

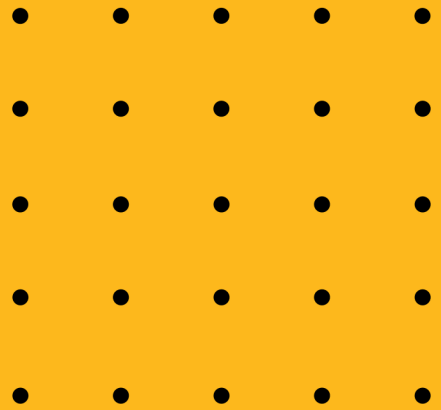


taktiful

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Case Study: How Tactile Digital Embellishments Improved Packaging for the Visually Impaired

FEATURING: VICTORIA WATTS
AND THE CYR.U.S. SYSTEM



BRINGING A VISION TO LIFE TO HELP THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED.

When was the last time you were in the shower and picked up the shampoo bottle instead of the conditioner just because they looked and felt the same?

Did you know that in the next 30 years, 55% of the population (more than 600M people) will experience some form of vision loss? Yet today, only a small percentage of product packaging is designed for the visually impaired. And by visually impaired, we also mean those wearing glasses or contacts.

Victoria Watts, founder of the CyR.U.S. system, plans to disrupt the packaging industry by making accessible packaging a standard - not an option - by 2033.



Founder Victoria Watts with her son, Cyrus.

THE STORY

After launching her first beauty brand, VictoriaLand Beauty, founder Victoria Watts learned that her youngest child, Cyrus, was born with a rare hereditary disorder that affects the retina. This disorder can cause vision loss or blindness, retinal detachment, and strabismus, and Cyrus was just one of millions of children in the world affected by visual impairment.

As Victoria shuttled Cyrus to appointments in the ophthalmology department at Boston Children's Hospital, she became increasingly amazed by his ability to navigate his unsighted world through his other senses, particularly touch. Inspired by her son's resilience, Victoria began to see the world from Cyrus' perspective and realized that there was a need for more inclusive products for the visually impaired.

She recognized that people who are visually impaired deserve independence and the ability to experience products just as much as sighted individuals. With the technology and resources available today, it should be standard practice to create products that are accessible to all.

COMMUNICATING WITH SYMBOLS

Just like emojis were created as shortcuts for communicating, the CyR.U.S. system consists of easily recognizable 3-D symbols to help the visually impaired distinguish products by touch rather than by sight.

CyR.U.S is the first – and currently only – modern tactile language designed to give the over 2.2 billion people worldwide who have some degree of vision loss independence, enjoyment and product safety.

Each CyR.U.S. symbol is optimized for touch - simply run your fingers across the symbol clockwise and feel the contours. By simply adding raised symbols and embossed QR codes to everyday packaging, CyR.U.S. makes it easy to recognize products, learn about ingredients, and understand its usage.

The symbols are intuitively designed for specific product categories such as skincare, self-care, cleaning, and laundry detergents, some of which can be deadly if used incorrectly.



vs



<p>night cream</p> 	<p>face oil</p> 	<p>eye cream</p> 	<p>face moisturizer</p> 
<p>serum</p> 	<p>exfoliator</p> 	<p>face wash</p> 	

THE PROCESS

Creating the concept and attempting to design the symbols was merely the starting point.

Producing them professionally, affordably, and at scale took a lot of research - with many false starts - before Victoria could find the perfect cost-effective print solution.

Her initial thought was to print braille, but the population of braille users is small, and her idea relied heavily on imagery. This led her to custom-tooling, which worked well, but was too expensive as a viable option for brands to adopt.

At PAC Global — a global packaging network where the industry meets to discuss print and packaging technology, trends and innovations — Victoria discussed her ideas with Kevin Abergel, President, and Founder of Taktiful, the digital embellishment sales and marketing experts.

He immediately suggested digital embellishment as the logical technology for the CyR.U.S. system. It's a cost-effective print solution that is functional, sustainable, and already used to print braille.

"Kevin was instrumental in educating me further in digital print and the applications available," said Victoria. "I knew a bit about it, but he opened me up to a cornucopia of digital embellishment options."

THE SCIENCE OF TOUCH AND DIGITAL EMBELLISHMENT

The traditional use for digital embellishment is to enhance the appeal of labels and packaging and encourage people to savor their experience through touch, for extra brand recognition – and profit margins. In each case, the outer packaging or label takes advantage of embellished "sexy print" – with coatings, metallics, varnishes, and more, to draw consumer attention and entice them to touch (and buy) the product. But Victoria and Kevin looked at the solution differently, choosing digital embellishments for function over form.



THE SCIENCE OF TOUCH AND DIGITAL EMBELLISHMENT

Victoria then collaborated with Matt Redbear, Taktiful's Creative Director. Together, they agreed to start by creating sheets of Touch Tags™ by CyR.U.S. that could be added to any product in the home and then work their way up to brand packaging and brand adoption.

