

UPRIGHT **DAISY** BRAND APPEAL

CASE STUDY



Sonoco Solves Club Store Packaging Issues with Custom PET Tray Design

The 14-oz. squeeze pouch of Daisy Brand sour cream made quite a splash when it was introduced by Sonoco Flexibles in 2015. The new inverted package suggested less product waste much like the inverted condiment bottles that were becoming popular at the time, and the squeezable pouch was a sour cream category defier.

The package also reinforced the clean presentation of the Daisy Brand as well as the brand's emotional connection in trying to provide the freshest product for the longest time. Recently, when Daisy decided to sell its sour cream pouches in the club store retail segment, much thought was put into how to present the Daisy Brand in the best possible manner.

Daisy settled on a 16-count retail-ready box that maximized the pallet configuration. Each box contained eight two-packs that were joined by a handy, efficient, and reliable adhesive strip which doubles as an easy carrying handle. The two-packs were well-received by both customers and retailers alike, and Daisy heard few—if any—complaints. Nevertheless, the Daisy Brand decided to develop an innovative plastic tray solution by longtime partner Sonoco Alloyd that elevated both the consumer connection and the brand presentation.

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We Can Do Better

The Daisy Brand internal home office, sales, and plant staff knew from experience that to truly understand how packages are performing at retail, you have to walk the store aisles yourself. Daisy wanted to make sure the customer-friendly Daisy Brand image and reputation were being maximized.

"It's hard to predict what the real-world applications will be," explains Ryan Adame, Plant Manager/Project Engineer at Daisy. "It's hard to really know what people do, what store staff does, or what they care about." The internal Daisy stakeholders wanted to confirm a fundamental brand reputation protection question. That is, was the customer experience in club stores a completely positive one?

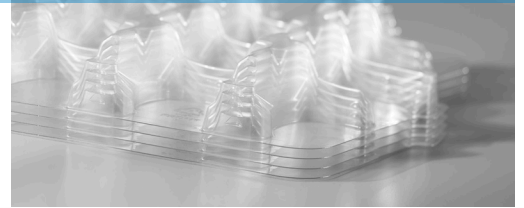
When Adame and his colleagues visited a number of club stores, they discovered nothing particularly surprising at first glance. The sour cream pouches were selling well, and the retail-ready packaging, when first opened, was performing well. However, they noticed that half-full boxes were sometimes disorganized with primary packages lying on their sides. The Daisy staff felt that this presentation was not consistent with the clean image of the Daisy Brand, and thought there might be an easy way to rectify this situation.

The causes of the disorganized boxes were easy to pinpoint. The pouches are a little top-heavy, customers often grab two-packs quickly, and some customers want to inspect the expiration dates to make sure they have the freshest product. Adame thought some kind of insert tray would keep the two-packs upright, reduce excessive handling, and ship better with fewer pouch dents as well.

Prototypes for a Complete Solution

Adame also had to consider how a tray solution would fit into the current, fully automated filling and packaging line. Another top concern was determining what material would perform best in the refrigerated environments that the tray would ship and ultimately display in.

Both of these considerations eliminated molded pulp and paperboard options pretty quickly. When stacked for automation, those options would not nest and denest with the reliability of plastic trays. And condensation in refrigerated environments would lead to unreliable performance at the point of sale.



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When Adame contacted Sonoco about developing a solution, the Sonoco team quickly turned around a number of prototypes. Daisy and Sonoco worked openly to refine the concept for the most efficient tray that would perform reliably both on automation lines and in club stores.

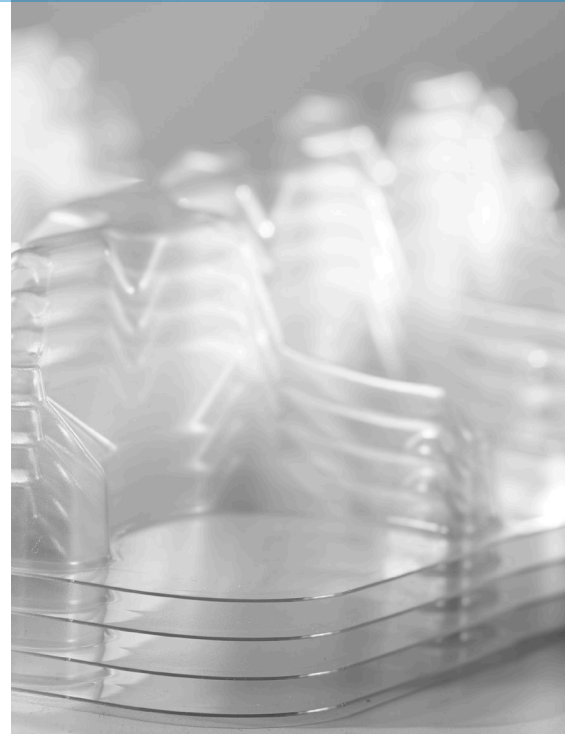
After several iterations, the solution achieved the ideal performance of cavitation consistency, locking feature performance, and tray handling efficiency, checking off all the goals:

- Capture points of fitment
- Secure but easily popped out
- Ship well
- Present well
- Nest well for handling and loading
- Denest reliably for automation
- Streamline automatic load process
- Use minimal material

Daisy and Sonoco agreed that PET was the best option because of its reliable performance on shelf, its performance in packaging automation, and its recyclability advantages. The volumes were going to be high, so PET was an economical option. When Daisy ramps up to full automation, their goal is 8,000 boxes with trays every week.

The final solution uses .025 clear, food-grade PET formed into a tray with overall dimensions of 9.560 in. x 11.705 in. x 1.5 in. run on 4-up 25 x 21 production tooling. One of the critical elements in the design of the tray was to include a small gap between the edges of the trays when stacked. This gap facilitates the automated picking and placing of the trays during denesting and feeding.

The solution also minimizes plastic use with an “open” design, meaning there is not a plastic border around the outside edges of the tray. This also led to a tighter configuration, with an angled footprint that overlaps the pouch ends, and a retaining tab that helps “lock” it into place. The qualitative gains in merchandising, visibility, shopper perception, and shopper experience will be monitored closely at Sam’s, BJ’s and Costco as the tray solution becomes the default club store packaging.



The verdict is already in at Daisy HQ, where the project was a collaborative one between many departments. Everyone in sales, marketing, and production believes the plastic tray solution represents the best of the Daisy Brand at retail. And in an internal study at Daisy, the new design decreased product tipping by 53% and reduced handle issues by 41%.

In the end, the primary consumer interaction goal was achieved:

Brand protection for Daisy Brand products at the point of consumer contact. The plastic trays provided the best product presentation, the most consistent functionality, and the most positive Daisy Brand customer experience.