

Abstract: Deconstructing data into actionable information

Executive Summary

The proliferation of systems has created a unique challenge—an influx of data with no “information.”

Consumer packaged goods (CPG) and life sciences companies constantly strive to improve their packaging design processes to deliver higher quality creative work more quickly and reliably and at lower cost. To do so, these organizations must benchmark their processes and monitor their progress.

The proliferation of information systems and software tools has created the common challenge of too much data and not enough information—reams of raw measurements, time stamps, and event logs but very few meaningful, actionable insights.

Project managers can parse rows and rows of status updates but typical reports fail to answer basic leadership and stakeholder questions, like:

- How effective is our process?
- Are we getting better over time?
- What are the risks?
- What are our cost drivers?
- Which projects, tasks, functions, or people are doing well and which need improvement?

Part of the problem is that companies often use point solutions for project scheduling, document review, and task management—often built on popular platforms such as FileMaker, Microsoft Project, SharePoint, and Access. All these tools have reporting features, but they are separate and disconnected from the artwork routing and review process. The resulting information silos make consolidated reporting more difficult and time-consuming.

Furthermore, the time lag in creating reports means the information is out of date the moment the report is complete. Scanning these reports may prove that teams are busy, but do the reports show whether teams are working on the right tasks, meeting organizational objectives, or getting better?

Is All Data a KPI?

Discovering what constitutes a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) begins with understanding the overall process and its contribution to organizational goals.

Today, there is no universal standard for measuring the performance of Packaging Design Groups. Leadership has long sought to answer several key questions such as:

- Do administrative burdens extend time to shelf?
- Does process variation cause defects?
- Are the responsible teams resourced properly?
- Is the process efficient?
- Are specific functions or situations causing major delays or errors?

Identifying recurring issues can only be done through pattern analysis and consistent data roll-ups. The solution is a simple dashboard that provides executives with rapid insight into project performance, task durations, and iterations.

Core Measurements for Iterative Packaging Design

Establishing benchmarks for iterative creative design cycles requires a data set based on historical patterns.

The concept of iterations is unclear to most business people. In creative work, “right” is usually a very subjective call based on “look and feel.” As a result, reviewers often have to see work in its entirety. If graphic layouts do not meet expectations, the design team must correct or alter the label, carton, box, sleeve, or pouch with successive changes to meet the creative objectives. In addition to creative design, copy development and approval is another element—particularly in labeling—that generates multiple iterations.

The conventional approach of measuring a single project is rooted in the fundamentals of:

- Time—Will the project deliver on the expected date?
- Quality—Are potential defects being mitigated?
- Cost—Is there a variance on authorized investment?
- Scope—Are tasks being added to the work effort?

While these metrics tell a portion of the story, creative design by its nature is iterative. These cycles—commonly known as “rounds”—move back and forth between creative design teams and the requester(s) or reviewer(s) until the work is declared “correct” based on subjective and objective criteria. Understanding change requests and their causes can be captured in the form of “reason codes.”

Establishing benchmarks for iterative creative design cycles requires a data set based on historical patterns. Leading companies seek to understand the following core metrics for their KPIs:

- Duration—Standard project turnaround time
- Iterations—Average number of approval rounds
- Right First Time—Completed during the initial review cycle

The average performance for each key metric can be established as a baseline for optimization. The goal is to continually improve flow with the existing capability by developing behaviors that align with strategic objectives. Root causes of issues can be identified by reviewing more detailed reports.

Uncovering Process Management Challenges

High-level KPIs act as signposts to provide uniform base measurements. More detailed reports can drill down to answer specific questions or identify specific problems:

Question	Metric
What tasks are most often late or delayed?	Late tasks by role, complexity, type, etc.
Are resources sufficient to keep up with workload?	Number of overdue tasks (long-term trend); Average task turnaround time in days
Which individuals/functions identify the most issues?	Number of annotations by function/individual; Number of review cycles (iterations) initiated/generated by function/individual
Which individuals/functions overlook the most issues?	Errors most often found on subsequent review cycles or by other (non-responsible) functions
How effective are reviews and what problems cause oversights?	Number of review cycles by review milestone (task group) or specific review/approval task
What aspects cause the most errors?	Failure points by code (copy, barcode, color, fit, etc.)
Are project demands increasing?	Average duration between tasks or milestones

Reports can provide additional detail (drill downs) on specific pivot points to illuminate speed bumps.

With good information, teams can act to:

- Reduce risk
- Effectively share assets
- Balance workloads across team (or across the globe)
- Drive down costs
- Motivate and assist participants to complete tasks on time
- Provide visibility into blockers and imperfections
- Identify bottlenecks and improve their processes

Understanding Through Data Visualization

Rich data also provides an opportunity to spot variances without poring through rows and columns of data.

