











Avery commissioned this unique psychological study about labels because we wanted to understand what exactly makes a label eye-catching, persuasive and successful.

Through our fascinating findings, small business owners will learn how being clever with labels and label design can increase sales, ignite consumer loyalty and even wow to the point that customers tell others about you.

## Key Findings

# Using a label WOrks

Deciding to use a label rather than having nothing at all makes a big difference.



Using emotional imagery or words on labels engages consumers on a primal level and leads to higher interest and greater likelihood of purchase or customer loyalty.



## Handwriting helps!

The use of a handwriting font can increase customer considerations by 30% and purchase intentions by 33%.



## Give a clue

Labels that included a product signifier (like a bee on a pot of honey) made products much easier to find and made people look at the product for longer.



## **Quality** counts

Consumers are prepared to pay more money for products with labels that convey quality - quality labels, quality design and a message of quality.

## Awards and Authority

Remembering to include product or business awards or accreditation can improve considerations by 25%, positive impressions by 36%, and quality perceptions by 53%. It can even encourage the customer to pay more.



## Make it personal



Addressing consumers personally on packaging increases the perception of quality - even love - of what's inside.



As you might expect, our study confirmed that bright colours, bold lines and borders draw initial attention, while larger labels get more interest and are noticed more quickly.



Using multiple labels on a product or package creates more space for the information you want to get across and more scope for persuasive design. The positive outcomes are cumulative as a result.











