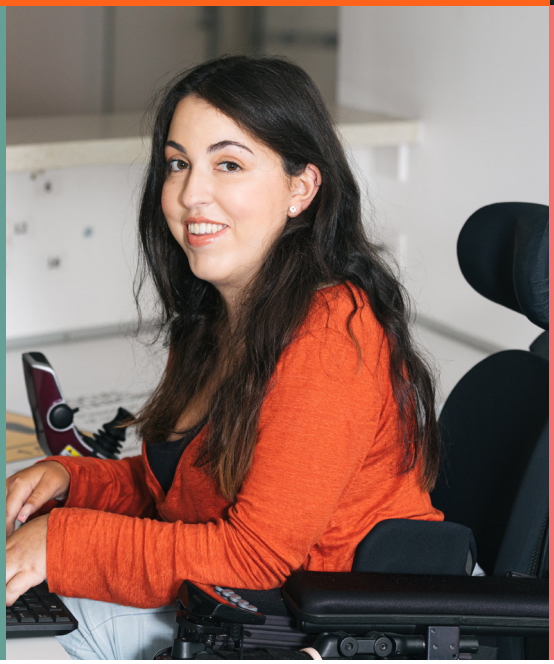
Best Practice Report

Part 1

Give everyone a fair go



Start systemic change



GSA
Get Skilled Access

Executive Summary

4.4 million Australians or 20% of the Australian population have disability , and 90% of those disabilities are non-visible . Worldwide, people with disability have a global spending power of more than $6 trillion. Get Skilled Access (GSA) was commissioned to undertake a Coles desktop review to understand the factors that can positively or negatively impact a user's experience with Coles Own Brand products and packaging. The objective of the desktop review was to gather insights into the current Coles Own Brand range and determine global best practice for designing accessible and inclusive packaging.

In the coming months, this desktop review will expand to include the outcomes from customer focus groups that will highlight common barriers that customers with disability experience when interacting with products and packaging. To date, this desktop review has highlighted existing accessible products on the market, some accessible materials for packaging and global best practice design ideologies that Coles can implement in their Own Brand product design process moving forward.

These valuable insights provide an opportunity for Coles to improve accessibility and universal inclusion for customers with disability and their diverse range of needs because everybody deserves to be able to access and use products with independence.

Introduction

Australia has an ageing population. The prevalence of disability increases with age as 1 in 2 people aged 65 year and over identify with having a disability . Research from Arthritis Australia shows that the ageing population, people with disability, people with arthritis and children are the cohorts who are most likely to struggle with products and packaging. Their research also suggests that when consumers experience hard-to-open packaging:

- 56% look for the same product with different packaging
- 50% have injured themselves trying to open packaging
- 89% of consumers are currently feeling frustrated or furious with packaging

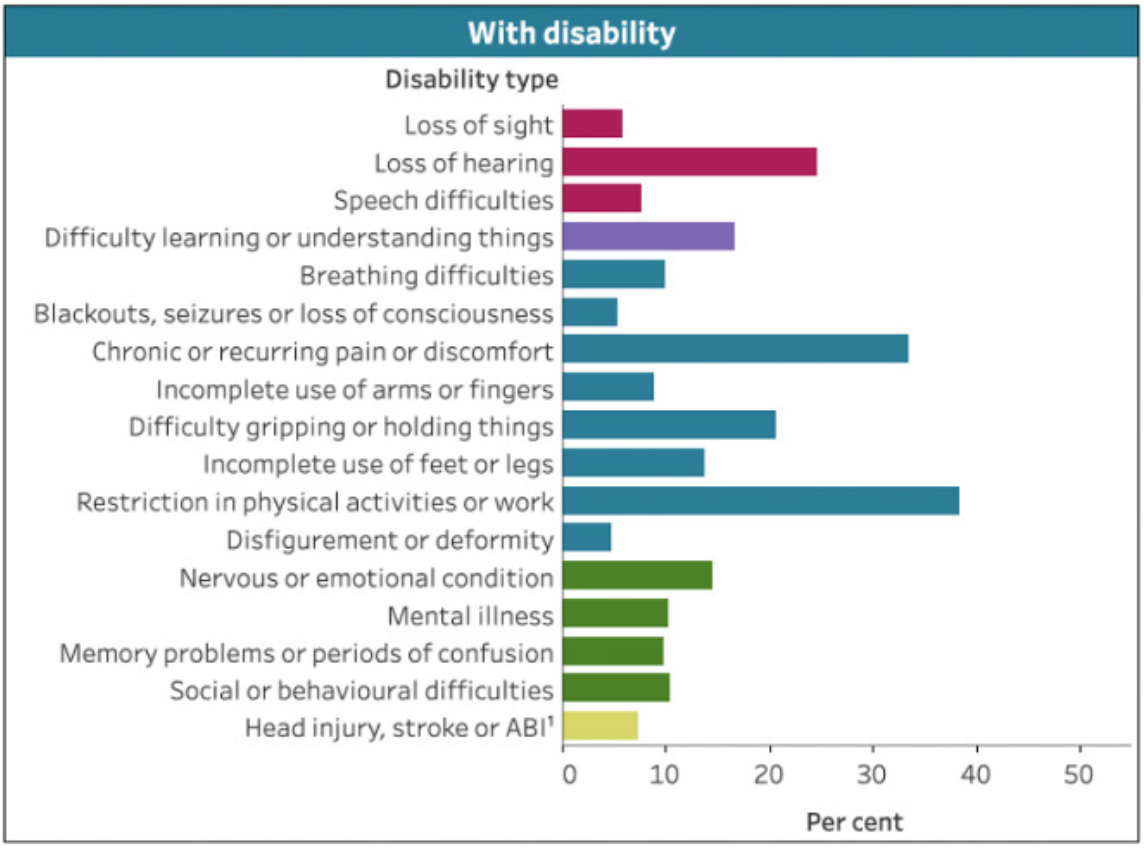
Challenges for Coles consumers with disability may include:

- Unable to open packaging
- Difficult to open packaging
- Difficult to close packaging
- Injuries from opening packaging
- Having to use household tools to assist with opening packaging
- Difficult to grip, hold and use packaging
- Hard to follow opening instructions
- Difficult to read labels
- Complex ingredients and information on labels
- Hard to read and understand expiry dates
- Hard to use products leading to a lack of independence

Good product design communicates with the user that the product brand empathises with and understands their consumers. Poor design costs consumers time and make them feel emotions such as frustration and sadness. Good product design for people with disability can mean greater independence and therefore a better quality of life, and for Coles Own Brand it can

equate to customer brand loyalty. Designing inclusive products and packaging is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do. When organisations design for disability, they design for everyone.

Disability affects many people, directly or indirectly. It may be a life-altering event or experience. It may have large or small effects on people's daily lives. Increasingly, disability is recognised as something that affects most people, to varying degrees and at different life stages. Disability is an umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions, all of which can interact with a person's health condition(s) and environmental and/or individual factors to hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.



[1]Head injury, stroke or acquired brain injury.
Source: ABS 2019b; see also Table PREV12.
http://www.aihw.gov.au

Areas of disability to consider:

Vision: It is estimated that there are over 575,000 people who are blind or have low vision in Australia , however any sort of visual difficulty, such as colour blindness and astigmatism must be considered while designing products and packaging. Key things to consider when designing for people who have a vision disability are:

- The size of text
- The colours used and their contrast levels
- Integrating technology where customers can scan products for important information read out by a screen reader
- How intuitive packaging is to open?
- How intuitive a product is to use?
- What a product or packaging feels like


LAVAZZA

Mobility: People with mobility disabilities may have limited use of their arms, legs, hands, and feet making it difficult for them to open packaging and use products. Mobility disabilities may include, however aren't limited to Cerebral Palsy, Arthritis, Muscular Dystrophy, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease and Paralysis. People with mobility disabilities may use mobility aids such as wheelchairs, walking frames, power chairs, straws, kitchen aids and specialised cutlery. Key things to consider when designing for people with mobility disabilities are:
• How easy packaging is to open
• What material the product and packaging are made of
• How easy a product is to reach in store?
• How easy a product is to hold and use?

