In the late 1990s, the phones became smaller and smaller, and people care much more than ever about the beauty of their phones. Especially for the young generation, most of them would like to own a unique cell phone. But how could they distinguish from others if they use the same phone? The phone case is the only way out! Large number of phone users and changing pursue for electronics trigger the mobile phone case industry. One of the most popular cell phone case companies would Otterbox.

Throughout the research and development of the cell phone case, Otterbox looks into how it wants the product to function. The goal is to provide protection and an opportunity to have a unique design or decoration on one’s cell phone. The protection would be to stop the screen and the rest of the phone from getting scratched or broken, help stop the phone from slipping out of one’s hands or off of a table, or in the case of waterproofing, even protecting one’s phone from water. Otterbox researches which materials will protect the phone best while still maintaining a usable design. To successfully create a sustainable design for a cell phone case, Otterbox researches the specs of each phone for which they will make a case. Because phones are generally used for a very short amount of time, Otterbox needs to release cases as soon as a new phone is released. This means that the company needs to reverse engineer the exterior of the phone to make the case, and then get it produced as quickly as possible. With each new model phone that comes out, the company needs to make sure that it will fit properly and leave access to buttons, speakers and charger ports.

The manufacturing of Otterbox cell phone cases originally only took place in the United States. As the company began to grow, manufacturing continued in the US but also production in China started up. Otterbox uses high impact polycarbonate as well as silicon to construct its phone cases. High impact polycarbonate is produced from a reaction between bisphenol A and phosgene. The materials used help to make the cases shock and scratch resistant. It is imperative that Otterbox makes products very quickly so that it will not fall behind the competition. According to the company, it releases ten to twelve products per month and 100 products per year. Otterbox offers a warranty for all products against defects in material or workmanship for a period of one year from the original date of purchase.

Originally Otterbox cases were packaged in a paperboard solution but they would get shopworn and the method was not very eco-friendly. In April of 2013, the company made a transition to a new package made of 100% post-consumer recycled PET. Polyethylene terephthalate, or PET, is a thermoplastic resin that is lightweight and is usually extremely malleable. PET plastics are semi-rigid to rigid, depending on their thickness but sadly this plastic contributes to the growing problem of plastic pollution worldwide. The packaging of the case actually plays a large role in its marketing as well. For example a case named, “Defender” is appealing to people searching for a tough case that can go through anything. A case name, “Commuter”, is appealing for people looking for a light-weight easy to carry case.

Otterbox does a lot of its advertising online. It has banner ads along with video ads. To some degree the company also markets using the look of the case itself. Because the case is popular and unique in its appearance, it attracts others who see Otterbox cases paired with the phones of others. The first case that Otterbox marketed was in 2001 for Apple’s original Ipod. Otterbox also advertises partnered with phone cases who support the product and promote it to their customers.
The preferred American distributors are Nite Ize Innovative Accessories, TESSCO Technologies, VoiceComm, Ingram Micro U.S. and Brightstar US Headquarters. You can purchase an Otterbox online, at cellphone company stores, Best Buy, Amazon, Target and other retailers. OtterBox has regional offices in Cork, Ireland, for the European market and Hong Kong for the Asia-Pacific Rim market, as well as a small sales office in Dubai. As of 2013, Otterbox had sold enough cases to receive a revenue of 923.6 million dollars.

Otterbox cases are used by consumers to protect their phones from damage. Phones nowadays are fairly fragile, so it has become important for people to purchase protective cases to accompany their phones. This keeps the screen from breaking and keeps the electronics safe. Phones cases have also become a bit of a statement. This is why Otterbox offers cases that are varied in color. This makes the product more attractive to consumers because consumers want to use a case that is somewhat unique.

It is uncertain how exactly most people dispose of their Otterbox cases. It is possible to recycle both the case and the packaging. The percentage of consumers who do this is unknown. It is true, however, that the life of an Otterbox case is fairly short because they only last as long as the phone is in use, and most people get new phones after ten to twelve months. Therefore, the rate of disposal of Otterbox cases is fairly large because they are in use for such a short amount of time.

Otterbox is a major corporation that dominates the market of cell phone and tablet protection in many aspects. All companies that manufacture consumer products must go through the 7 steps of production. Leading companies, such as Otterbox, perform these steps in the most efficient and innovative ways to emerge as the top player in the market.


http://www.inc.com/profile/otterbox