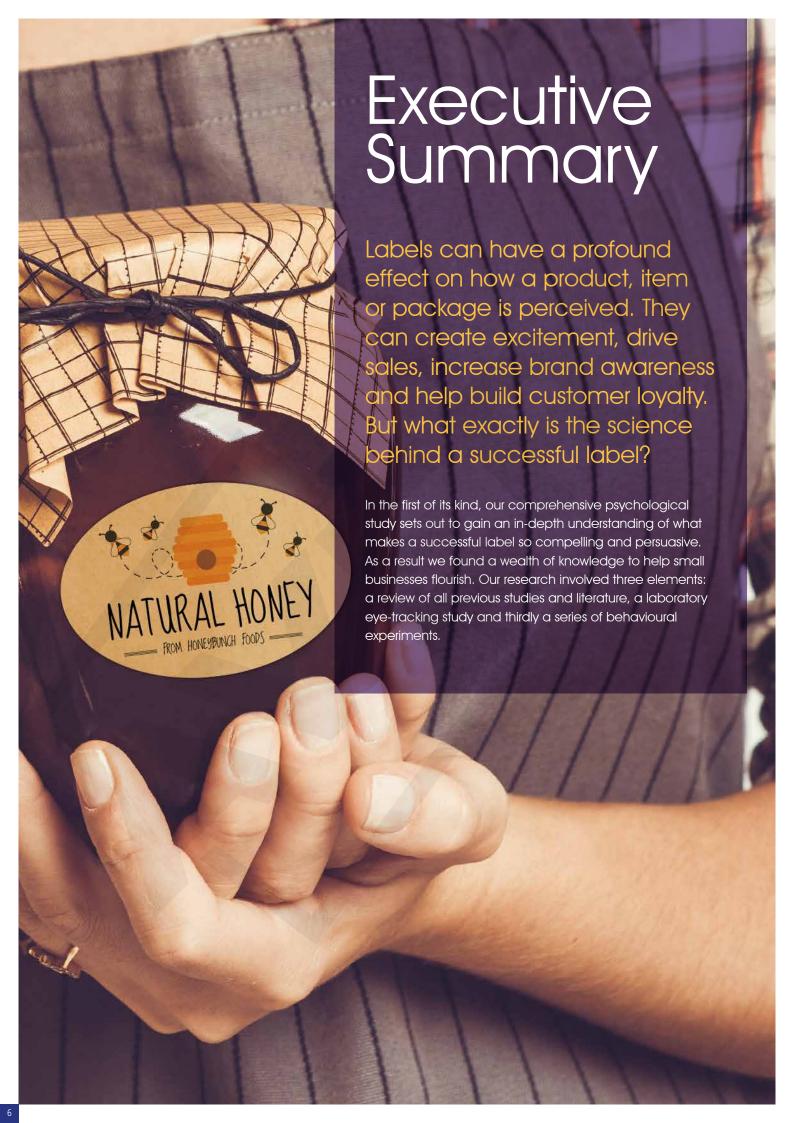
UKAvery

#LabelStories



## Contents

| Key Findings                       | 2  |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Contents                           | 5  |
| Executive Summary                  | 6  |
| The Research                       | 8  |
| How your customers make decisions  | 9  |
| The 4 stages of Label Design       | 10 |
| 10 Successful<br>Label Templates   | 12 |
| How to design<br>the Perfect Label | 18 |
| Mutiple Labels<br>for shipping     | 20 |
| A 15 point checklist               | 21 |



### 4 Stages to designing the perfect label

As a result, we discovered that there are four clear stages to brilliant label design:









## the right label for the job

It is important to take time to select the right Avery label for the job. Consider the options available like waterproof, transparent, glossy or matt as well as different shapes and sizes. There is so much more to a label than just a plain white rectangle.

#### grab attention

A successful label will be eye-catching and will draw the consumer's interest. There are seven key things you need to consider when designing labels: positioning, contrast, surprise, visuals, simplicity, relevance and appealing to the primal part of the brain.

## engage and persuade

Our study confirmed that once you've attracted the consumer's attention, it is important to then engage their brain in a meaningful way. Rousing curiosity, priming expectation, helping in the decision-making, showing emotion and displaying important information can all result in a persuaded customer.

#### producing behaviour

If the first three stages are successful, your label will produce a behavioural response like a confirmed purchase, brand loyalty, even the readiness to pay more for a product.

### The perfect label

The elements featured on this label were tested in our experiments and were found to be very effective at bringing heightened engagement. They increased the probability of loving the parcel by 264% and perceiving the parcel's contents as high quality by a massive 564%.

#### Clear Information

Clear presentation of important and rational information (the mailing address) ensures that there is no room for confusion.

#### Bright and Bold

The bright colours and striped bar naturally draw the eye and help the label stand out.

#### Handwritten Font

Fostering perceptions of openness and friendliness, a handwritten font is very effective in helping customers warm to a brand.

Mr James Smith 6 Rosehill Way, Tilehurst, Reading. R61 2JW

Baked withlove just for you!





#### Brand Icon

The brand icon is bright and distinctive, making it easier for customers to identify and get to know the company.

#### Primal Imagery

Choosing to use images of food not only signifies the contents of the package but it also engages the primal part of the brain which helps draw very strong attention.

#### Special Message

A personal or special message encourages customer engagement on an emotional level and shows that heartfelt thought has been put into package presentation.

In this report we will dissect the psychology behind successful labels and reveal how you can make labelling work for your small business.

## The Research

Our research comprised three fascinating approaches to understanding what makes a successful label.

### Literature Review

We read 159 academic papers about previously conducted research to see what was already known about labelling and what still needed to be discovered. It turned out that former studies were mainly limited to food and nutritional labelling, warning labels and marketing direct mail and that there were distinct gaps in the understanding of shipping, price and promotion labelling for small businesses. The literature review also helped shape and refine our strategy for the next stages of our research.

### Eye-Tracking

We used cutting-edge eye-tracking apparatus in controlled laboratory conditions to trace exactly where a label can lead the eye. All test subjects confirmed that they often bought from small businesses. Each experiment was randomised and repeated 10 times to ensure accuracy of results. Participants were shown two images on the screen in front of them - a control image and the label we really wanted to test. There were two blocks of research: one centred on products and the other featured mailing and shipping items. We used the eye-tracking experiments to discover:



### **Experiments**

For our final stage of research, we conducted three online experiments to examine the more cerebral and behavioural aspects of labels. This included considerations like how much someone was willing to pay; how they felt towards the company and how likely they were to make a repeat purchase.

1,108 British adults 45% Male 55% Female

all with a mean age of 39.5. Most participants (78%) said they buy from small businesses.

For this analysis, we focussed on the key areas of shipping, product and promotion.

# How your customers make decision

In our research, we have seen how labels can have a powerful impact on how a product or item is perceived and received.