Cognitive: Cognitive disabilities include but are not limited to Intellectual disability, Alzheimer's disease, Dementia, Dyslexia, Down Syndrome, Stroke, Brain Injury and Autism. Cognitive disabilities may impact a person's emotions, communication methods, their ability to problem solves, their memory, their attention and focus, and their processing functions. Key things to consider when designing for people with cognitive disabilities are:
• Using Plain English words for easy processing
• Use short and direct sentences
• Consider the materials used and how the product feels and sounds
• Clear and concise labelling

Hearing: 3.6 million Australians have some form of hearing loss and while designing products for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing may seem straight forward, there are some factors to consider. For example:
• Advertising when products make a noise
• Consider accessible advertising for products like Auslan interpreting for advertisements
• The accessibility of stores and product placement

Global Best Practice Design Theories

User-centered Design

User-centered design is a repetitive and necessary design process in which designers are focussed on the user's needs, and the user is included in every stage of the design process. The process includes research and design techniques to create the best possible outcome for the user. The research phase often incorporates techniques such as surveys and interviews to develop a deep understanding of the user's needs. Connecting the designer and the user helps to create empathy which in turn inspires ethical and sustainable designs.

Along with the user, multidisciplinary teams are unique to User-centered design. They are teams made up professionals from different relevant areas e.g., engineers, researchers, psychologists, marketers. This helps to capture and address the entire experience of the user.

The five steps of user-centered design include:

1. Research and understanding context
2. Identifying user requirements
3. Design of solution
4. Evaluate against user needs
5. Test

The user-centered design process is vital for early warning signs of usability and inaccessibility. While the process may seem lengthy and repetitive, the results mean increased sales and less

costs incurred by re-design.

Universal Design

Universal design (UD) is the design of products, services or environments that cater to the diverse needs of all people regardless of their age, size, cultural background, gender, or disability. The centre for excellence in Universal Design describes UD as the design and composition of an environment so that it may be accessed, understood, and used:

• To the greatest possible extent
• In the most independent and natural way possible
• In the widest possible range of situations
• Without the need for adaption, modification, assistive devices, or specialised solutions, by any persons of any age or size or having any physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual disability or disability and,
• Means, in relations to electronic systems, any electronic-based process of creating products, services or systems so that they may be used by any person .

The standard approach to Universal Design is a two-levelled one starting with including as many users as possible in the design process and then designing a single, functional product that attempts to cater to all the diverse needs of the users. A key ingredient for successful Universal Design is pushing boundaries without compromising the integrity and quality of the design, and if there are many design options for a product – always choose the most accessible option e.g., installing stairs into a building limits the amount of people who can access the building, yet installing a ramp is a more accessible option for people with mobility needs, elderly people, and people with prams.

There are seven principles that make up the concept of Universal Design, they were developed by a group of product designers, engineers, environmental design researchers and architects in 1997. The principles include:

1. Equitable use – the design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities
2. Flexibility in use – the design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities
3. Simple and intuitive to use – use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level
4. Perceptible information – the design communicates necessary information effectively for the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities
5. Tolerance for error – the design minimises hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions
6. Low physical effort – the design can be used efficiently and comfortably with minimum fatigue
7. Size and space for approach and use – appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility

What is good design?

In the 1970's, German industrial designer Dieter Rams created the good design ideology to help question the quality of his own work. Rams is better known for his work as Chief of Design with product company Braun and furniture company Vitsœ. He is described as "one of the world's greatest designers for everyday objects" and is responsible for the design of products like calculators, shelving, office chairs, electric shavers, and radios. Rams good design ideology included the following principles:

- Good design is innovative
- Good design makes a product useful
- Good design is aesthetic
- Good design makes a product understandable
- Good design is unobtrusive
- Good design is honest
- Good design is long-lasting
- Good design is thorough down to the last detail
- Good design is environmentally friendly
- Good design is as little design as possible

The Co-design process

There are several different ways of including users in the design process and some are better than others. The most inclusive way of designing and getting the most accessible product results is to include people with disability at every step of the design and to employ people with disability as part of your design teams. The different ways of including users includes:

1. Inform – the issue is already defined and there is no budget to pay users. The timeframe is short, and the organisation has the decision-making power.
2. Consult – the issue is already defined and there is enough budget to pay users for their feedback. The organisation will make the decisions after hearing from the users.
3. Involve – the issue requires the users input and there is enough budget to pay users for playing a role. The organisation will make the decisions after involving users in the process.
4. Collaborate – the issue is defined by the organisation and users together and there is enough budget to pay users for their contribution and their hours. The timeline is long, and the organisation and the users share the decision making.
5. Empower – the issue is defined by the users, and they are working independently and being paid for their time. The users will determine the timeline and will make the decisions.

Accessible graphic design

Besides designing and producing inclusive packaging and products, it is also important to consider the accessibility of the label and any other printed material that supports a product. Product labels communicate critical information with customers such as ingredients, allergies, used by dates and instructions on how to open and use a product. It is best practice to ensure all printed information is accessible to all consumers including people with disability.

Certain disabilities may make it difficult for a person to engage with printed information, they include but are not limited to:
- Blindness and low vision
- Intellectual disability
- Autism
- Low literacy skills

Some design elements Coles can implement to ensure their Own Brand /labelling is inclusive are:
- Ensuring all packaging text is 12pt or larger
- Ensuring any colours used on labels have a high colour contrast. Use the Webaim colour contrast checker to compare contrasting colours: https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/
- Increase any letter and line spacing to increase legibility and to give people more processing time
- Use Plain English for any text, this not only benefits people with disability, but also people for



who English is a second language.
• Write using a clear, hierarchical structure including bold headings for each section to break up information
• Use accessible typefaces. The most accessible typefaces are the most common typefaces. They are considered easy to read because they are easily recognised. They include Arial, Helvetica, Verdana and Calibri.
• Tactile symbols so people who are blind can differentiate between products that are different but packaged the same

Global Best Practice Examples

Herbal Essences shampoo and conditioner

On world sight day in 2019, Herbal Essences announced they would start to include tactile markers on their shampoo and conditioner bottles so people who are blind can tell the difference between the two. The tactile markers include raised stripes for shampoo and raised circles for conditioner. Apart from the tactile markers, Herbal Essences have teamed up with 'Be my eyes' app, offering live video calls with in-house experts to get assistance with shopping in store, with hair care or general questions.

Packing Innovation and Design Awards

Every year the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) holds the Packaging Innovation and Design Awards (PIDA). The six categories that are recognised include food, beverage, health, beauty, and wellness, domestic and household, labelling and decoration and outside the box. The accessible and inclusive packaging design award is one of the main four awards awarded each year.

The 2020 Accessible Packaging designer winner was Ecolead for their Bannister Downs Dairy WA chilled pasteurised range. The packaging claims to be "easy to open and easy to use by people with reduced hand function." Key parts of the design include obvious and intuitive opening points, easy to grip and manoeuvre with an air-filled handle and a lightweight material.

Starbucks

Starbucks has been hiring Deaf and hard of hearing since they first opened in Japan in 1996. Japan has now opened its first Signing Store that creates an "immersive experience into sign language and Deaf culture." The staff are supported to take sign language classes and customers have options on how they order in store including contactless speech to text, pointing to items on the menu or writing on a notepad. The store has installed digital signage that allows the customer to watch the progress of their order and when their order is ready, a sign language animation is shows on the same screen.

Starbucks Japan has a dedicated program which offers support to staff with disability including training tools, flexible work hours and coaching services to help develop their careers.

AbleFoods

AbleFoods is a disability-led food business that caters to people with disability. They deliver freshly made meals to people's homes that encourage people with disability to eat healthy. AbleFoods offers easy to open packaging for people with dexterity disabilities such as the Baked Beans pouches sold at Coles. They also offer texture modified meals for people with swallowing difficulties and participants can claim the cost of meals on their NDIS plan.

OXO kitchen utensil handle

The founder of OXO Sam Farber, saw an opportunity to design more inclusive kitchen utensils while watching his wife struggle to use a vegetable peeler due to arthritis. It was revolutionary for 1990 in design and material.

The OXO utensil handle was tested at different stages with consumers with different types of dexterity disabilities. The designers determined it needed to be a special softer material, something textured for grip and something waterproof. It was designed to be more comfortable than regular steel handles and has won many design awards.

