



## **B&Q : Reusable kitchen worktop Carrierpac**

Reusable packaging for kitchen worktops uses less packaging and reduces damage in transit leading to greater customer satisfaction.

B&Q currently delivers thousands of kitchen worktops per week, resulting in approximately 100 tonnes of packaging ending up in the household waste stream per year. Kitchen worktops are an essential part of any kitchen sold by B&Q, but they require significant packaging to avoid transit damage and scuffing of the worktop corners, edges and presentation surface. The slightest dent or scratch is likely to lead to the worktop being rejected by the customer, returned to B&Q and scrapped. At a retail price of between £27 and £830 per kitchen worktop, minimising product damage is essential to avoid the wasted cost of production, distribution and disposal of damaged and unsaleable stock. During the trial there were no reports of worktop damage.

The current cardboard-based transit packaging is designed to protect a worktop for just a single journey to the customer's home. Packaging consultants Outpace worked with B&Q to develop a multi-trip package that met its requirements for its range of kitchen worktops. The 'Carrierpac' is manufactured from plastic materials supplied by Storsack Dorton Ltd and Kaysersberg Plastics with approximately 45% recycled content, and is recyclable at the end of its life. Its robustness was tested during a trial that also involved two logistics contractors (TNT and Christian Salvesen). The three specifications included in the trial represented the longest, widest and commonest types of B&Q kitchen worktops sold. All 500 Carrierpacs made for the trial were given unique numbers to allow them to be tracked for monitoring the number of uses and recording condition.

### **Preventing damage and reducing waste**

The highest recorded number of uses of a single Carrierpac was 18 trips. No damage to worktops was reported during the trial, thereby creating no product waste from unsaleable stock. No customer complaints were received.

The trial confirmed that the Carrierpac was fit for purpose and highlighted other benefits including:

- increased customer satisfaction due to delivery of undamaged product;
- quicker to pack and un-pack; no bulky packaging left for customers to recycle or dispose of;
- opportunity for on-pack messaging and promotion of brand values;
- reduced risk of personal injury to packing and delivery teams due to ergonomic carrying handle;
- no need to use sharp objects to open the packaging;

- and packaging performance not affected if left outside in wet conditions.

**Achievements:**

Cost benefits: lower packaging costs through reduced raw material and waste disposal costs; reduced cost of buying Packaging Recovery Notes (PRNs) since packaging that is reused is exempt after its first use; reduced cost of returns and rejects; and reduced product damage during transit.

Consumer benefits: increased customer satisfaction; no bulky packaging waste for the customer to recycle or dispose of; and improved product presentation to the customer.

Company and employee benefits: reduced risk of personal injury to packing and delivery teams; improved customer service; improved company image; and marketing opportunities (e.g. branding on packaging).

Environmental benefits: less packaging waste entering the domestic waste stream; and reduced product damage thereby reducing the carbon footprint.

If adopted for all B&Q kitchen worktops, the multi-trip packaging could reduce packaging by 1,100 tonnes per year. If the Carrierpac was also adopted by all other manufacturers and retailers of kitchens, 5,000 tonnes less packaging would be generated per annum.

Source: WRAP