They can strongly influence the path of decision-making and can even bring about an unconscious judgement. As humans we are not aware we are doing this.

Behavioural science research proves time and time again that how something is presented is very important in positively influencing consumer perception and decision-making. But how exactly does a humble label influence the decision of a consumer? What goes on in our minds?

#### The limits of the conscious mind

Did you know that approximately 11 million sensory neurons are firing around the brain every second, but only 40 of these travel through conscious pathways?

Humans are 'cognitive misers'. In other words, we have very limited brain space – not to mention motivation, energy and time – to put careful, conscious thought into all our decisions. Instead, most human decision-making is automatic, emotional and irrational.

## The psychological considerations of labelling

When it comes to labels there are three important psychological factors to be aware of:

#### Attention

Humans have limited attention spans, but certain things that the brain deems to be important do get through quickly and forcefully. Your own name or aspects of danger, for example, can push their way right to the front of your awareness, even in loud and hectic surroundings.

#### Emotion trumps reason

The non-conscious, emotional part of the brain is more automatic and influential than the conscious, rational part. In other words, emotion trumps reason. We tend to buy with our hearts and then justify our decision with our heads.

#### **Heuristics**

To help us make decisions, we rely on rules of thumb or shortcuts known as heuristics. For example, when a shelf is untidy and stock is low, we can reasonably deduce that the product is popular and therefore probably good and well worth a try.

#### What we've learned

This overall understanding of the psychology of human decision-making helps us to build the steps of a consumer's journey. We now know that labels need to:

- Catch a consumer's limited attention span.
- Engage them emotionally.
- And 'nudge' them towards a specific behaviour using mental shortcuts.

Which takes us to practical application and the 4 Stages of Label Design

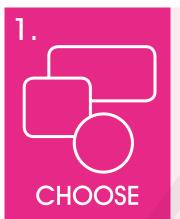
## stages of label design

What should you consider when designing your label?

If you apply science to your label design it can lead to repeat purchase and customer loyalty. Our research has revealed the importance of thinking more about every label you design to ensure you attract attention and encourage someone to take action.

Every little detail can have a surprisingly big impact.





## choosing the right label for the job

Simply adding a label is the first step to getting your product or package seen as it increases the likelihood of it getting noticed. However, it's vital that both your chosen label and the design get across the message you are trying to create about your business.

Think about the right Avery label for the task as well as making sure it looks great on the item you are sticking it on to. Avery has a wide range of different materials, including waterproof, glossy, matt and transparent as well as many shapes and sizes. We have labels small enough to stick on tiny items, like a pencil right through to AO sized labels for walls and larger items. There are also labels for a variety of surfaces, whether it's paper, card, glass, plastic, fabric or even walls.



## grab attention

Making your label eye-catching is the next step. It's a loud and busy world out there with an overload of information and choice. Your label needs to cut through all the noise and grab a consumer's attention by highlighting what the brain deems important.

We found there are seven ways a label can grab attention:



#### position

People have a natural tendency to look at the centre of an object so placing important information in the middle of your label and sticking the label centrally on your product or package will maximize results. But be careful not to overload this area with too much information. Be selective so as not to put off the reader.



#### contrast

Choosing colour over black and white wins every time. Select colours that stand out, not only against your own packaging but against that of your competitors too. The larger your label the greater the likelihood of it standing out. And bold lines, borders and stripes also mean that your label could be viewed 42% more than any neighbouring plain labels.



#### surprise

Humans have a natural tendency to notice anything unexpected, novel or bizarre. Dream up the unusual, raise eyebrows and challenge the convention of your field and your label to help draw attention. For example, in our research, the envelopes that used an unusual arty label were more likely to be looked at first. In our template designs you will also see a hamster and cheese on a label. This is the kind of different design that will cause surprise and therefore attract attention.



#### visual

They say a picture paints a thousand words. Did you know that people process visual stimuli more rapidly and fluently than words? Research shows that combining the use of colour, a picture, and an icon can help customers home in on your product more readily than a word-heavy label.









Since consumers have limited attention spans, it is important for labels to be as simple as possible in their design. Our research discovered that when a simple label was used rather than a complex one, people were 5-10% more likely to notice it initially and spent 9-15% more time looking at it.