Degree Deodorant

New York Design Studio, Sour collaborated with consumer goods company Unilever to create an inclusive roll-on deodorant. The deodorant's key features include a hook for flexibility in use, magnets to make the opening easy and to provide auditory confirmation when closed, an embossed logo, braille labelling, and a larger roll-on ball for easier application.

The design process entailed a review of current deodorants on the market, expert interviews with Occupational Therapists, mental health counsellors and inclusive designers, and workshops with people with disability. The design was then distributed to a group of 300 people with disability to gain further feedback on the first prototype. They asked the question "How might we recognise what is unknown to or misunderstood by us and build empathy towards another?".

EeasyLid

EeasyLid by Consumer Convenience Technologies (CCT) is an aluminium jar lid designed to address the challenge of difficult to open jars. CCT's first partnership was with Boyer's Food Markets in Pennsylvania. The company recorded a 300% increase on their pasta sauce sales after the introduction of the EeasyLid.

The lid works by simply pressing a button on the lid to release the vacuum and open, and pressing it again to close. CCT reports that the EeasyLid design reduces the amount of torque needed to twist a jar lid by more than 40%.

Kellogg's UK

As a celebration of World Sight Day 2020, Kellogg's UK launched their new cereal boxes created in partnership with The Royal National Institute of Blind People. The boxes feature a unique on pack code that allows users who are blind or have low vision to scan the code and have their screen reader read out any labelling or allergen information. The technology is called NaviLens and allows users to scan an on-pack code from up to 3 meters away. NaviLens is different to a QR code as the user doesn't need to know precisely where the code is placed. The NaviLens technology is used throughout New You Metro, the Kellogg's project was the first time it was featured on food packaging.

Olay

Olay is a world-wide skin care brand and in 2021 they released their non-patented 'Easy Open Lid' created to improve the accessibility of face creams. The lid is designed to assist users with dexterity challenges, limb differences, joint pain, and low vision.

Throughout the design process Olay consulted physiotherapists, occupational therapists and UX experts, along with consumers with disability. The lid has two wings on either side, is higher than their other lids, has texture for grip and braille on top that reads "face cream". In addition, the products labelling was updated to include high contrast text and colours.

How to ensure an inclusive release of new products:
It's all well and good to design inclusive products and packaging, but how they are marketed to consumers with disability speaks volumes. The important final step to producing inclusive products and packaging is to ensure that the accompanying message and marketing is accessible.



Accessible and inclusive marketing means ensuring all people can receive, understand, and experience content without barriers. A bad example of marketing an accessible product is the Olay face cream. While Olay's accessible lid design is revolutionary, there are some problems with the design as outlined by the disability community. Firstly, not all people who are blind read braille. In fact, a statistic from the USA states that fewer than 10% of the 1.3 million people who are blind read braille . Secondly, the media release for the accessible lid wasn't accessible - the videos didn't contain captions and the online still add didn't contain alternative text.

Things to consider when creating inclusive marketing includes:

- Inclusive language
- Captioning on videos
- Audio descriptions on videos
- Delivering what you have promised
- Alt-text for still images on websites, EDMs etc
- Optimisation for mobile devices

In conclusion, Global best practice design ideologies and existing inclusive products on the market can inspire and assist Coles in making changes to their Own Brand products to ensure they are inclusive of their customers with disability. As 20% of Australians identify with having a disability, there is almost a quarter of the population that may be facing challenges or experiencing a lack of independence pertaining to groceries. The global best practise report has identified that the release of a product needs to be as accessible and inclusive as the product itself in order to truly market to people with disability.

Coles has taken the most important first step in implementing each of the design ideologies by including people with disability at the product review stage through GSA. The approaching focus groups will provide Coles with a more insight into how people with varying disabilities interact and engage with the selected Own Brand products, and what design changes will need to be made to ensure Coles Own Brand continues to be a trust brand.

Things to consider when designing inclusive products and packaging:

- Is the product easy to grip and hold? E.g., contoured, textured surface
- Does the product have enough surface area to apply force for opening?
- Does the opening method require fine motor skills? E.g., A small tab for seals
- Does the opening method require using tools? E.g., scissors
- Does the product have sharp edges?
- Does the product require more than one opening method?
- Is the way to open the packaging obvious? Are there clear instructions?
- How readable is the label? Is the text large enough?
- How clear is the expiration date format?



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Give everyone a fair go

Focus Groups

Part 2



Start systemic change





GSA
Get Skilled Access

Coles Focus Group Key Findings and Product Assessment

Methodology:

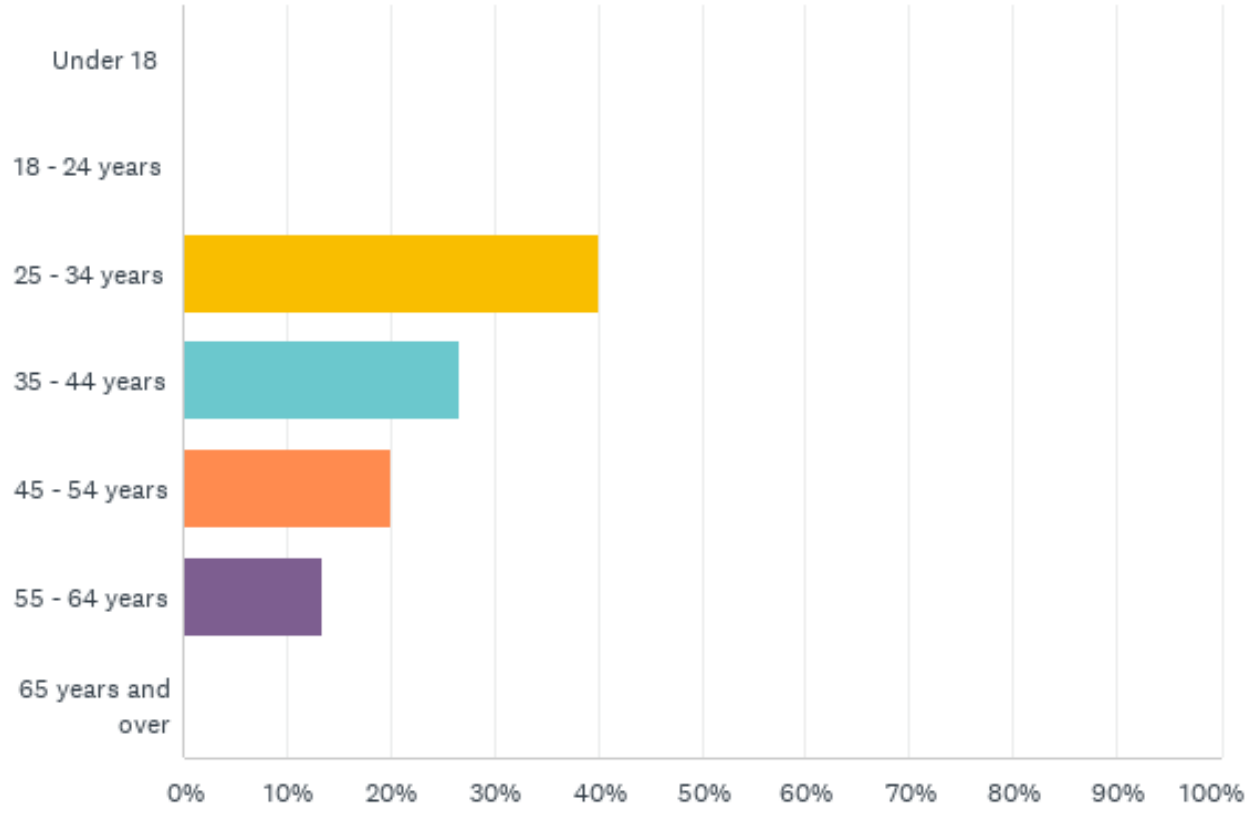
Get Skilled Access (GSA) facilitated 5 90-minute focus groups over September and October 2022 totaling 25 participants with varying disabilities. The purpose of the focus groups was to assess a chosen range of Coles Own Brand products for their accessibility.

