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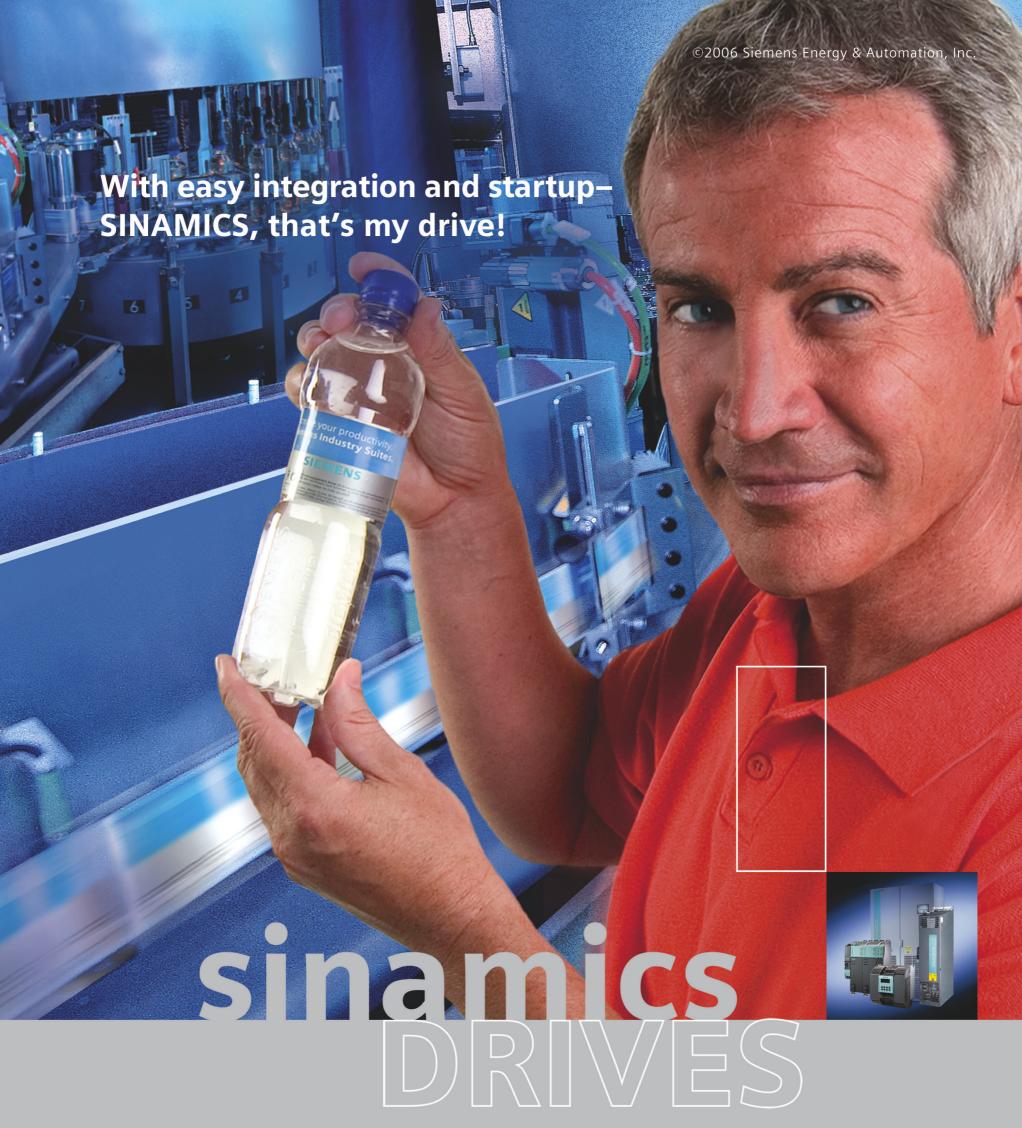
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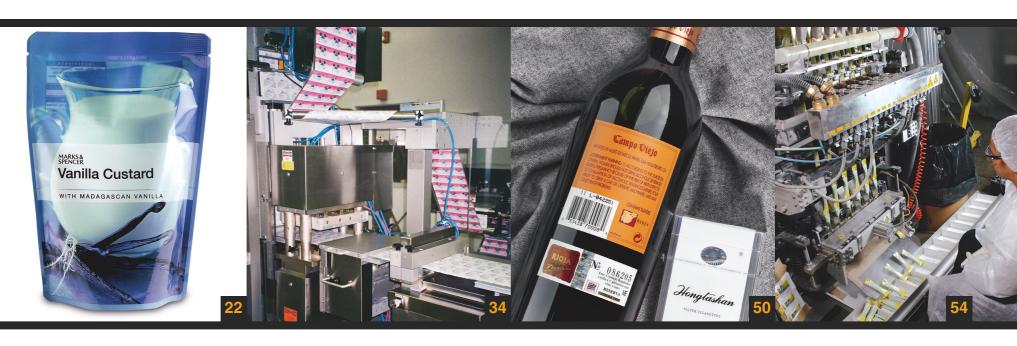
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# **features**

