

# WHAT'S A CARDBOARD CARTON BOX?

## 1. When was paper first produced commercially?

John Tait first made paper in bulk in the United Kingdom in 1496. Nicholas Robert invented the first papermaking machine in France in 1799. It was moved to England in 1807 where it was taken up by two London stationers named FOURDRINIER. The first commercial attempts to produce paper in large quantities at a reasonable cost failed but the first machine still bears the name FOURDRINIER.

## 2. What were the first paper or cardboard boxes used for?

The first known use for a paper box was for packing tea. The name arose because they were first made from the wood of the Box tree. Boxes for gifts became popular when Roman priests encouraged people to send presents during the seasons of rejoicing.

## 3. When were the cardboard boxes we use today invented?

The paperboard boxes we use today originated in the 16th century when paperboard was invented. In Europe one of the earliest types of paper boxes was commonly known as a bandbox. They were decorated by hand and used to carry bands and ruffles worn by the Cavaliers and Ladies of the court. It was not until 1844 that setup boxes were manufactured in the United States. All boxes were made by hand.

## 4. When did cardboard boxes begin to be commercially produced and used by the general public?

Before the US Civil War in the early 1860's most consumer products were still packaged in paper bags or wrapped in paper. There were about 40 box makers in the US but most boxes were made by hand. At this time Colonel Andrew Dennison developed the Dennison machine to cut the blanks for cardboard boxes but it wasn't until John T. Robison in 1875 developed the first scoring machine, corner cutter and shears that cardboard boxes could be produced in larger quantities with less human labour involved. In 1879 Robert Gain of America took out a patent for the mechanized process of cutting and creasing board. This process is essentially the same that is used today. The end of World War II in 1945 saw significant improvements made to the machinery used to make cardboard boxes.

## 5. How important are cardboard boxes in Australia today as a form of packaging?

From a retailers viewpoint carton boxes are important because they use up less space on the shelf as it folds down easily despite its rigidity when erected. They give outstanding visual impact and the rigidity protects the product contained and minimises waste due to damage in the distribution chain. Packers find that unfilled carton boxes take up little space and can be filled or packed at high speeds. Cardboard boxes provide for tamper evidence and can incorporate easy opening/closing features. If you compare it to say tin boxes, which last forever, carton simply lasts long enough to fulfil its role after which it is readily recyclable. It can be water-resistant; it lends itself to ease of opening though tearing or cutting and is easily flattened for disposal.

Carton boxes are environmentally friendly, made from renewable, recycled and recyclable resources. In 2004 approximately 206.8k tonnes of cardboard boxes were produced in Australia. The Australian cardboard box industry is currently worth an estimated \$620 million.