The primary research method of overt observation was used for the focus groups. GSA facilitators observed participants naturally interacting with the chosen Own Brand products to collect qualitative data. This needs assessment effectively reflected how people with disability use the chosen products in their daily lives. Everyday household objects were provided such as bowls and spoons so participants could imitate exactly how they would use the product at home.

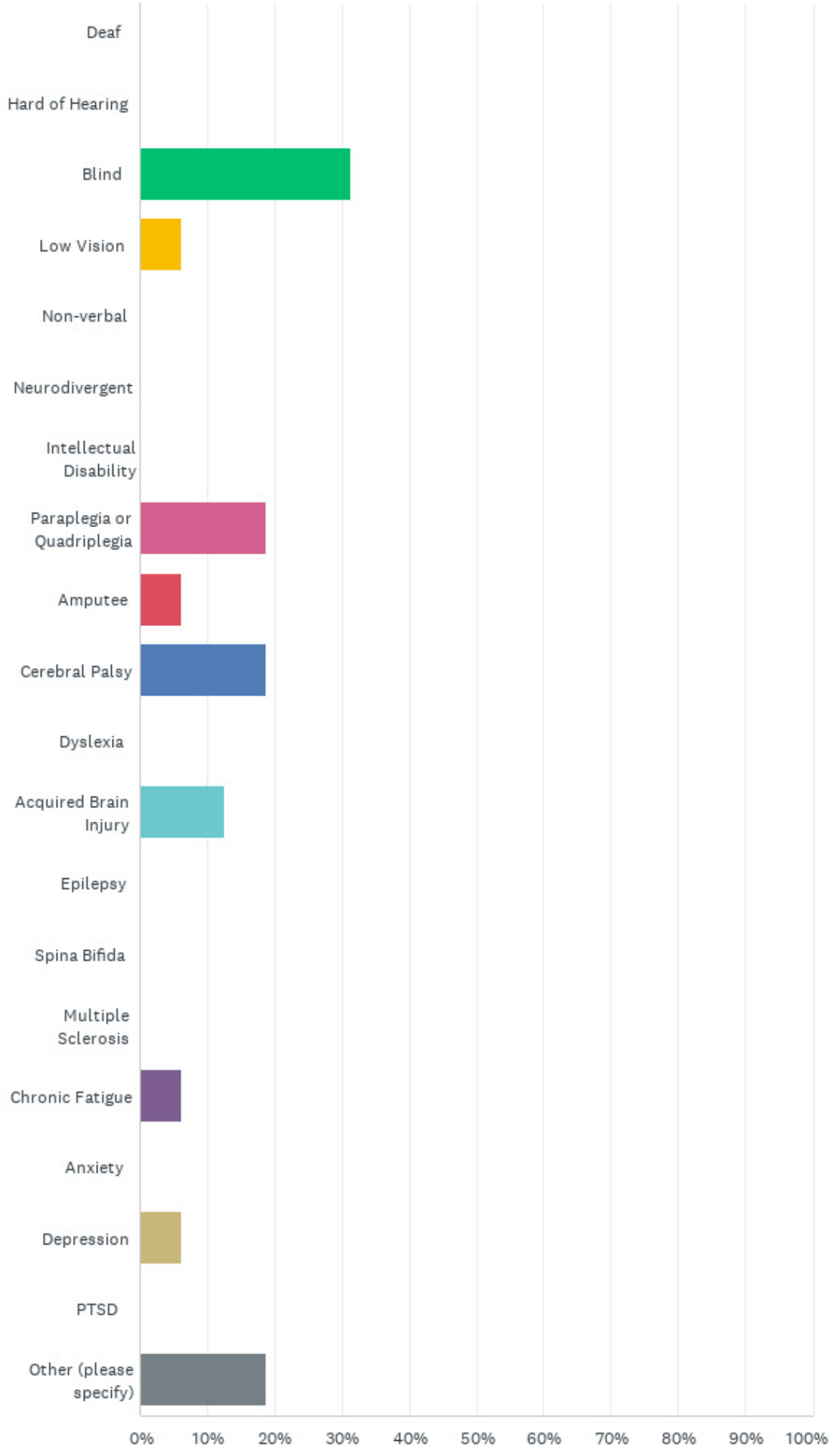
To assist the assessment, accessibility market reference products were provided when facilitators were prompted by participant discussion. This was helpful in comparing Coles Own Brand products to benchmark products and whether it would be beneficial for Coles to implement existing product features to increase accessibility.

Participant Overview:

Q1 What is your age group?

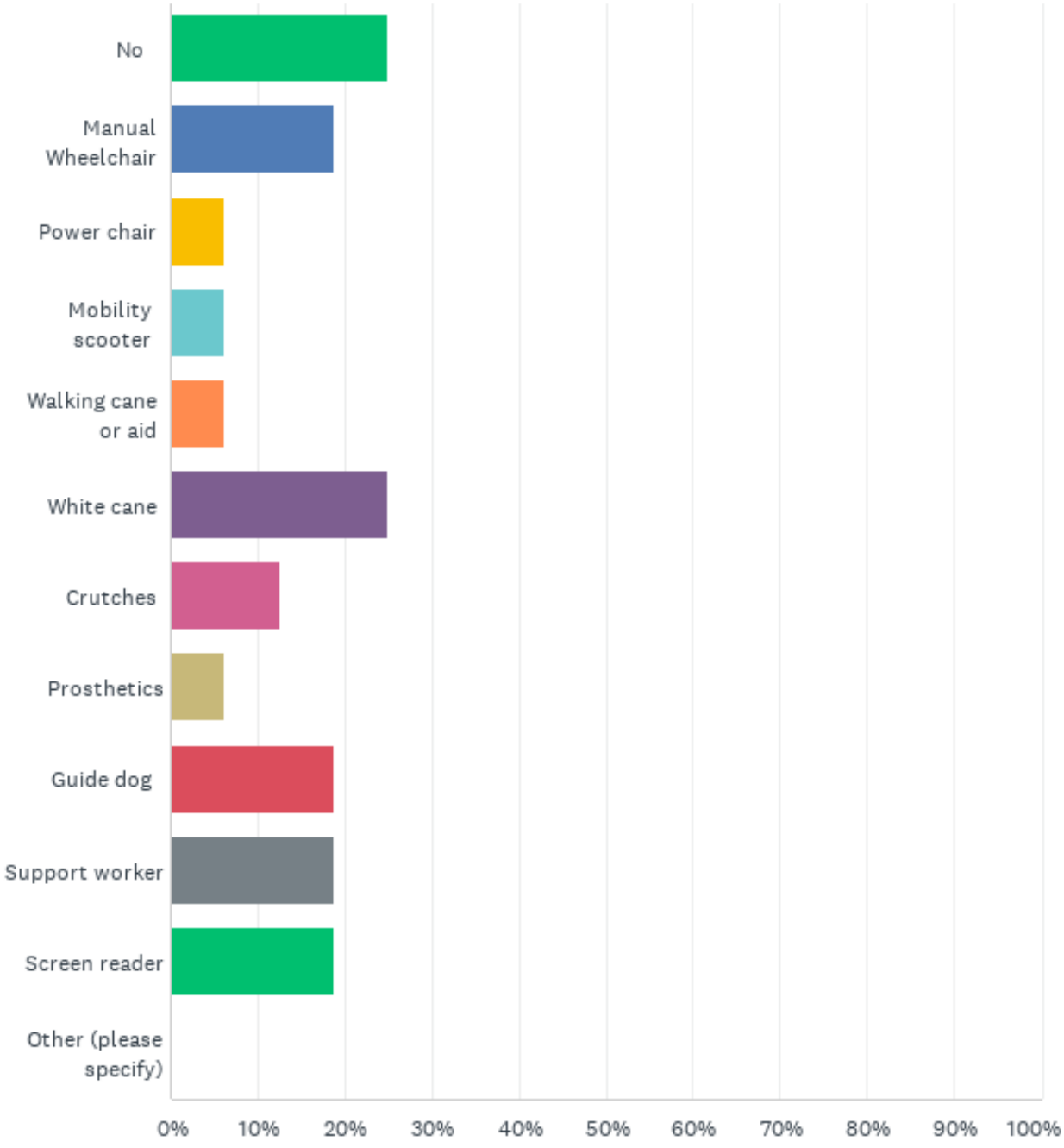


Q2 What disability do you have?