# **22** Flexible Packaging Achievement winners go for the gold

Convenience, technical expertise and shapely new options mark this year's flexible packaging awards competition, with 12 top winners, including 11 Golds and one Highest Achievement.

# 34 Blister-packs are the Rx for physician's samples

Sanofi-Aventis' new packaging line produces two-unit blister-packs of Ambien sleep aid supplied to physicians to hand out as samples.

# **40** Packages flex their innovation muscles

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# 54 Stick-packs do the trick for tea

A popular choice for a growing list of applications, stick-shaped pouches at 4C Foods are produced on a vertical form/fill/seal machine that runs flavored teas.

#### 58 Shrinkable labels for milk burst onto the scene

Exciting, gravure-printed sleeve labels for bottles of North American Beverage's milk drink line Mega Moose hit store shelves with a bang.

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# new technology

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# Robotic palletizer does double duty

Guida's Milk & Ice Cream's speedy new system loads a wide range of case sizes on two pallets simultaneously.

#### **Smart Packaging**

# **Optically variable safeguards**

Spain's Domecq Bodega and China's Hongta Group rely on optically variable devices to protect against counterfeiting.

# web exclusives

# **Flexible Packaging Award Silver winners**

A whopping 24 entries received Silver awards in the 2006 competition, which can be viewed at www.packagingdigest.com/info/silver



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# productnews

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# design trends

# PP flip-top debuts Wrigley mints

In what it bills as the first Doublemint brand debut in more than 90 years, the Chicago-based Wrigley Co. is massaging the mint market, rolling out Wrigley's Doublemint™Twins® nationwide. The flavors are Mintcreme and Wintercreme, each blending two flavors in one mint, with each mint decorated with the double-arrowhead Doublemint logotype.

The package, holding 37 mints with a suggested unit retail price of 69 cents, is a clarified polypropylene rigid container decorated with a full-body shrink label. The label, along with carrying over a trademark previously limited to Wrigley's chewing gum, also covers part of the integrally hinged flip-top, serving as a tamper-resistant feature. Wrigley doesn't discuss specs for the package or its suppliers. Its marketing director, Shari Matras, does tell PD that the "sleek, convenient flip-top package is slim enough to fit in a pocket. The rounded, ergonomic shape provides smooth, easy handling for sharing with others."

The marketer says the packages will be merchandised through unique modular displays in convenience, grocery and drugstores. The introduction will be supported by an integrated marketing campaign, including TV, print and out-of-home advertising, in-store shelf talkers and other means—exactly what might be expected for a debut that happens every 90 years or so.





# Packets-in-pouch are sweet for dried fruit

Sunsweet Growers, a Yuba-City, CA-based, grower-owned marketing cooperative representing more than two-thirds of the prune market worldwide, has launched Smart Snack Packs® of dried Mediterranean Apricots, Premium Thailand Mangoes and Dried Plums (pitted prunes) in a glossy, metallized film standup pouch that holds six to eight mini film packets of dried fruit. The 6-, 6.1- and 8-oz, side-gusseted pouches features brilliant green, orange or purple color-coded, six-color graphics created with assistance from Oakland, CA-based designer **Blind Mice Studio Design Group** 

(www.blindmicestudio.com). A clear film window on the back panel of the outer pouch—the only area devoid of printing on the entire package—reveals the packets inside. The back panels are also printed with detailed product information and nutritional information. The pouches' front panels incorporate a navy Smart Snack logo, a sunny yellow Sunsweet brand logo on an illlustration of the packet and the phrase, "6-pack" or "8-pack" in large navy and yellow lettering. Available across the U.S., the proprietary packaging is produced in China.

