



## INTERVIEW



**Davinder Singh**  
Principal, TARU Innovations

*"Packaging innovations could and should be considered as game changers alongwith product innovations....."*



**PackagingConnections:** What is your educational background? How did you get involved in the Packaging industry?

**Mr. Singh:** I am a Physics graduate from St. Stephen's College, Delhi University. I did my post graduation in Management from Inst. of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA). I have been associated with packaging industry for most of my career (20+ yrs) in marketing and new product development.

**PackagingConnections:** Your key activities at work? What is the most rewarding part of your work?

**Mr. Singh:** I enjoy managing the various elements of Innovation. It is like a jigsaw puzzle which offers challenges and satisfaction in equal measures.

**PackagingConnections:** The most prestigious awards you have received? And the awards which meant the most to you.

**Mr. Singh:** It is very rewarding to see the innovations done by oneself being used and enjoyed by consumers. Recently, the new packs of Kinley have been appreciated by consumers and trade and have resulted in increased business.

**PackagingConnections:** Your key achievements? Have you, or your organization, been recognized in any way for your great work?

**Mr. Singh:** Successful commercialization of an Innovation Idea is in itself a very satisfying. The recognition of the same provides encouragement and motivation to do more. Some such achievements include

- Launch of Minute Maid Range in India; resulting in tally of over 20 product launches, 10 new packages across 15 brands
- Building a long term innovation strategy and pipeline for Coca-Cola India

- Building process and capabilities across the company for Innovation Excellence.

**PackagingConnections:** What unexpected costs and headaches have you had to deal with?

**Mr. Singh:** There have been hic cups in all innovations projects. But no headache is too bad that it cannot be insignificant compared to the joy of a successful launch of an innovation.

**PackagingConnections:** What is one thing about the industry that you would change?

**Mr. Singh:** I prefer that packaging industry take a more proactive positioning to link itself with core of marketing. Packaging innovations could and should be considered as game changers alongwith product innovations.

**PackagingConnections:** Where do you see the packaging industry in next 5 years?

**Mr. Singh:** With the increasing consumer desire for innovative packaging there would be significant investments in the industry to not only build capacity but also capability especially in the sustainability arena. There would be closer interaction between multiple stakeholders – consumer groups, user industry, packaging industry and governments.

**PackagingConnections:** Could you share with us your key plans for the future?

**Mr. Singh:** TARU Innovations is currently focused on working with user industry in 'commercialising' the new packaging initiatives. These span cost reduction, better functionality and higher sustainability.

**PackagingConnections:** What has been your biggest challenge? How did you overcome?

**Mr. Singh:** Each launch appear to the biggest challenge till it actually happens. Meticulous planning, collaboration across stakeholders and result orientation helps to increase the success rate.

**Packaging Connections:** What are three important tenets (Principles) that you work by when beginning a new packaging project?

**Mr. Singh:**

- It should make consumer sense
- It should make business sense
- All need to understand and share the above two for good collaboration.

**Packaging Connections:** Your packaging dream?

**Mr. Singh:** Replace plastic with bio-degradable material at same cost and ease.

**Packaging Connections:** Any tips you want to share with the packaging professionals across globe?

**Mr. Singh:** To commercialise any innovation, it is important to have right skills and capabilities. Get from outside if they are not in an organization.

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