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Bag-in-box caters to Ruby Tuesday



RUBY TUESDAY enhances the image of its catering business with a new, branded bag-in-box container that uses a gusseted, form-fit multi-ply bag to provide complete beverage dispensing and sustainability benefits.

Anne Marie Mohan, Senior Editor

Ruby Tuesday, Inc., Maryville, TN, a restaurant corporation that boasts “Simple Fresh American Dining,” was launched more than 30 years ago with a single location. Since then, the company has grown to include 900-plus company-owned and franchised restaurants in 43 states and in 15 countries around the world.

Six years ago, the company launched its Curbside To Go takeout and catering program, which now accounts for

approximately 6- to 7 percent of its sales. “Making food available for guests to enjoy outside our dining rooms is part of our ongoing initiatives to better serve our guests and to make their lives a little easier,” says Rick Johnson, senior vp of Ruby Tuesday. “It’s a continually evolving process of offering our fresh, great-tasting food in more ways, in more locations.”

Last fall, in an effort to bring more branding to the catered table, Ruby Tuesday sought a new solution for transporting and dispensing its iced tea and lemonade beverages off-premise.

Switching from rigid, white polyethylene terephthalate jugs, the company selected the Cheertainer® flexible, gusseted film bag from **CDF Corp. (www.cdf1.com)**, housed in a custom-printed, corrugated box from **Accurate Box (www.accuratebox.com)**.

When looking for new beverage packaging for its catering business, Ruby Tuesday notes that beyond finding a better branding opportunity, other considerations for the solution included finding “a suitable container that was high-quality and

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reasonable from a price-point objective,” relates Terina Stewart, product manager at Ruby Tuesday. The container also needed to accommodate both hot and cold beverages, be easy to fill at the restaurant level, be simple to dispense by diners and exhibit eco-friendliness.

Working with Accurate Box, Ruby Tuesday settled on a bag-in-box format. A 1-gal custom box was created using a sturdy, SBS single-face E-flute corrugated material. The box is offset-printed with a ruby-red background against which is boldly positioned the restaurant’s logo in white type. Initially, the company chose a pillow-style film pouch to hold the beverage, but according to Iris Kennedy, CDF’s Cheertainer product manager, “they found that they could not get the proper fill volume with the pillow-style bag.”

Enter CDF with its Cheertainer flexible pouch alternative. The Cheertainer is a gusseted, form-fit, multiply pouch with a fitment that is designed for bag-in-box use. Because of its gusseted design and the location of the fitment, the pouch is said to dispense 99.9 percent of its contents. Explains Cheryl Paul, CDF Cheertainer assistant product manager, “Because of where the fitment is placed

in relation to the bag [at the bottom edge when positioned in the box], the product dispenses fully, leaving no residue.

Whereas, on a pillow pouch, the fitment is higher on the bag, so liquid gets trapped in the corners below the fitment.”

The bag’s square-cornered construction, fitting comfortably in the outer box, is also said to eliminate product foaming and splashing. And, since the bag does not shift in the box after it is filled, there is no chance of film scuffing or stress on the bag during transit, Paul adds.

The pouch used by Ruby Tuesday is constructed of an oriented nylon layer on the outside and a linear low-density polyethylene layer on the inside. According to Kennedy, the nylon layer provides the bag with “superior strength.” CDF also offers other film choices for the Cheertainer, such as a coextruded nylon/ethylene vinyl alcohol construction, for products requiring a higher barrier, and a metallized construction.

Ruby Tuesday selected a 5-L pouch from among CDF’s standard pouch sizes of 5, 10 and 20 L. A 38-mm, opaque-white screw cap seals the bag after it is filled by Ruby Tuesday operators at the restaurants’ drink station. The Cheertainer

can also accept a range of other fitments and taps for ease of filling and dispensing.

Ruby Tuesday also realized environmental advantages by switching from a rigid PET bottle to the bag-in-box format. According to CDF, the Cheertainer uses less plastic than a rigid container, and because of the bag’s flexible cube shape, it minimizes deadspace, allowing more product to fit on a pallet, and it eliminates the need for excessive layers of plastic.

Additionally, relates Kennedy, because the bags and boxes are shipped flat to Ruby Tuesday’s distribution center and then on to the individual restaurants, “more containers can fit on a pallet, and less fuel is needed to transport them.” Lastly, because less plastic is used to create the bag and since the packaging is recyclable, less landfill space is required for disposal.

More information is available:

CDF Corp., 800/443-1920. www.cdf1.com.
Accurate Box Co., Inc., 973/345-2000.
www.accuratebox.com.