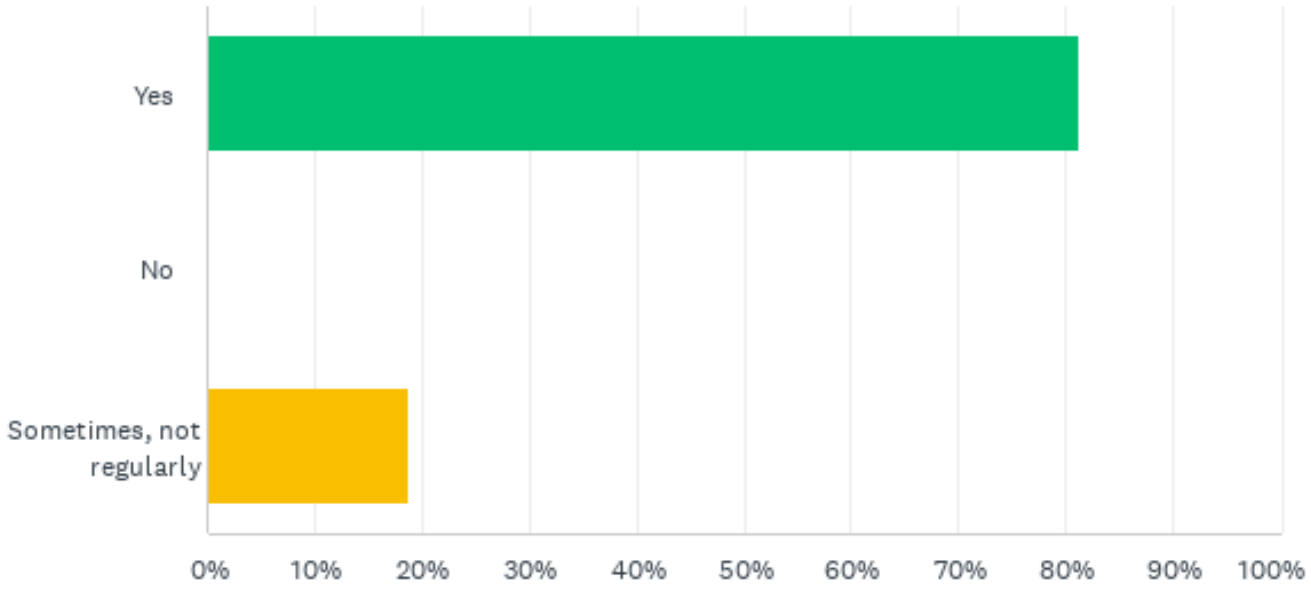


Other included: Friedreich Ataxia, Brachial Plexus injury and Spinal muscular atrophy type 2.

Q3 Do you use an assistive technology or aid?



Q4 Do you reguarly shop at Coles?





The chosen Own Brand products included:

- KOI for men razor kit (4333242)
- Coles cling-wrap super stretch 30m (4486040)
- Coles wrap foil 30m (4486287)
- Zena smooth shampoo 300 mL (3958416) and Zena Smooth Conditioner 300 mL (3958427)
- Coles air freshener vanilla orchid & ylang ylang 150 gram (2682455)
- KOI Hydrating Finger Lime Agave Nectar Lip Balm 15 gram (3729260)
- Coles premium honey mustard salad dressing 250ml (3585396)
- Coles Australian Peanuts Unsalted 375 gram (2518746)
- Coles muesli bars honey 8 pack 248 gram(5139405)
- Coles pacific tuna brown rice & quinoa with peri peri tuna 190 gram (3544548)
- Coles refried beans 454 gram (2938118)

Key topics of assessment included:

- How easy is a product to identify?
- How easy is product packaging to open?
- How easy is a product to pick up?
- How easy is a product to use?
- How easy is a product to store?
- How easy is product information to read?

General information and considerations:

Throughout the focus groups, we received some general feedback that applies to all Coles Own Brand products that we thought would be valuable to include in the report:

Coles can ensure all product information on the Coles website is up to date. For people who can't pick products up in the store or who might use a product scanner to identify products, it is important that they can access all relevant product information online including cooking instructions, nutritional information, and ingredients.

Instructional images as well as text is important for people who don't speak English or who have low literacy skills. A good example of this is the cling wrap market reference product image.

Participants who are Blind used assistive technologies to scan product barcodes such as the smart phone application Seeing AI and the portable barcode scanner I.D Mate Quest. After some research it seems that products need to be registered with an Australian or a Global EAN database to be scanned e.g. GS1 Australia or The International Barcodes Database. One participant found that the Coles app has a barcode scanner and reported it to be "a bit fiddly to get it to scan a barcode."

Implementing a QR code onto product packaging could be useful for customers who have low vision to scan to find out more information using a screen where they can zoom in, but unless a QR is tactile or it has been marketed in a way that Blind people know it's there, it might not be useful.

It is important when updating product packaging to work with the Autistic community. Some people who are Autistic will only eat products that they know are packaged a certain way and are a certain brand, drastically changing packaging can mean a person who is Autistic might avoid food.

Advertising when products have a high or low fragrance can be helpful for people who have sensory sensitives e.g., shampoo, conditioner, laundry detergent, air freshener.


MUESLI
MUESLI BAR
Win together
Smarter selling
Inspire customers

Short term considerations

- Update low contrasting colours to be high contrasting
- Reconsider repetitive information on product packaging
- Ensure all Own Brand online product information is up to date and available
- Reduce the use of decorate text on labels
- Increase font sizing

Mid term considerations

- Ensure all Coles Own Brand products are registered on an EAN database compatible with bar code scanning tools
- Include visual and text opening instructions on all packaging
- Reduce the amount of glue used to seal cardboard packaging e.g., Muesli Bars and Glad Wrap
- Advertise when products have a high or low fragrance

Long term considerations

- Implement tactile markers that differentiate products that are identical e.g. Shampoo and Conditioner
- Implement more accessible marketing campaigns for accessible product features
- Implement a large, high contrast ‘tear here’ tab for products the require tearing for opening
- Implement texture or contours onto glass items and smooth items e.g. Salad dressing and razor handles

Key Findings:





Coles cling-wrap super stretch 30m (4486040) Coles wrap foil 30m (4486287)

The overall feedback is that cling wrap is hard to use for everyone. Participants who have full use of their arms and hands struggled to open the cling wrap and wrap foil boxes, for some people who have limited use of their arms and hands – it was impossible to open. Most participants avoided using these products at home because of their inaccessibility or would have to ask for help.

“My mum usually does this for me. It’s very annoying.” - Participant with Cerebral Palsy









For participants who are blind, it was difficult to differentiate between the two products. In some instances, those participants used assistive technology to identify the products or would have to open each box to determine which is which. The sharp teeth exposed on the outside of the glad wrap box is a potential safety hazard for people who are blind who need to feel their way around the box to establish how to open it. The wrap foil box has the teeth on the inside of the box so that they are only exposed after opening, this is a much safer packaging method.

Participants with low vision noted that the yellow box meant the white text stating “Cling wrap, super stretch and cling” has low colour contrasting and is hard to see. Same goes for the “freezer safe” and “microwave safe” icons shown in the image below.









“When you tear off this bottom bit, it’s really close to the sharp bit, and I have cut my thumb trying to rip it.”

The packaging was determined to be not instinctual or easy to open even for people who can see and who have full use of their hands. A lot of participants opened the boxes at either end instead of the side. Some clear written instructions and images on how to open the box and obvious tabs to pull with enough surface area to grab onto would help with this barrier.





It was suggested that the tape tab that starts the roll is too small to grip for people who have limited use of their hands, and that it is hard to find for people who are blind or have low vision. A tab that extends the length of the roll and has more surface area to hold onto would increase the usability of both the cling wrap and the wrap foil. Some participants mentioned brands of cling

wrap that ‘scrunch’ the starting edge of the cling wrap making it easier for customers to find and negating the needs for the tape.

