

Why Partner Scouting is Key to Unlocking Sustainable Packaging for F&B and CPG Brands?



Cologne, Nordrhein-Westfalen Aug 6, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - *“Pioneering innovation in sustainable packaging requires a collaborative ecosystem. By building alliances with innovative suppliers and recyclers, brands unlock viable and future-proof solutions, turning sustainability from a marketing claim into a long-term value proposition,”* says **Stellarix’s CPG/F&B expert Ashu Verma**.

Introduction: The Sustainability Pressure is Real

Mounting consumer expectations and strict regulatory demands have made sustainable packaging solutions a top priority for businesses across the globe. Companies operating in the CPG and F&B space are under constant scrutiny to promote recyclability, reduce plastic use, and shift toward a circular economy. Subsequently, the industry players are struggling to meet their sustainability goals as their traditional procurement and R&D teams find it hard to keep up with the current pace of innovation. A recent market research forecasted that the sustainable packaging market is projected to grow from approximately \$293 billion in 2024 to \$424 billion by 2029, while the global packaging market valuation is estimated to reach USD 501.08 billion by 2029.

To stay competitive, businesses must look beyond internal capabilities and embrace **strategic partner**

scouting — a key differentiator that enables scalable, sustainable packaging solutions.

[Stellarix, an innovation strategy firm](#), helps companies achieve their packaging innovation goals by helping them find potential partners to accelerate transformation and market-outpacing capabilities at a significant scale and speed.

Why Partner Scouting in the F&B and CPG Industry?

i) The Packaging Challenges in F&B and CPG Industry

Packaging has long been at the forefront of the sustainability debate for F&B and CPG brands due to high waste disposal, stringent environmental measures, supply chain complexities, and changing customer preferences. Further, the packaging challenges have intensified for companies due to the scarcity of materials and a surge in transportation expenses, indicating the need for **packaging innovation** and **strategic collaboration**.

Shortages of paper, plastic, aluminum, and key ingredients have disrupted production and raised delivery costs by about 25%. New regulations on carbon emissions and packaging waste necessitate significant changes to packaging, labeling, and product formulations. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws, which are gaining traction in the U.S., shift waste management duties to producers, prompting companies to adopt more [sustainable packaging](#) practices despite limited recycling infrastructure.

Therefore, business enterprises must innovate to balance shelf life, cost, customer convenience, and sustainability. However, effective implementation remains a challenge due to a lack of internal resources. The key solution to these pressing packaging challenges is strategic partner scouting.

ii) Limitation of In-House Innovation

Internal teams often fall behind despite their expertise in packaging due to niche knowledge gaps in the use of emerging materials, such as seaweed films, biodegradable polymers, and others, which require specialized knowledge. Additionally, lack of global insights, combined with slow internal processes, negatively impacts the execution speed and competitive position of brands when scaling up innovation. Hence, brands should explore the broader ecosystem of innovators to improve their agility and responsiveness.

Strategic Partner Scouting: A Key to Competitive Edge in Sustainable Packaging

SPS is the proactive and targeted approach to identifying and assessing potential partners for collaboration across the sustainability landscape. By determining external partners from startups to niche suppliers, brands can accelerate their path to sustainable packaging solutions.

How does it work?

- **Material Science Startups:** Identify innovators working on breakthrough sustainable materials, from plant-based plastics to compostable coatings
- **Green Packaging Manufacturers:** Partner with manufacturers who specialize in eco-friendly production processes and scalable solutions
- **Reuse Tech Platforms:** Collaborate with platforms enabling reusable and refillable packaging models

- **Circular Logistics Partners:** Collaborate with logistics providers dedicated to circularity, ensuring packaging is reused or recycled efficiently

These collaborations harness resource expertise and innovative solutions across the value chain for companies, leveraging benefits like faster market entry, enhanced competitive edge, and innovation agility.

Real-World Use Cases & Impact

- **F&B Brand: Compostable Packaging via Startup Collaboration**

Ambev, Brazil's leading brewing company, collaborated with startup growPack to produce compostable packaging made from plant-based materials, such as corn husk and cellulose. The packaging decomposed within 12 weeks, thereby resulting in decreased plastic waste.

Outcomes:

- This strategic partnership is supporting Ambev's sustainability objective of net zero emissions by 2030. It contributes to cutting approximately 9,700 tons of CO₂ emissions annually, which is equivalent to removing about 1,300 cars from the road.
- Ambev achieved the goal of over 86% recyclable packaging by 2024, demonstrating leadership in packaging innovation driven by sustainability goals.

- **CPG Firm: Refill Stations through Tech Partner**

Unilever has teamed up with refill tech Startups (Algramo, QYOS, and Bopinc) and launched over 50 refill and reuse pilots worldwide since 2018. In Indonesia alone, pilot refill stations developed in collaboration with QYOS and Algramo numbered around 1,000 last year, serving more than 6,000 customers and selling approximately 91,000 liters.

Outcomes:

- This strategic partnership saved more than 6 tons of plastic last year.
- Bopinc's collaboration in Bangladesh increased refill accessibility, leading to approximately 43% repeat customers.
- The refill pilots continue to scale in 2025 with greater consumer adoption and loyalty.
- Improved EPR regulatory compliance and increased traction of sustainability-driven consumers.

Other than this, a real-life use case of an F&B brand's SPS is showcased in Nestlé's partnership with MIWA, a market leader in reuse and refill dispenser technology, which piloted refillable packaging for instant coffee. This initiative demonstrated success in terms of attracting new customers, enhancing customer satisfaction, and achieving sales that exceeded expectations.

How Stellarix Supports Sustainable Packaging through Partner Scouting?

Stellarix's [strategic co-man and partner scouting services](#) facilitate packaging innovation and accomplishment of the businesses' SDGs through:

- Supplier identification and benchmarking

- Restructuring the distribution and supply chain ecosystem
- Deep market and tech landscape scans

Concerning the F&B and [CPG sectors](#), the topmost value propositions of Stellarix for businesses are:

- Customized partner identification and validation
- Market intelligence and trend insights
- Partnerships and innovation roadmaps alignment
- Risk mitigation through vetting and thorough scouting

Wrapping Up/Concluding Remarks

Packaging innovation through strategic partnerships is enabling F&B and CPG brands to lead sustainability initiatives without compromising their market positions. It is no longer an alternative but a fundamental requirement to integrate eco-friendly packaging solutions. Through strategic partnerships and alliances, F&B and CPG industry players can alleviate pressing packaging challenges and build a resilient ecosystems that accelerate sustainable packaging adoption, minimizes environmental impact, and fulfills consumer demand for green products.

Transform your packaging strategy—[connect with Stellarix](#) and get started on your path to scalable, sustainable solutions through expert-led partner scouting.

About Stellarix

Stellarix is a global innovation and sustainability strategy consulting firm that specializes in helping companies implement sustainable packaging strategies. With over 15 years of experience and a footprint in 70+ countries, Stellarix delivers R&D planning, sustainability services, and strategic partner scouting that support a more sustainable future.

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