

Master Carton Embargo Date Markings

Planning and Application

- Carton date markings printed as part of carton artwork ensure that no carton will be missed when dates are applied – however, this requires that dates be firm before master cartons are printed, which may be as much as 8 months before planned embargo date.
- Carton date markings applied as stickers to finished cartons provide more flexibility in determining embargo dates but are less secure as cartons may be missed or may ship before stickering is completed.
- Cartons should be marked on all six sides, so dates are visible no matter how cartons are stacked.
- Carton date markings should be globally unambiguous, if product is shipping globally. Numeric date forms vary by region – “10/8/2021” may mean October 8 or August 10 to different viewers.

Distribution

- Carton-marked product should not be removed from cartons prior to embargo dates by distributors for customer shipments, or by customers. Licensee should enforce the concept that marked cartons cannot be opened at all until the embargo date they are marked with.
- Carton-marked product should not bypass standardized master cartons for any direct-to-consumer shipments.
- Customer-specific applications such as FSDUs, pallet displays, frustration-free packaging should be tracked and included in the need for carton printing or other embargo alert labeling if shipping to customers prior to embargo date.