The data visualization capabilities of Business Intelligence tools enable teams and leadership to align on information quickly. Long-term trends and deviations from baselines can be visualized in simple dashboards that present the full array of KPI roll ups, providing insight into:

- Quality (freedom from errors)
- Speed to market
- Efficiency
- Cost drivers

Managers can drill into the data to understand the root cause of challenges, allowing them to provide appropriate guidance for remediating issues that diverge from baseline performance targets.

Standard Content Creation (Yellow) & Approval Time (Red) - Days

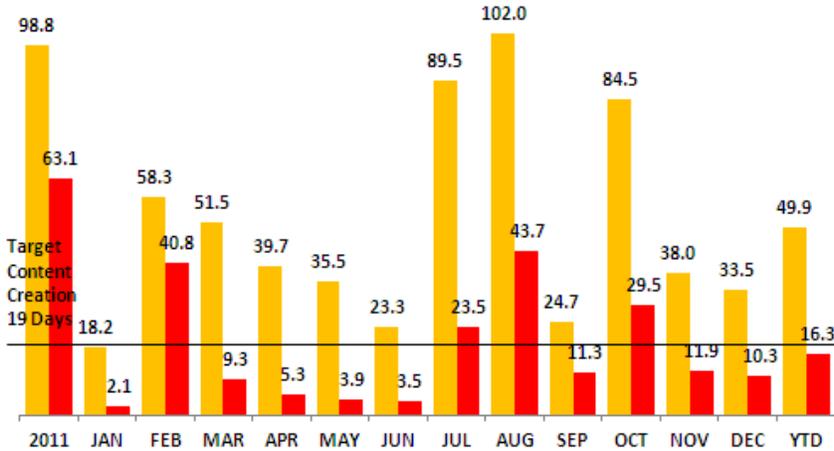


FIG 1: Labeling review cycle time compared to total content creation time

The above report shows the proportion of time required for label review cycles (red bars) compared to the total time for content creation (yellow). The spikes in July, August, and October are attributed to higher cumulative content creation activities. Note how performance improved when comparing 2011 to 2012 against the established benchmark.

Label Approval Average in Days

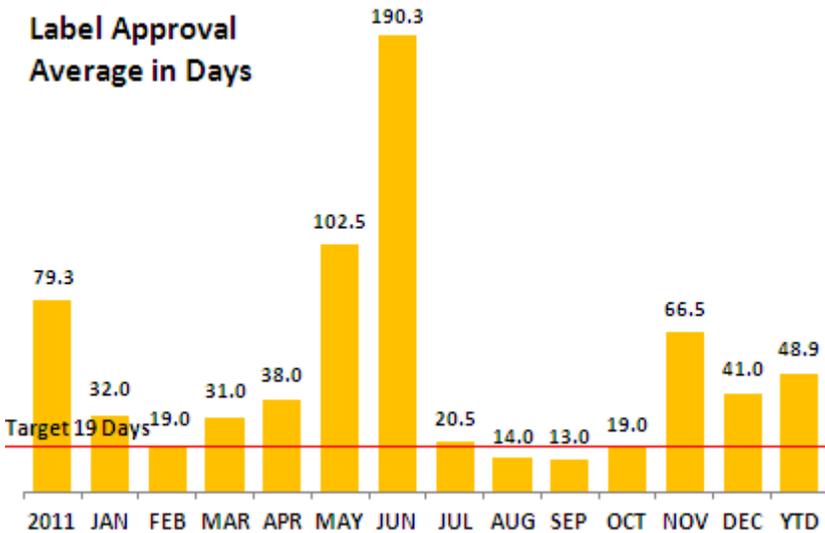


FIG 2: Labeling approval turnaround time by function

This report shows the average time for label approvals across business functions (Brand, Legal, Regulatory, etc.). In this case, one business unit was indecisive on the artwork specifications, resulting in delays.