# Eco-friendly packaging is a 'shoe-in' at Timberland

Outdoor shoe company Timberland is launching new packaging for its shoes aimed at providing new levels of transparency with regard to environmental and community impact. Featuring a so-called "nutritional

label," the packaging, launched in stores beginning in 2006, is designed to provide consumers with a new information guide to aid them in the purchasing process. The labeling describes the product, including where it was manufactured and how it was produced, and lists the name and location of the factory, while its effect on the environment is noted in terms of how much of Timberland's energy is generated from renewable resources such as the sun, wind

and water. The reusable footwear boxes are made of 100-percent post-consumer-recycled waste fiber, use water-based solvents in place of chemical glues and are printed with soy-based inks. Timberland will also place messaging inside the box, asking consumers, "What kind of footprint will you leave?" as an incentive to take environmental action within their own community. Each of its outdoor performance

shoe pairs also comes in a reusable "take-in, take-out" biodegradable waste bag to be used on the trail. Children's footwear includes tissue wrap that educates kids about birds and animals in the woods. Links on timberland.com will help consumers find local or national groups and then print shipping labels.

# Skoal Bandits packs update for summer

U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Company (USSTC) says it will launch new and improved Skoal Bandits® moist smokeless tobacco (MST) in canned pouches this August. Replacing the existing Bandits line, the new Skoal Bandits will be sold in Mint and Wintergreen flavors. Twenty compact pouches of the new and improved Skoal Bandits, featuring 100-percent American-grown tobacco, will be contained in the brightly decorated, beveled polypropylene cans from **Evco Plastics (www.evcoplastics.com)**, along with USSTC's advanced Flavor Flow<sup>TM</sup> pouch paper, to provide a more satisfying experience than the original. The sleek can and lid, printed in blue and green color schemes, are getting a facelift as well to correspond with the

new flavors. The cans will be stamped with a "guaranteed-fresh-until" date (which means the product stays fresh for several weeks). The metal lids will be stamped

and embossed in-house with the Bandits logo, and are produced by USSTC.

















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# design trends

# Shaped topical applicators go to the dogs...and cats

Consumers with mixed-pet households are the target of new, shaped applicators containing flea and tick topicals for cats and dogs from Wellmark Intl., Schaumburg, IL. Fanciful and functional, the new Pet Specifix<sup>TM</sup> thermoformed applicators use a dog-bone shape for canine treatments, while feline products are marketed in cat-head-shaped applicators.

"Dogs and cats have different needs, especially when it comes to flea and tick control, and applying the wrong product can be harmful to a pet," says Dr. Jordan Siegel, Wellmark technical services veterinarian. "Some people are too busy to read the labels, or they simply get products confused, particularly if they have more than one dog or cat in the home. It's an extremely important issue that previously has not been adequately addressed."

The packaging, launched in pet specialty stores this year, adds new convenience to Wellmark's Zodiac® Spot On® Flea & Tick Control products, which have been



available since 1997. In

addition to the visual cues provided by the unique shapes, products are also color-coded—a feature carried over from previous packaging—to indicate pet weight ranges. For example, products for dogs from 31 to 60 lb use blue packaging, while applicators for small dogs, 16 to 30 lb, are red. In addition, the new, longer, Accu-tip dispenser allows for easier product application for long-haired pets.

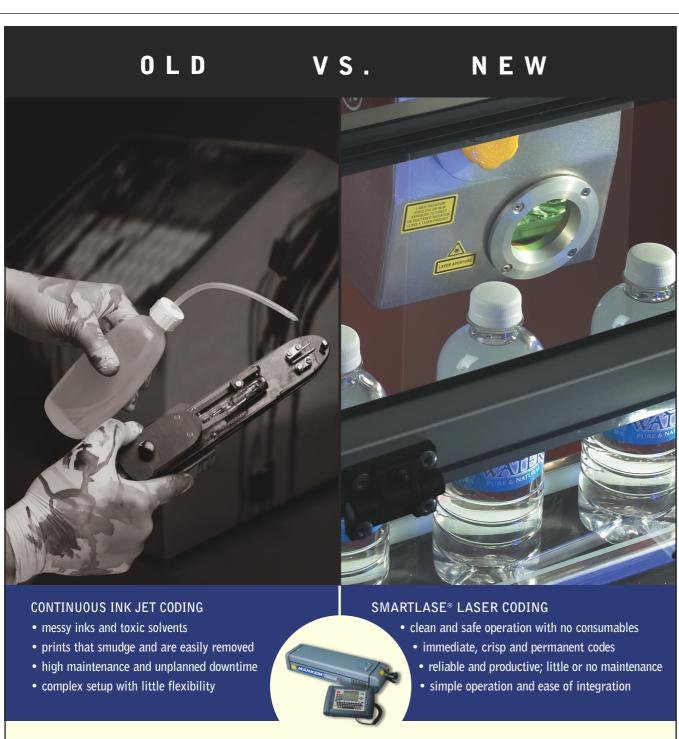
Credit for the distinctive, shaped packaging goes to the Zodiac marketing team and Wellmark's in-house engineering staff, which Roy Brown, group manager, manufacturing technology and quality for Wellmark, says teamed up to develop the shapes and present models created by stereolithography to focus groups to gauge market acceptance. "Challenges in creating the packages included incorporating the feedback of the focus groups into something that could be manufactured at a cost that is consistent with what the consumer is willing to spend," Brown notes.