“It’s really tricky for me, when you pull the middle tag that comes up, but the rest stays and I have to spend so much time trying to find where the rest is.” – Participant with low vision

One participant who is a wheelchair user, has containers at home with an in-built cutter. They transfer the cling wrap & aluminum foil to these containers, allowing her to more easily use the products. Some accessibility market reference product features did increase the accessibility of the glad wrap and foil including a sliding cutter in the instance that the cutter was already attached to the box. Using the Own Brand cling wrap and foil wrap system requires the use of two hands.

“Without a hand that works well, I can’t hold it down solidly and it turns into a really bad mess.” – Participant with an Acquired Brain Injury

The sliding cutter system worked much better for people who couldn’t hold the box and tear the wrap at the same time. It is worth noting that when the cutter was not attached to the box it was hard to find and attach in the right place for people who are Blind and people with limited use of their hands.

The push tabs on each side of the box to secure the roll is not clearly understood – most participants weren’t aware of this feature on the packaging.







Zena smooth shampoo 300 mL (3958416) and Zena Smooth Conditioner 300 mL (3958427)

For some people with disability, bathroom activities can be precarious. Having an accessible and user-friendly product that is used in a wet area can increase safety and independence..

Participants were generally surprised to learn that the shampoo and conditioner is a Coles Own Brand product. Comments included that the design was aesthetically pleasing, contemporary and the bottles are a good size to hold.

Participants with low vision reported not enough colour contrasting on the Zena shampoo and conditioner labels to be able to clearly read the text. The poor colour contrasting applies to both the green and yellow bottles. High colour contrast is when the foreground and background colour are at a contrast ratio of 4.5:1 or higher. Using high colour contrasting can also improve the accuracy of assistive technologies such as Seeing AI., and can improve the readability for people who are colour blind.

“The font on beauty products is always so small and difficult to read, especially the ingredients” – Participant with low vision

“The directions are always way too close to the warnings too; you can’t even tell that there are directions on there. Is it a warning, a direction, or an ingredient?” – Participant with Autism







It can be difficult for people who are blind or have low vision to distinguish between differing products that are packaged the same such as the Zena shampoo and conditioner. As part of the focus groups, we tested some market reference products that use raised or embossed symbols to assist with determining the difference between the products. Only one participant who is blind found the tactile placement immediately but couldn’t understand what the symbols meant. If Coles were to implement a similar design feature, it would be best to consult with people who are blind in designing the tactile markers and marketing it in a way so that people know what to feel for. Participants also suggested opposing packaging designs for similar products to solve this

barrier e.g., shampoo dispenses upright, and conditioner dispenses upside down.





“What I have done in the past, if I have a couple of bottles that are similar, I have put a lacker band on one of them and that helps me differentiate the two.” – Participant who is Blind

Overall feedback was that it’s not obvious how to open the bottles. Some participants tried to twist the tops off, a simple ‘press here’ instruction could help with this barrier.

“Maybe they could put “push here” then we will know where to press it. Because currently we don’t know where to press so it’s a little bit tricky.” – Participant with Cerebral Palsy





Some participants with limited use of their hands reported that the Zena bottles were generally easy to squeeze and to control how much product comes out. Participants who use mobility aids while showering reported that pump bottles are their preferred packaging for shampoo and conditioner as they may need to use one hand to hold onto a rail or a shower chair whilst dispensing shampoo or conditioner into the other hand. A pump bottle also dispenses a certain amount as opposed to leaving that up to the user.

“The pump is good for me as well because my balance isn’t very good so when I’m reaching out, I can just do it in the one hand, instead of having to reach out, pull it over on top of my body and use both hands and have to worry about my balance.” – Participant who uses a wheelchair

“I am sitting on a shower chair and If I have to lean over and they (shampoo and conditioner) are down somewhere, it can be tricky because some are heavy. I find pumps easier from a balance perspective.” – Participant who uses a wheelchair

Some people who are neurodivergent can have sensory sensitivities including sensitivity to smell. Advertising how intense the product fragrance is would help people when choosing products off the shelf.

“I have a really sensitive sense of smell. There are a lot of shampoos that I avoid because they’re too overpowering or they smell too much like chemicals. The scent of this one is okay and not overpowering.” – Participant with Autism





Coles muesli bars honey 8 pack 248 gram (5139405)

There are two parts to the Coles muesli bars – the box all 8 muesli bars are enclosed in, and the plastic packaging a single muesli bar is enclosed in.

In all 5 focus groups, participants with varying disabilities ripped open the box instead of using the lift tab. This tells us that the lift tab mechanism may not be intuitive to use, effective in its purpose or easy to identify.





For some people who are blind, the lift to open tab wasn't easily found. A market reference product featured in the photo below was found to be easier to open for both people who are blind and people with disabilities such as Cerebral Palsy and Muscular Dystrophy because of less glue under the tab. The same participants said it was easier to remove a bar from the box because of the wider opening, and that the foil wrap on the market reference bars was much easier to tear than the plastic on the Coles Own Brand bars. One participant who couldn't open the Coles Own Brand muesli bar packaging at all, could easily open the market reference product packaging shown below. Participants thought this may have been because the market reference product used less glue. The same participant mentioned using a knife or scissors at home to perforated packaging they couldn't open.

"If I wasn't doing this focus group I probably would have just given up, or I would have got a knife or scissors or something so I could break into it." – Participant with Muscular Dystrophy

It is worth noting that participants who have limited use of one hand often use the crook of their elbow to hold the box and use their other hand to open the box. These participants and a participant missing 3 fingers said the Coles Own Brand muesli bar box is a great size.





Participants with limited use of one hand suggest that a perforated press inwards section on the box would be easier to use, as pushing requires less strength than pulling. It was also mentioned that a pull tab seen on products such as chewing gum could make it easier to open the individual muesli bars.

“The gift boxes of Maltesers where you push in the perforated bit, that’s easy to access because I can push down quite easily and tear it open.” – Participant with Spinal Muscular Atrophy type 2

Participants with low vision reported that most of the branding colours on the box have a high enough contrast to determine text, however some information such as “honey” was hard to read because of light colour text on a light-coloured background. Participants who use assistive technology such as Apps for identifying products also stressed the importance of high colour contrasting to assist the Apps in reading text.

“I like visually the contrast, for me personally, I really rely on contrast and so having the light colour with the dark background I can actually read Muesli Bars. The “Honey” is very hard for me to make out. The white on yellow has very little contrast.” – Participant with low vision

“I am assuming that’s a picture of a Muesli Bar, it’s very blended in for me.” – Participant with low vision





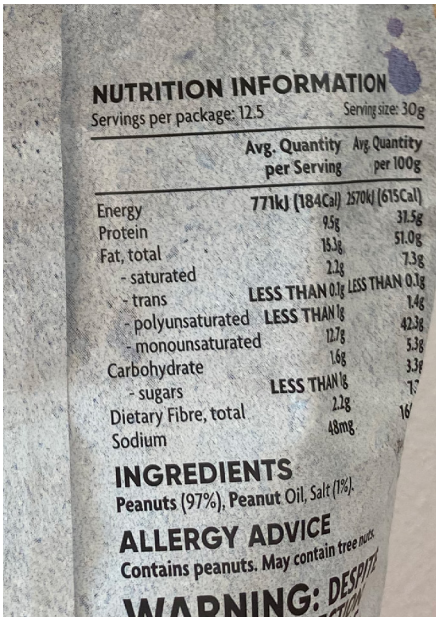
Coles Australian Peanuts Unsalted 375 gram (2518746)

For a person who is a guide dog user, this kind of packaging where there is no allocated point of opening can be risky. It might mean that the user tears a hole in the packet bigger than required and the contents ends up on the floor. For a person who is blind, cleaning up food from the floor can prove difficult, as can keeping a guide dog away from spilled food as was demonstrated in focus group #1. Participants who are guide dog users reported using scissors or knives at home for packaging like the peanuts to avoid spilling contents onto the floor.

Participants with low vision commented that the front of the packet had good text size and colour contrasting for words like “Unsalted Peanuts” making them clear and easy to read, but the text on the back of the packet is too small.







