND IT TO BE A POWERFUL REMEDY FOR FEVER, CHOLERA, AND OTHER DANGEROUS DISEASES. A LIGHTWEIGHT, PORTABLE, AND EASY TO SHAPEN INTO CONTAINERS OR WRAPS, BARK STRIPS WERE OFTEN FOLDED INTO POUCHES OR BOXES, SECURED WITH NATURAL FIBER CORDS OR RESIN-BASED ADHESIVES. THIS TYPE OF PACKAGING WAS PARTICULARLY SUITED FOR DRY HERBAL POWDERS, ROOTS, OR RESINS, OFFERING LIGHTWEIGHT PORTABILITY AND LIMITED PROTECTION AGAINST MOISTURE. SOME MEDICINAL BARKS SERVED DUAL PURPOSES: BOTH PACKAGING AND ACTIVE INGREDIENT, SUCH AS CINCHONA BARK USED TO STORE AND PREPARE QUININE. THOUGH LESS DURABLE THAN CERAMICS OR METAL.

1799 Swivel Fronts Iron Fittings

CONTAINERS IN BARK, A POWERFUL REMEDY FOR FEVER, CHOLERA, AND OTHER DANGEROUS DISEASES. A LIGHTWEIGHT, PORTABLE, AND EASY TO SHAPEN INTO CONTAINERS OR WRAPS, BARK STRIPS WERE OFTEN FOLDED INTO POUCHES OR BOXES, SECURED WITH NATURAL FIBER CORDS OR RESIN-BASED ADHESIVES. THIS TYPE OF PACKAGING WAS PARTICULARLY SUITED FOR DRY HERBAL POWDERS, ROOTS, OR RESINS, OFFERING LIGHTWEIGHT PORTABILITY AND LIMITED PROTECTION AGAINST MOISTURE. SOME MEDICINAL BARKS SERVED DUAL PURPOSES: BOTH PACKAGING AND ACTIVE INGREDIENT, SUCH AS CINCHONA BARK USED TO STORE AND PREPARE QUININE. THOUGH LESS DURABLE THAN CERAMICS OR METAL.



Ancient To Medieval Period: Natural Containers And The Era Of Ceramics

A 14th-Century Spanish Pharmaceutical Ceramic Jar Used For Storing Herbs Or Ointments (Public Domain). Such Jars Were Commonly Used In Medieval Europe And Closely Resemble Chinese Porcelain Containers From The Same Period. In Early Human Civilizations, Medicinal Substances Required Dependable Storage Containers. Ancient Societies Across China, Egypt, Greece, And Rome Utilized Naturally Derived Materials Like Clay And Stone Jars To Preserve Herbal Remedies, Ointments, And Balms. These Containers, Made From Locally Available Porous Ceramics Or Stones, Were Fragile And Labor-Intensive To Produce, Yet They Were Among The Most Effective Options Available At The Time.



The Use Of Bark-Based Packaging: A Transitional Material

Between The Dominance Of Clay And The Rise Of Glass, Some Cultures Utilized Tree Bark As A Natural Packaging Material For Medicinal Storage. In Traditional Practices Across Asia, Africa, And The Americas, Bark—Especially From Birch, Mulberry, Or Cinnamon Trees—Was Valued For Its Flexibility, Mild Antimicrobial Properties, And Ease Of Shaping Into Containers Or Wraps. Bark Strips Were Often Folded Into Pouches Or Boxes, Secured With Natural Fiber Cords Or Resin-Based Adhesives. This Type Of Packaging Was Particularly Suited For Dry Herbal Powders, Roots, Or Resins, Offering Lightweight Portability And Limited Protection Against Moisture. Some Medicinal Barks Served Dual Purposes: Both Packaging And Active Ingredient, Such As Cinchona Bark Used To Store And Prepare Quinine. Though Less Durable Than Ceramics Or Metal.