KPIs: Building and Optimizing Reporting for Packaging Design Production

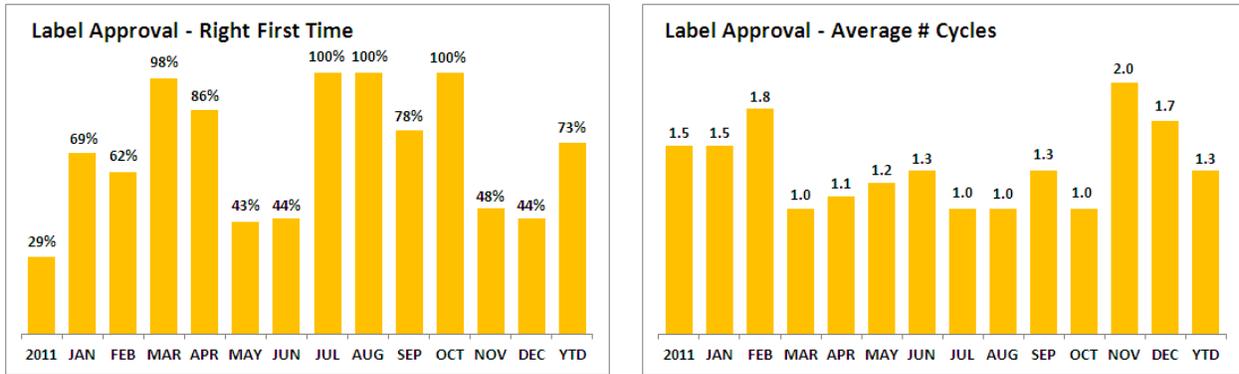


FIG 3: Labeling approval

Comparing unlike data can show cause and effect. The simple example above shows that when more label components are approved on the first review, the number of review rounds is closer to one. More interesting would be identifying the reasons for these variations—are they related to specific artists or reviewers, to workload or to project complexity? Finding patterns based on project types, task complexity, individuals, or functional roles will provide insights to improve the process and schedule more accurately.

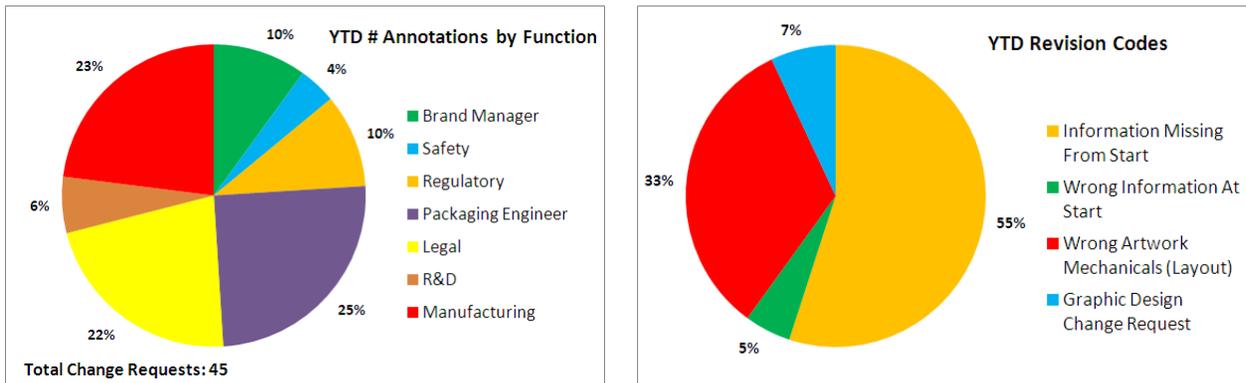


FIG 4: Detailed annotation tasks by business function and revision codes

By breaking down reports further, specific roles can be identified as the source of changes. Identifying reasons helps isolate communication issues.

Combining KPI data with cost information can provide insight into how to reduce costs. For example, if the data shows high demand on the costliest resources such as Legal, the organization could seek to reduce this demand through training (to decrease legal errors) or workflow changes (to identify errors earlier) or involve Legal in fewer review rounds.

Summary

Packaging design production KPI's play an integral role in the success of enterprise teams. Key stakeholders—from executive management through graphic designers—have a vested interest in ensuring that packaging and labeling meet all necessary requirements from a compliance, speed-to-market, and quality perspective which, as a result, will contribute to the success of a brand's product line. KPI's are valuable tools that assist teams in making the right decisions that will improve process, maximize resource allocation, and provide overall insight and visibility to projects and project management. They not only provide information that illustrates how well or poorly a process operates, but they help identify issues and roadblocks. This lets organizations make adjustments that guarantee success—success that is measured by speed-to-market, quality, and cost-effectiveness.

About Kodak Design2Launch Brand Manager

Kodak Design2Launch Brand Manager is a Web-based workflow and asset management solution designed to help brands deliver packaging and marketing materials faster and more accurately.

Brand Manager empowers marketing and packaging teams to better manage their business processes and assets across suppliers and in-house teams. It reduces errors and maintains brand standards by providing a single source of up-to-date, approved content. Advanced project management tools and automated workflows enforce corporate processes, prevent errors, and ensure regulatory compliance.

The powerful engine supports unlimited workflows with fully automated task routing and notification. It can be configured to oversee any business process—from basic review and approval to comprehensive product development—promoting timely task execution, efficient teamwork, visibility, and accountability.

Design2Launch Brand Manager does more than help enterprises get their packaging right the first time—we help them get to market faster. At lower cost. With reduced risk. And with greater brand protection—from concept to consumer.

Get your packaging right the first time. Visit Kodak.com/go/D2L

Kodak
Design2Launch
Brand Manager

Eastman Kodak Company
Rochester, NY 14650 USA
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