#### relevance

Customers will immediately pay attention to anything personally relevant to themselves. Personalisation is very effective at making people sit up and pay attention. Also, labels featuring icons that bear relevance to the product a person is looking for will mean they will be found quickly.

#### primal

Did you know that humans are hardwired to notice faces? Our eye-tracking experiments revealed that people were 14% more likely than average to look at an item featuring an emoji and 18% more likely to look at a label first if it featured a face. Emotional images like hearts and words like 'lovely' also draw the primal gaze and even help people look at your label for longer.

## 3. BRAIN

### engage and persuade

This is the stage where the consumer will make their all-important decision. Labels are more effective if they encourage some kind of processing, thought or deliberation within the consumer. The more the brain is engaged and attention is invested, the more likely the positive outcome. You've made them stop, now let's make them think. And there are five key ways in which to do just that:



#### emotion

Emotion encourages involvement and engagement with an object and positive emotions 'rub off' on items through a process known as emotional contagion. So, an expression of emotion such as 'love' or 'joy' on a label can go a long way towards gaining positive customer association and investment.



#### information

Make sure you convey your crucial information clearly. Exciting rhetoric and inviting imagery are extremely important, but consumers do still prize rational information like price, origin, quantity, contents and benefits of a product.



#### priming

Consumers will take their cues about how to perceive and respond to an item like a parcel from the labels it has. Before they even open it up a label will prime their expectation and level of excitement. A label suggesting high quality can lead to increased product consideration and perception, but it works both ways - a cheap design can suggest a cheap product.



#### heuristics

Consumers rely on mental shortcuts to quickly and effectively make decisions. If your label boasts a recommendation or endorsement or features evidence of awards then people are more likely to make the purchase.



#### curiosity

There is a sudden spike in brain activity when we encounter something that does not immediately make sense or which needs to be 'worked out'. Teaser labels that engage the brain and pose a question, for example, a "What's inside?" label on a parcel can increase response rates by threefold.



### producing behaviour

Finally, once a label has caught a consumer's attention, and then engaged and persuaded them, desired behaviours such as purchases, increased spend and recommendation are likely to follow. And all because of a well-considered, well-designed and well-placed label.

## 10 Successful Label Templates

## Choosing the right label for the right job

Look around your office or workplace. It is likely you will see a range of labels whether it is on products, packaging, files or other items. But how much have you thought about the design and whether you are using a label to its full potential? Many businesses use address labels, but adding branding, return labels and a special message will significantly improve your packages. By including special information on product labels, you can really emphasise the quality of the contents.

Over the following pages you will see ten out of around 50 label templates that can be found on our website www.avery.co.uk/labelstories. We have broken down these labels to highlight what makes them perform well so you can use these learnings in your own designs. We have carefully chosen these templates to demonstrate how thinking about label designs can provide maximum impact in a variety of situations.

Remember, it is important that you choose the right label for the job and select the best possible design for your own business or need.

#### Label Design One

Mrs. Helen Barnes 12 The Close, Calvert, Buckinghamshire. BK12 2QQ

Thank you!



L7163™ 99.1mm x 38.1mm

We have a wide range of white address labels for a variety of envelope and parcel sizes. All of our laser address labels feature QuickPEEL™ technology so are quick to apply.

In our study, people were an enormous 480% more likely to buy a product when the principles of this label design were used.

The reason why this label design works so well is that its bright colours and stripes along the bottom ensure the label attracts attention in the first instance. The pictures of food attract the primal side of the brain as well as providing a clear signifier of what's inside the package. The handwritten font confirming the contents is more evocative and appealing than straight print would be and the words 'Thank you!' bring the all-important personal touch. Meanwhile, the plain text for the address itself means that there is nothing getting in the way of the key information.



L7171™ 200mm x 60mm

Made from special BlockOut™ material, these labels completely hide text and existing labels on files so you can re-use your files time and time again. Avery Filing Labels are available in white, red, yellow, green and blue.

Our eye-tracking experiments revealed that people were 14% more likely than average to look at an item featuring an emoji and 18% more likely to look at a label first if it featured a face.