“Nutritional content, I have just accepted that I can’t read anymore. That’s my circumstance. I definitely can’t see the expiry date. Some products if it’s high contrast I can see the expiry date with my magnifier but what I have started doing is taking a photo with my phone and zoom in but a lot of that detail, I just accept that I can’t see it.” – Participant with low vision

“Colours that are similar like Yellow and white, and blue and purple, it’s quite hard for me to tell the difference.” – Participant with low vision

The peanuts packet requires two hands and fine motor skills to tear open, this can be difficult for people who have limited use of their hands associated with disabilities like Cerebral Palsy and

Muscular Dystrophy. Two of our participants with Cerebral Palsy couldn't open the peanut packet. One participant who couldn't open the peanut packaging at all did have success opening and closing the plastic container option. .

"To open the bag of peanuts I had to use my teeth which is fun, but probably not ideal. That's easier all round (the market reference)" – Participant with Cerebral Palsy







A specified large opening tab in one corner and some obvious 'tear here' instructions could help customers who can't open the packet and those who attempt to open the peanuts like a packet of chips.

Participants who are wheelchair users commented that they would be more likely to purchase the Coles Organic Grocery Nut Range featured in the photo above because the packet can stand on its own making it easier to rest on their lap while they move in their wheelchair.

"If I am going to the kitchen to get the peanuts, I'm not going to eat the peanuts in the kitchen, I am going to move them. And if I move them and hit a bump or something then I will spill them." – Participant who uses a wheelchair

Storing an open bag of peanuts was also considered in the focus groups. Participants reported they were unlikely to finish a whole bag in one sitting and that storing methods were important when deciding between two brands of peanuts. The resealable packet option in the Coles Organic Grocery Nut Range was the preference of most participants especially those who struggle to use rubber bands and Tupperware containers independently.



Coles pacific tuna brown rice & quinoa with peri peri tuna 190 gram (3544548)

Out of all the Coles Own Brand products assessed in the focus groups, the Coles Pacific Tuna packaging was found to have the best colour contrasting. Participants with low vision and those using assistive technology could easily recognise the Coles logo and the white text on the blue background that states “Pacific Tuna”.



“I can’t read Coles but I recognise the Coles label because it’s such a strong brand in Australia.” – Participant with low vision

The white text on orange background saying “brown rice & quinoa with peri peri tuna” was harder to read but not completely inaccessible. Participants noted that while the colour contrasting of the product information on the back of the packaging was accessible, the font size and amount written made it impossible to read information like the ingredients and nutritional information. The pacific tuna branding is repeated 3 times on the packaging and participants noted that there is an opportunity to reduce the branding and increase the information text size.



“With me also being Dyslexic, I wouldn’t even bother trying to read that (information on the back), does the best before box need to be that big? Could the heating instructions go on the inside of the box?” – Participant with Autism

“I wonder about the value of having a picture on the front of what is essentially in it because it is either not going to look like the photo but also it makes it really crowded, couldn’t you just have bigger and better text and contrast? It doesn’t make a lot of sense to me especially with this Coles one because the packaging is clear, you can already see it.” – Participant with Friedreich Ataxia

Majority of participants reported that the plastic tab that allows a person to grip and peel off the plastic seal is a great size and has plenty of purchase area to grab onto, however, the plastic seal was difficult to remove.



“I’d get a fork or a knife, or scissors and I would cut it open” – Participant with Cerebral Palsy

“I wouldn’t go for this in the supermarket, because of my Cerebral Palsy and my hands I won’t be able to open this and I would just keep walking and choose something else.” – Participant with Cerebral Palsy

Some participants who required a lot of force to peel the plastic ended up with the contents on their hands and on the table. Some participants couldn’t peel back the plastic at all and mentioned that they would normally use a scissors or a knife to stab through the plastic when facing this barrier at home.

A market reference product with divots for gripping was provided as a comparison. Some participants who were given the market reference product agreed that it was easier to hold and transport, and that the plastic seal was easier to peel because the plastic is thinner but could benefit from a bigger pull tab. It was also mentioned that the market reference product container wasn’t as full so when force is required to remove the plastic, the contents don’t spill out.

Participants who are Blind commented that it can be difficult to determine microwave instructions and that tactile markers indicating the number of minutes required would be useful. However, this would need to be developed with people who are blind and marketed in an accessible way.

Smarter selling
Win together
Smarter selling
Inspire customers



Coles premium honey mustard salad dressing 250ml (3585396)

While most participants agreed that using glass as a material makes a product seem premium, plastic is more convenient for people with a range of disabilities including:

- People in wheelchairs who use a backpack to do their groceries and worry about things falling out and breaking
- For people in wheelchairs who might find it difficult to sweep up broken glass and use their wheelchair at the same time
- For people who are guide dog users who need to keep the dog out of the space where the glass is broken
- For people who have limited use of their hands and might drop the glass bottle and risk glass in their food e.g., people with Cerebral Palsy or low vision
- People with limb fatigue or who need a lighter material because of limited strength
- For people who are Blind and can't see the amount of salad dressing that is coming out of a bottle, and can be more easily controlled with a plastic squeeze bottle

It is worth noting that a glass bottle with texture or contours for gripping could alleviate peoples worries about dropping the bottle.

"I have a love hate relationship with the glass bottle, I think it looks nice and classy but for someone cooking who has no peripheral vision, I feel safer having a plastic bottle around cooking and it's such a tall glass bottle too that I know for sure that it would get smashed." – Participant with low vision

When the participant was offered a market reference product that is shorter and thicker, they said there is less chance of it falling over and that it's more stable.





Participants who are Blind and have low vision struggled to see where to tear the plastic seal over the lid, or at all. Some participants twisted off the plastic seal and the lid at the same time. One participant who used this method ended up with salad dressing in their hair. Making the plastic seal a different colour to the lid and providing a pre-lifted coloured tab could mitigate this barrier.

“I haven’t been able to open these wrappers since losing my vision. At home I get scissors to cut a bit to pull because I just can’t see or do it myself.” – Participant with low vision

Assistive technology such as Seeing AI will struggle to identify words on a curved surface and text that is too decorative. The label text “Honey Mustard” could not be read by different assistive technologies used throughout the focus groups. Participants with low vision also noted that the label had limited colour contrasting and that a dark label with white writing would make it easier to read.





“I cannot read the writing on the front. I know there is a white label and yellow writing but if that label was black with white text, I would be able to read it. I don’t know what this product is.” – Participant with low vision

A participant who is Autistic mentioned that the information on the label was busy and would be hard for them to process when their cognitive load is limited. A larger label with bigger text and limited use of all-caps could help.

“On the back, there is so much information. I can’t read any of the nutritional information, at all.” – Participant with Autism

“The spacing between the letters is really squished, it makes it blurry. It’s even tricky to read the bold bit at the top because it’s not well spaced” – Participant with low vision

For some participants, having to shake a bottle so the contents comes out can be difficult. A bottle that is easy to squeeze or a pump bottle could help with this barrier. Coles Caesar Dressing 300 mL was supplied to test the plastic and its ability to be squeezed, while participants reported the plastic was better, they also noted that there can be accessibility issues with the seal featured in the image below.



“Normally with sauce I would prefer a squeezy bottle, so you’ve got a bit more control over when it comes out.” – Participant who is Blind





KOI Hydrating Finger Lime Agave Nectar Lip Balm 15 gram (3729260)

Participants commented that the Koi lip balm branding is appealing and contemporary, and that the simple, black on white text on the box is accessible for people with low vision and for assistive technologies. However, the text on the tube itself is too small and crowded.



Participants who are wheelchair users appreciate that the lip balm can be applied from the tube as they often have dirty hands from pushing their wheelchairs and don't want to use their fingers to apply lip balm.

"I get dirty fingers all the time from using my chair and the last thing I want to do is put them in a pot of lip balm and put it on my lips." – Participant who uses a wheelchair

Participants who are Blind could tell that the product was a beauty product simply by the shape of packaging but couldn't tell what it was specifically.





The lip balm tube was hard for everyone to squeeze, and especially those who have limited use of their hands. For people who have trouble squeezing a tube, it was suggested that a twist up option like in the market reference product photo below could be better. The twist option worked best for several participants with limited use of their hands.

“I am very strong in my hands and I find this tricky to squeeze out.” - Participant who is a wheelchair user.

