

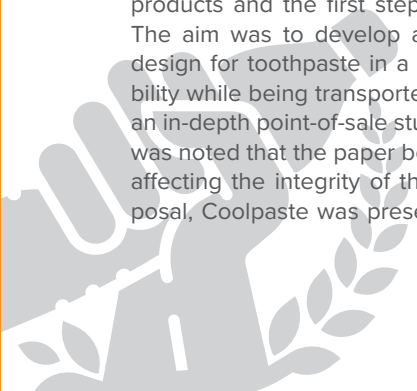


ALLAN GOMES, BRAZIL

## Coolpaste – Think Outside the Box!

Coolpaste is a sustainable packaging design that literally thinks outside the box. The concept started with the desire to solve a problem for one of the most popular everyday products and the first step to our mornings, toothpaste. The aim was to develop an eco-responsible packaging design for toothpaste in a way that didn't affect its durability while being transported or stacked on shelves. After an in-depth point-of-sale study about the Colgate brand, it was noted that the paper box could be eliminated without affecting the integrity of the toothpaste. In the final proposal, Coolpaste was presented as a product that would

hang instead of being stacked. By reducing waste and offering a new disposal for this product category, it became lighter. Also, instead of using the conventional plastic tube, Coolpaste uses impermeable cardboard – similar to the material used by the food industry. The cap of the tube is also biodegradable, made from Polylactide (PLA), a bioplastic derived from renewable resources, such as corn starch, tapioca roots, potato starch, or sugarcane. This design solves logistical and environmental issues for global toothpaste brands if implemented.





## Coffee Talk with Allan

**Please tell us a bit about yourself, Allan!** Well, I'm a curious and ambitious Brazilian packaging designer, now based in Toronto, where I am pursuing my master's degree at York University. My involvement with design started early in my life. In 2005, when I was 15 years old, my father opened a print shop, and I supported this family business by creating graphic arts for new clients. Then I joined the design program at the Federal University of Minas Gerais. Since then, I've been fascinated by packaging design, and I spent five years working as a senior designer in a creative agency specialized in branding and packaging design. Now, I work as a freelancer allowing me to manage my time whilst I'm doing my master's studies.

**What motivated you to get into sustainability?** In our consumer world, graphic design is often limited as a means to make brands sell more products. This always bothered me because my motivation for sustainability comes from the desire to use all the knowledge to promote the good. Personally, the trigger for acting and thinking sustainably was my experience with a shamanic medicine from the Amazon Rainforest, the Ayahuasca, which is a plant-based tea with a powerful capacity to make us connect with nature. This inner experience changed the way I see my role as a designer and citizen in this world.

**How did you come up with Coolpaste?** Our packaging design professor at the university in Brazil challenged us to develop a new packaging concept for an existing product. I chose to work with toothpaste because it's a mass-produced item presenting our daily lives with single-use packaging causing a substantial environmental impact. The

initial proposal was to remove the paper box and make the tube possible to be hanged at point-of-sale. The idea of replacing the material of the tube from plastic to laminated paper came up years later.

**What is a possible future for Coolpaste?** Coolpaste had fantastic visibility on the Internet, and I got in contact with many oral care companies, including Colgate. But most of the companies wanted to see proof that my prototype would work in practice. Fortunately, I now have a solid collaboration with an industrial partner in Brazil, and they are making all the material tests and production preparations. So, it's becoming a reality now.

**What do you think can we do on a large scale to fight against plastic pollution?** Well, this is a tough question. It's a structural problem, and it will take time to solve. Some scientific innovations may arise to alleviate the crisis, especially when it comes to plastic from renewable sources. But I personally think that the only way to fight this crisis is to focus on the education and awareness of our society formed by a mass of critical consumers. As consumers, we have the potential power to ask for change. The most effective act of protest within our capitalist system is refusing to consume the wrong products.

### SILVER AWARD WINNER

Allan Gomes,  
Designer, Coolpaste, Brazil