It's important when creating folders that the contents can easily be seen and identified. This design is bright and uncluttered for that very reason. The branding is clear, the image is relevant to the contents and the handwritten font brings a friendly air. All these elements combine to inspire customer trust and confidence in the information inside as well as the business that has created it.



Not only do we have many different sizes and styles of round labels at Avery, but we even have neon labels which will make your products stand out. Our glossy product labels also help reflect the quality of your products.

When a round label was completely filled with no white space, respondents spent 20% longer than average looking at it.

Here we have an example of an emotional label and two showing purely rational information. All three of these examples display bold or bright colours, which help them get noticed, but each conveys a different message. The label displaying emotion in the form of a smiling face helps the human brain bond quickly and easily with the product in a positive way. Meanwhile, the two informational labels are clear and to the point, prioritising the important information with simple text. The words 'Limited Edition' and 'Only 3 left' communicate scarcity, which, according to psychology, means the customer will be more likely to want it.

#### Label Design Four



L7159™ 63.5mm x 33.9mm

These rectangular labels come with our special QuickPEEL™ technology for faster application. Simply divide the 24 labels on the sheet along the perforation to expose the label edges and then peel and apply.

A label displaying a handwritten font can improve the potential for word-of-mouth recommendation by 46%.

Along with the bright colour of this design, the dashed borders really make it stand out and draw the eye. As revealed in our research, emotional words and images are a strong and simple way to forge a powerful connection between the consumer and your brand. The three hearts together serve to compound this emotional effect. Also, the handwriting font and the personal touch of 'by Helen' give an open and friendly feel, which encourages customer affection.





Clear L7780™ ø40mm

The edges of the Avery Crystal Clear Invisible Effect label virtually disappear when applied. They are perfect for use on glass, polished surfaces, plastics and metal and ideal for sealing products. And you can write or print your own personalised message quickly and easily using your inkjet or laser printer on our round white stickers.

An emotive image like a heart made people spend 13% longer looking at the item.

Clear labels are often seen as indicators of premium products. Our research showed that a premium label primes the brain for a premium product quality. These designs are also simple and uncluttered, communicating a clear and heartfelt message, which is underpinned by the friendly, more personal handwritten font, the emotional image of a heart and the emotional word 'love'.

#### Label Design Six



L7551™ 38.1mm x 21.2mm



L7651™ 38.1mm x 21.2mm

Perfect for return address labels, special messages and branding, you can select mini inkjet or laser labels in a variety of sizes. For special use, try our gold and neon labels or why not explore our transparent labels.

An envelope or package using an 'arty' label is 14% more likely to be looked at first.

These designs are both arty and interesting and will easily catch the eye – helped by the strong blue border on the tea label and the colourful background and images on the honey label. The teacup and the bee are also clear signifiers for the nature of the businesses and provide clues as to what might be found inside. The clear label especially communicates quality, while in both cases the handwritten font and the words themselves are cheerful, friendly and inclusive, which inspires excitement and appeal within the consumer. On the address label, the change in font between the rational and the emotional content makes sure that the important information is still clear and the package is less likely to get lost in the post.



L7101™ 63.5mm x 42.3mm

Avery Glossy Labels make it easy to give your brand a premium, custom printed look. Designed to ensure best results with laser printers, you can create labels with brilliant colours and sharp text to make your product look professional.

This authority-signalling parcel label increased word-of-mouth by 37% and purchase intent by 40%.

This label has a clear and bold design that uses a simple but authoritative text. The tick demonstrates a heuristic mental short cut, suggesting in one simple image that the item has 'passed' or reached a certain high standard, which inspires confidence in the brand. The choice of the colour green also communicates the message to 'go', 'proceed' or 'choose' and that the package content is good.

#### Label Design Eight



L7103™ 63.5mm x 42.3mm

Avery's kraft labels are eco-friendly and 100% recycled. They are ideal for product labels, branding and packaging.

When a product label included a product signifier, participants in our study spent 21% longer than average looking at it.

This design and even the choice of a kraft label, serve to communicate the natural qualities of this product. When a product label had an image or icon relating to its contents it performed better in the research and this label very clearly achieves this with its use of the bees and hive icon. It also uses a handwritten font which, when tested in our research, proved to be a more popular style of text. The strong, warm colours of the hive and the bees along with the dashed lines of the bees in flight and even the lines on either side of 'from honeybunch foods' help to draw the eye. And the uppercase text means that the product is more likely to be looked at first. In our experiments, participants were 8% more likely to look at a jar with a label using an uppercase font.