“The one issue I didn’t like was that it is hard to squeeze out of the bottle. It takes a good squeeze and not everyone will be able to do that.” - Participant with Autism.





“I can get the box open, but the tube is where I will struggle. Whereas a roll on would be better. Usually when I would buy a lip balm it would be a chap stick kind of one, they are easier to pull open.” – Participant with Muscular Dystrophy

The tube is difficult to remove from the box, especially if it is opened from the end where the tube cap is. Some instructions on which end to open the box from could help with this. One participant with Muscular Dystrophy had to open both sides of the box so they could push the tube out, as pulling the tube from the packaging was too difficult. Participants suggest that a perforated push opening could be more accessible.





One participant suggested that a textured cap might make the lid easier to twist. It is worth noting that participants mentioned they are more likely to buy a lip balm that has an SPF component.


BAR
Coles Honey Muesli Bars
are high in whole grain, made with
Australian oats and contain less than
6g sugar per bar. Grab a bar for a tasty
energy boost on the go.
Win together



KOI for men razor kit (4333242)

The Koi men's razor kit box was confusing to open for the majority of participants. The bottom of the box has cut out sections that suggest you can hold the outer box from either side and pull out the inner box but there is a tab that needs to be removed first, however it isn't obvious. Some participants tried to open the box from the top end but to no success. Some clearly printed directions on how to open the box could mitigate this issue. The tab that needs to be pulled out requires pressure to push down and slide out, this proved difficult for people who have limited use of their arms and hands.

"There are a lot of elements to opening this box" – Participant with low vision





The information printed on the box is clear and has good colour contrasting. Participants commented that the "6 blade razor system" and box contents printed on the front of the box is written top to bottom instead of left to right. Information in English is read left to right – people automatically search for information on packaging from left to right, text printed in any other form can prolong people absorbing that information and even longer for people who have low vision, neurodiversity, or cognitive disabilities.





Participants with low vision mentioned that the clear covers are hard to see when they are on the razor and especially when they have been taken off and accidentally dropped in the bathroom.

“The plastic protector slides off really easy, but these are always tricky to find, my only thought is if I lose this (the plastic protector) and put it back in the stand it’s probably not the safest option.” – Participant with low vision





Many participants commented that the razor handle is a good weight and feels good in hand, some participants expressed concern about the handle having no grip and becoming slippery in the shower. When shown the One of A Kind Razor, participants did feel that a handle with more grip would be safer.

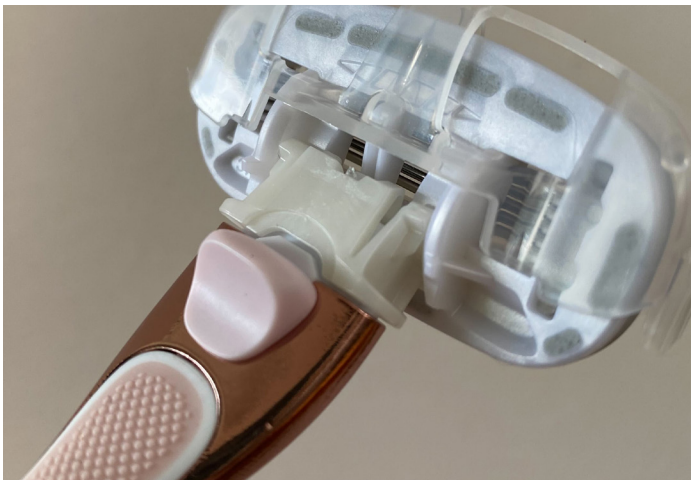
“It’s just going to slide out of your hands if you’ve got soapy hands. It needs some sort of grip on it.” – Participant who is blind





Participants who are Blind had to feel around the razor to try and figure out how to change the razor head as the method isn’t obvious. While the magnet method is neat, people were

instinctually looking for a button to press like the One of A Kind Razor in the photo below and also said the button method can be difficult to use.



“I actually use the ones that have got the wider handle, I like that this bit has the soap stuff around it and the blade in the middle. One less thing I have to do.” - Participant who is an amputee.

Participants rarely figured out the stand first go. Some participants who are Blind couldn’t identify what the stand was, and some thought the stand was faulty without knowing the razor needs to be inserted a certain way. There were also concerns that participants who are blind would knock over the stand and the razor, and suggested that something to stop the razor falling out would be useful.







“The stand for me isn’t working.” - Participant with Acquired Brain Injury

“It doesn’t always stand in the stand, it slips out.” - Participant who is Blind

Some participants who have limited strength in their hands and lack the ability to pull couldn’t remove the razor head at all. For those that did, replacing the razor head proved difficult because of the fine motor skills it takes to line the head and the handle up and insert them perfectly.

The majority of men in the focus groups said they are more likely to use an electric shaver for safety and convenience.





Coles refried beans 454 gram

There were mixed reviews on the accessibility of cans. Some participants reported that the Coles refried beans can was very easy to open, and some couldn't open it at all. Some participants mentioned that they completely avoid cans when grocery shopping because they can't open them, and they can't risk injuring themselves trying to open them.

"I do like these pull top cans because I find, personally they are easier with a vision impairment than trying to use a can opener." – Participant with low vision

"I would steer away from these kinds of products." – Participant with Cerebral Palsy





It is noted that the lift and pull mechanism sits on some raised dots to allow users to get their fingers underneath the ring, but there isn't enough room for people who lack fine motor skills, and the raised dots could be higher. The pull mechanism also sits on top of the opening instructions and the best before date, making them hard to read. All participants who are Blind said that the ring pull is instinctual for them to use, they know where to find it and how it works. The only issue is when it breaks.

The decorative text, low colour contrasting, and small text made it hard for people with low vision and Autism to read the information printed on the label. The same as the salad dressing, assistive technology will struggle to read text on a curved surface. One participant's assistive technology read the word "beans" but did not pick up the word "refried" and the beans were assumed to be tinned green beans.

"These are really hard to open for me. I normally have to use a tool but sometimes even it doesn't work." - Participant with Cerebral Palsy

"I can't lift that at all." - Participant with Muscular Dystrophy

Two participants mentioned that they have a specialised tool at home that they use to open cans. The majority of participants voiced their disdain for can openers.

“I just avoid them (cans), or only use when I am cooking with my partner. If I cut myself, I spasm and it just not worth it.” - Participant with Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 2

A market reference product in plastic sachets seen in the image below seemed to be a good alternative for most participants. Being able to put the product straight into the microwave without having to transfer the contents first is attractive to people who take a bit longer to do tasks. Some participants noted that soft packaging is easier for them to pick up when their hands have limited movement.







Coles air freshener vanilla orchid & ylang ylang 150 gram (2682455)

The general assumption is that when you spray a can such as this, the spray will come out the front. In this instance, the spray comes out the top and a few close calls were experienced in the focus groups where participants almost sprayed themselves in the face. A person who is blind will feel around the can to establish where the spray will come out of, however on this can there is a deceptive contour and what looks like a small hole on the front of the can where participants assumed the spray would come out of.

“The spray comes out the top as opposed to the side? Is that correct? That’s quite unusual for sprays.” - Participant who is Blind



“My thought initially is why this dips here? For me, if I was picking this up in the bathroom I would use it the wrong way because it’s got that dip.” - Participant who has low vision

Participants who are Blind might struggle to tell the difference between products packaged in Aluminium cans, in one instance the air freshener was confused with deodorant and fly spray.

All participants with low vision commented that the can had a great, accessible label on the front with good colour contrast and clear text. The back, however, has a lot of information in small space and could be overwhelming for people with low vision and cognitive disabilities. Increase text size, letter spacing, and white space could help with this barrier. One participant with low vision commented that having “air freshener” higher up on the label would benefit them in identifying what the product is – the emphasis should be more on what the product is, and less on the scent.





Some participants with limited strength found the can too difficult to spray and mentioned that they would opt for an automated spray instead.

“I have never found a toilet spray that I can use” – Participant with Muscular Dystrophy

Participants using assistive technology struggled identifying the product because of the curved surface. A suggestion was made for a raised indicator where the barcode is so it can be easily found and scanned with assistive technology.

“If you are reading it with app, these products or round products it’s very difficult to know what side the label is on.” – Participant who is Blind