Graduation project:

Using packaging design to promote healthier food choice

The research topic

Food packaging influences consumer purchase decisions in different ways, for example by communicating product information (e.g., brand name and ingredients), or by looking tasty or healthy or just attractive.

Many people have an unhealthy diet, by eating too much sugar, salt, or unsaturated fat. Packaging design influences consumer perception about healthfulness and tastiness of food products. For example, lighter colors and paper-based materials (instead of plastic) have been found to promote a healthy impression.

However, people tend to perceive healthy food to be less tasty. This is especially a problem for so called 'vice' foods (foods to indulge, such as cookies, snacks, ice cream). People buy these product for their enjoyment, and taste is therefore very important to them. However, less unhealthy alternatives can also be tasty.

So the question is: how can packaging for less unhealthy vice foods be designed in order to attract consumers looking for more healthy alternatives, but also consumers that find indulgence and taste most important.

The graduation project

In this research project, you will determine guidelines on how to design a package for more healthy alternatives in vice food categories, so that they will be more often chosen by consumers. The package should communicate that the food is less unhealthy, but still look tasty and attractive to consumers. This could for example be done by visual package design (color, material, etc.), or a verbal claim/label communicating quality or tastiness.

After reading relevant academic literature, you will determine relevant variables and product categories. You will design several packaging designs, and test your hypotheses by setting up and performing an experimental study, analysing your data in SPSS.

Interested?

We are looking for a student interested in consumer product perception and packaging design. Experience in performing a research project (e.g., SPD Research Project) and knowledge of SPSS (for statistical analysis) are beneficial.

Do you want to know more? Please contact Dr. Mariëlle Creusen m.e.h.creusen@tudelft.nl