#### Label Design Nine



L7121™ 45mm x 45mm

These Avery labels are great for short but powerful messages. Made from FSC certified paper from responsibly-managed forests, they are also perfect for QR codes to link customers to your website, online promotions and more.

Word-of-mouth improved by 243% when a label with these design elements was applied to a parcel.

This design performed extremely well in our testing. The bright colours and candy pink stripes, even the exclamation mark, attract immediate attention. Then the brain is engaged in curiosity to wonder what is 'inside' as well as being primed to expect good things by the use of such a strong emotional word as 'joy'. The handwritten font makes it less formal and more friendly, which appeals to the discerning consumer and the cakes appeal to the primal aspect of the human mind that focuses on food.

#### Label Design Ten

L7651™ 38.1mm x 21.2mm





L7165™ 99.1mm x 67.7mm

Our parcel labels are designed to stay securely and permanently on your packages. They all feature Opaque BlockOut™ which makes sure nothing underneath shows through - ideal for reusing old boxes and envelopes.

When this handwritten font was tested in the research it increased the consideration of the parcel by 30% and perception of quality by 14%.

This label features two powerful icons that both appeal to the primal part of the brain. The face communicates a happy emotion which is likely to 'rub off' on the consumer, priming them to be pleased with the contents. Meanwhile, the strong branding image of the cup not only taps into the primal part of the brain but it also provides a signifier of what to expect inside. The bold border and bright colour draw the eye and, although the address on the larger label is written in a handwritten font (serving to emphasise the friendliness of the company), this important information is made clearer by it being written in black. The small label also uses the font to demonstrate the care the company takes with its packages by adding a special message above the return address. There is also no room for confusion as to whom this package is from with such clear branding and the company name featuring twice.

## How to design the Perfect Label

Avery has made it easy for you to design powerful labels. Our free template software: **Avery Design & Print Online** is accessible to everyone at **www.avery.co.uk/print** 

Here you can create your labels from scratch or edit one of our templates to suit your business.



#### Attract Attention

A strong strip of colour in the background naturally draws the eye to ensure your label gets noticed.

Design & Print tip

Click 'Shape' & select from the drop down box.



#### Handwritten Font

In our research, handwritten fonts were successful on labels, as they feel open and friendly.

Design & Print tip

Click 'Text' and choose from our 14 handwritten fonts.



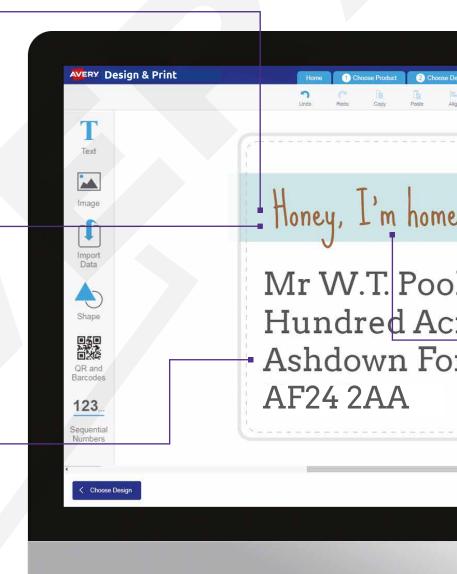
#### Be Rational

Ensure there is no room for confusion. Make it clear who the item is for by giving it prominance on the label, using an easy-to-read font.

Design & Print tip

Use our 'Import Data' tool to mail merge addresses from your databases in seconds.





