

Packaging That Pulls Its Weight

How a Smarter Packaging Design Boosted Brand Impact, Product Protection and Sustainability for a Leading U.S. Trailer Brand

Carry-On Trailer partners with Complete Design and Packaging to develop durable, on-brand retail packaging for its growing national parts business.

With an estimated four million trailers on the road, **Carry-On Trailer** is the best-selling trailer brand in the United States. The company operates seven manufacturing facilities throughout the country, producing everything from complete trailer builds to individual replacement parts. Its booming spare parts division generates millions in annual sales through major retailers like Tractor Supply and Lowe's.

But as the division expanded, Carry-On realized its packaging wasn't keeping pace.

The issue was clear: many spare parts products – typically heavy, sharp-edged metal components – demanded packaging that could withstand the jolts and jostles common along the supply chain journey and subsequent shelf stocking. The existing solution, a plastic clamshell paired with a printed insert card, was cumbersome to assemble, inconsistent in branding, and misaligned with the company's sustainability goals.

"We had long struggled with brand alignment, consistency, and sustainability in our parts packaging," said Scott Sittler, Marketing Director at Carry-On Trailer. "Our legacy clamshell solution involved multiple components and didn't reflect the quality of what was inside."

That realization led Carry-On to explore a new kind of packaging partner – one that could elevate both form and function. They found that partner in **Complete Design & Packaging (CDP)**.

Local Connection, Nationwide Solution

Carry-On had worked with multiple packaging vendors over the years, but a local connection helped kick off this particular collaboration. One of the company's executives happened to live near CDP's Concord, NC facility. After an initial meeting, CDP's team quickly demonstrated the professionalism, responsiveness, and technical expertise that set them apart.

The first project, a complete redesign for Carry-On's trailer wheel hub kits, would be a high-stakes test. Each kit weighs roughly nine pounds and contains essential metal components for trailer performance. It was both a mission-critical product and a complex packaging challenge – a bellwether of sorts.

CDP delivered. The new corrugated design provided vastly improved protection for the heavy components, while also simplifying the packaging process into a single step by eliminating the need for a separate printed insert. Visually, the updated packaging created stronger brand consistency and a more polished retail presence. Functionally, it improved stackability, handling, and ease of transport throughout the supply chain. And perhaps most importantly, it introduced a fully recyclable, single-material format that aligned with Carry-On's broader environmental goals.

"From the very beginning, CDP was operating on a different level," said Sittler. "They listened, they responded quickly, and they clearly had the capabilities we needed."

From a Single SKU to a Full-Fledged Packaging Overhaul

What began as a single project has since grown into a robust partnership. CDP now supplies packaging for at least 10 different Carry-On parts each month, with several new designs currently in development.

"We've seen real improvements across the board - not just in how our packaging looks, but in how it performs," said Sittler. "It's more efficient for fulfillment, easier to store and transport, and it delivers a much more consistent customer experience on the shelf."

Among the many successful outcomes, both teams are especially proud of one compact five-panel box, developed for one of Carry-On's tiniest parts. Despite its small size, the design demonstrates the same level of thoughtfulness and brand cohesion that defines the broader packaging ecosystem – an attractive affirmation that every detail matters when it comes to quality and consistency.

As a leader in the U.S. trailer market, Carry-On knows the importance of durability, precision, and performance. Now, those same values are reflected in how its products are packaged.