They worked on multiple sets of symbols until they came up with five sets of Touch Tags and laid the foundation for an industry-wide varnish standard that is machine agnostic, with exact registration - and could be affordably and readily printed worldwide.

The ultimate objective is to have brand manufacturers integrate this technology into their packaging during the design and production stages. This could range from extrusions on top of a jar of eye cream to embedding the technology onto a toothpaste tube.

However, until this becomes a reality, Touch Tags will be accessible to consumers for online purchase and at certain retail stores.



Cyrus Watts



Matt Redbear
Creative Director
Taktiful

TRIAL AND ERROR

The most efficient way to achieve a digital embellishment or 3-D effect is to produce very large drops of inkjet varnish and print layers over layers of varnish until each symbol is raised enough to be recognized by touch only. Achieving this high level of tactile response requires 100% accuracy and using digital embellishment equipment with perfect registration is key to getting it right.

Prototypes were created for touch testing with multiple substrates, using varying thicknesses of varnish and tested with different machines such as the MGI JetVarnish and Scodix Ultra.

“Matt and I speak totally different terminology,” states Victoria. “As we were coming up with the language and expanding it across categories, Matt was great. I’m not a designer, but I had a vision. Matt helped me expand that vision and get to a place where I was happy.”

THE RESULT

After months of testing and countless prototypes, the duo created an entire range of 3-D tactile symbols, complete with a sticky back that can be attached to any product for touch identification. This modern tactile language will transform packaging and change how people identify everyday products.

"I couldn't have come this far, with a product ready for market this year, without the support of Matt, Kevin and the entire Taktiful team," said Victoria.

Taktiful helped by:

- Figuring out how to lay the symbols down on paper and adhesive poly substrates
- Creating discovery displays for the symbols using magnetic, acrylic boards
- Implementing the idea of "removable symbols"
- Assisting in designing symbols that can be as easily "read" as they are to produce.

"I played a coordinating role in the project, working between the people, technology, and equipment," shared Matt humbly. "With the help of Kevin, Victoria, Production, the Machines, and the team, I tried my best to bring everyone together and make this project a success."

"We figured out how it's supposed to be done. We set the standard. And now, hopefully everyone who has any kind of visibility issue can benefit."

MOVING FORWARD

"Taktiful is thrilled to have helped Victoria develop the first – and only – modern tactile language, and be part of the packaging transformation that's changing how people with any degree of vision loss identify the products they use every day," said Kevin.

The plan is to make CyR.U.S. a universal standard by 2025. In the meantime, brands can include touch tags in their secondary packaging today, giving consumers the power to use them now.

"Taktiful has been extremely supportive and willing to help even before we officially started working together. I got to know Kevin and the team and that was good enough," concluded Victoria. "Taktiful is involved in something that's going to change the world and improve the lives of so many people. They definitely have a role to play and I think that's pretty great."



ABOUT THE CYR.U.S. SYSTEM

CyR.U.S is The first – and only – modern tactile language designed to give the over 2.2 billion people worldwide who have some degree of vision loss independence, enjoyment and product safety. CyR.U.S.'s raised symbols and embossed QR codes make it easy to identify products, learn about ingredients and understand usage. Right at your fingertips.

Visit: www.cyrussystem.com

ABOUT TAKTIFUL

Taktiful is a leading consulting company specializing in print embellishments for brands, printers, and original equipment manufacturers (OEMs). With a focus on enhancing the visual impact and tactile experience of printed materials, Taktiful offers expert guidance and support to help clients create, market and sell stunning and unique printed products that stand out in a crowded marketplace.

At Taktiful, we understand that print embellishments are an essential part of modern marketing and branding strategies. By adding eye-catching finishes and textures to print materials, companies can increase brand recognition, engagement, and customer loyalty. Our team of experienced consultants works closely with clients to identify the most effective areas that need optimization, providing customized solutions that deliver outstanding results.

With a deep understanding of the latest print technologies and materials, as well as a passion for creativity and innovation, Taktiful is the ideal partner for any company looking to elevate their printed products to the next level. Whether you're a brand looking to differentiate yourself in a competitive market, a PSP seeking to better monetize your existing embellishment capabilities, or an OEM seeking to develop or integrate new print embellishments into your products, Taktiful has the expertise and resources to help you succeed.

At Taktiful, we are committed to providing our clients with exceptional service, top-quality advice, and innovative strategies that help them achieve their goals. With our focus on print embellishments and our dedication to excellence, we are proud to be a leading partner for brands, printers, and OEMs across the graphic arts industry.

Visit: www.taktiful.com





taktiful

CONTACT

taktiful

6300 N Wickham RD
Suite 130 #676
Melbourne, FL 32937
USA
+1.321.574.2296
www.taktiful.com
info@taktiful.com



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About Taktiful

Taktiful connects people to brands using the science of touch. Our consultants are digital embellishment, sales and marketing specialists, who focus on helping the print industry and their customers make sexy print and universal design the obvious choice for customers and brands. We combine the science of touch with the power of print to give you a taktiful experience worth coming back for. Let us show you how to design, market, and sell sexy print to all your customers.

#SexyPrint #GetTaktified #Print