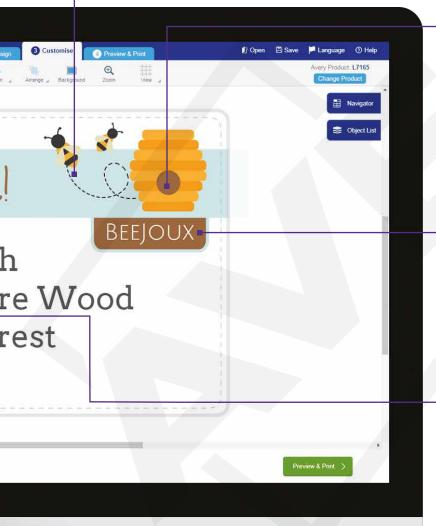
#### The Process

The principles of this particular design were highly successful in our label research. It packs in so many of the persuasive elements that we've uncovered in our study and, as with so many other examples on our Design & Print service, it can be adapted to your own needs.



#### Play to the primal

Grab attention with primal stimuli such as food, animals and faces. It engages the primal part of the brain and helps draw attention.



#### Make it visual

Our research confirmed people process visual stimuli faster than words, so a bright and colourful image helps focus attention more easily.



Design & Print tip

Select 'Image' then choose from our extensive picture gallery or upload one of your own from your computer.

#### Clear Branding

Make it clear who your package is from by including your company name and logo.

Design tip

We have created a simple guide at www.avery.co.uk/labelstories to show you how you can add your own branding.

#### Special Message

A personal or special message engages the customer on an emotional level. You can also add emotion with words like 'Joy' or 'Pride'.

You can find all of our best practice templates at www.avery.co.uk/labelstories
#labelstories

## Multiple Labels for shipping

Interestingly, our study also revealed that the use of multiple labels was particularly effective at influencing behaviours. We found that using multiple labels in shipping achieves more of the desired outcomes than just using one.

With each label bringing its own special results, combining them will have a bigger impact on your customers. In our research experiments we measured the impact of using multiple labels on a parcel in comparison to parcels without labels. We found an average uplift on the parcels with multiple labels of 129% for brand love and 116% for parcel content quality. Using multiple labels also increased the likeliness of word of mouth promotion by 135% and purchase intent by 113%. So we encourage you to make space for not only the crucial address label, but also for branding, return address and special message labels too.

Always remember that labels should have a clear purpose. Think about what a label will achieve and how to make each one as effective as possible. Here are the various labels we recommend you add to your business packages and mail.

129% increase in brand love

increase in perception of parcel content quality

113% increase in purchase intent

35% increase in word of mouth promotion





#### Remember the 4 Stages of Successful Label Design:



The right label



Grab attention



Engage and persuade



Producing behaviour

And apply these insights to your labels before applying them to your box, parcel, product or envelope.

#### 1.

Deciding to use a label is always better than no label at all.

#### 2.

Size does matter.
Make the label as large as possible, and make the key label elements large too.

#### 3.

Use contrasting or bright colours and designs, heavy fonts and thick lines to stand out. Also use colours that are relevant to the label's content.

6.
Think of ways you can make your labels surprising and different.

#### 4.

Use images or icons in your labels and be very visual. Think carefully about the pictures you use as labels displaying images that are clearly linked to your product or packaging will perform much better.

#### 7.

5.

Keep everything simple. Make sure the design is fluent and digestible.

#### 8.

It pays to place the label in the centre

important information in the centre of the

label. Be careful not to crowd this area of

of your item and to place the most

the label with too much information.

Grab attention through stimuli that naturally make humans stop and look. Emotional words like 'love' or 'pride' or images of faces, babies and animals all play to our primal instincts.

#### 9.

Provide all the rational information consumers need to make a decision, particularly when it comes to price.

#### 10.

Make your designs high-quality and artistic. This will prime your customers to associate quality with your product or parcel – before they've even opened it.

#### 11.

Conversely, be careful not to cheapen a quality product with a lower-quality label, as it can negatively affect perceptions.

#### 12.

Emotional elements should be included throughout your designs so that the feel-good factor 'rubs off' on your brand and positively impacts your consumer.

#### 13.

Gently nudge people towards your desired outcome through well-thought-out messaging. Inspire trust and appreciation by communicating that you are an authority in the field or by showing that you are award-winning.

#### 14.

Creating an element of curiosity is an effective way of attracting potential customers to your item, whether that's to encourage a purchase or open a parcel.

#### 15.

The use of multiple labels when shipping items achieves more of the desired outcomes than just using one. But don't go overboard, labels should have a clear purpose or it can be confusing for the recipient.