Early Modern Period (17th–19th Century): The Rise Of Glass And Metal

Logbook task

Museum Field Trip

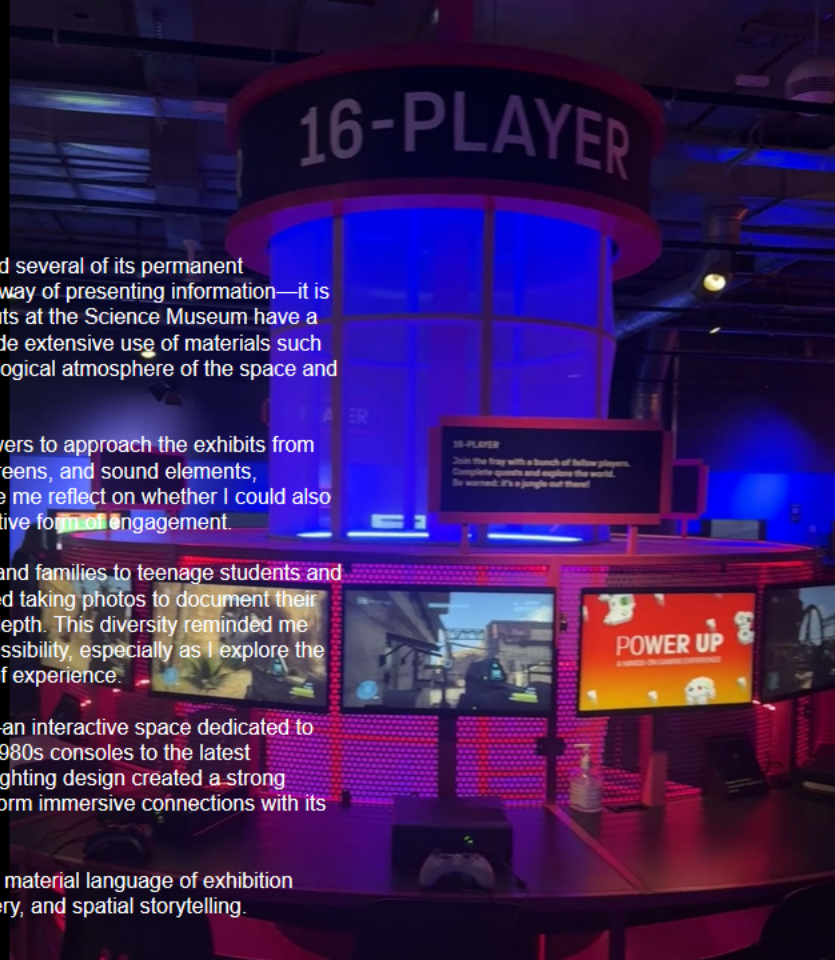
During the Easter holiday, I visited the Science Museum in London and closely observed several of its permanent exhibitions. This field trip helped me understand more clearly that “display” is not just a way of presenting information—it is a mechanism of interaction between the audience and the exhibits. The exhibition layouts at the Science Museum have a strong sense of materiality and immersion. In particular, the Information Age gallery made extensive use of materials such as glass, metal, lighting, and interactive devices. These elements enhanced the technological atmosphere of the space and reinforced both the clarity of information transmission and a sense of futurism.

In terms of spatial design, many display cases are open on multiple sides, allowing viewers to approach the exhibits from different angles. Some areas include interactive features like rotating buttons, digital screens, and sound elements, encouraging visitors not only to “look” but also to “do.” This participatory approach made me reflect on whether I could also use materials and structure in my own projects to guide the audience toward a more active form of engagement.

While observing visitors, I noticed that the user group was very diverse—from children and families to teenage students and older adults. Children tended to spend more time in interactive zones, teenagers enjoyed taking photos to document their visit, and adults focused on reading the panels and engaging with the content in more depth. This diversity reminded me that future project designs should consider varying levels of user engagement and accessibility, especially as I explore the direction of digital interactivity. It's important to design different entry points and layers of experience.

As a video game enthusiast, I particularly enjoyed the Power Up zone of the museum—an interactive space dedicated to the history of video gaming. Visitors could operate gaming devices ranging from early 1980s consoles to the latest mainstream systems. This area was highly engaging; the arrangement of devices and lighting design created a strong sense of participation, and it gave me a deeper appreciation for how digital media can form immersive connections with its audience.

In summary, this visit to the Science Museum not only helped me better understand the material language of exhibition design but also inspired further thinking about audience engagement, information delivery, and spatial storytelling.



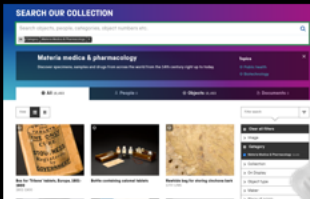
Research



After visiting the Science Museum, I noticed that both its displays and overall design are highly scientific. As a museum primarily aimed at audiences curious about science, its most important aspects are science popularization and the sense of experience.



What attracted me the most was the medical exhibition area, where I saw the history of human development in smelting, materials, medicine, chemistry, and biology.



After my visit, I also went to the Science Museum's website to look for related content.

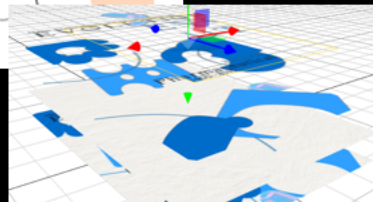


I found that pharmaceutical packaging has changed over time. Unlike modern packaging that focuses mainly on decoration, pharmaceutical packaging carries the marks of historical transitions and serves more practical functions.



Graphic process

AR poster



After reviewing the following websites, I have made a brief summary of the history of pharmaceutical packaging.

- <https://eurpack.it/2024/01/08/the-thousand-year-history-of-pharmaceutical-packaging/?lang=en>
- <https://ascendpkg.com/history-pharmaceutical-packaging-and-thomas-packaging/>
- <https://eurpack.it/2024/01/08/the-thousand-year-history-of-pharmaceutical-packaging/>
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