While supplier and material information for the thermoforms is proprietary, Wellmark says the 2-cc applicators are filled at its Dallas facility using an existing pump system that dispenses an accurate dose to each tray. The thermoforms are then sealed with a foil lid that is printed with product and warning information. A secondary carton holds four thermoforms, joined via a perforation, for a four-month supply.

Graphics for the seven varieties of topicals (four for dogs, three for cats) were redesigned with the new applicator and include a "landscape" presentation, rather than the previous packaging's "portrait" design, says Brown. The SBS carton, supplied by **Southern Champion Tray (www.sctray.com)**, incorporates a false back that pushes the product forward so that the shaped applicator is clearly visible through a matching, shaped die-cut window.

According to Tony Schultz, Zodiac brand manager, reactions to the new Pet Specifix applicators have been "overwhelmingly positive."

Zodiac Spot On Flea & Tick control products are priced from \$6.99 to \$15.99, depending on retailer and product variety.



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# design trendShousehold products



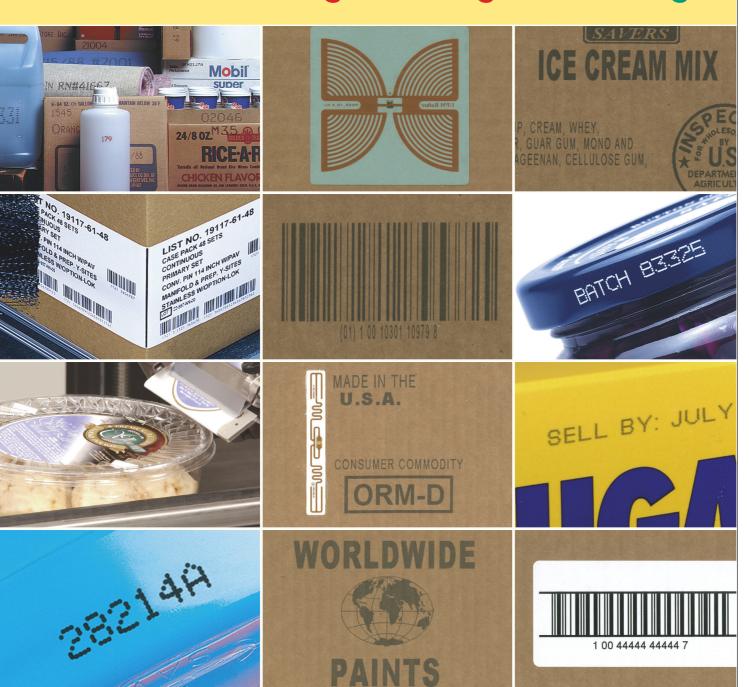
# Twin-pack carrier gets a handle on cleaner

OrangeGlo Intl. selects a new TwinKlip two-pack carrier from **PakTech (www.packtech-opi.com)** for its 32-oz spray bottles of its Oxiclean Miracle Foam Every Day cleaner. Introduced last spring, the new cleaner package is available at Costco clubstores and other retail outlets. OrangleGlo says it chose the unitizing bottle carrier because it recognizes the consumer convenience and says TwinKlip is "an infinitely more sustainable form of packaging than shrink bundling." The cost-effective handles, injection-molded of high-density polyethylene specifically for spray-bottle applications, are designed to perform under rigorous conditions throughout the supply chain. They make the bottle twin-pack easy to grab and easy to remove. They can be applied either by hand or with automatic equipment from PakTech. The new TwinKlip as well as 3Klip and QuadKlip are available commercially in various sizes.



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# Revised rope packs relieve the hangups

Nowhere is the selling environment more of a tie-up than in big-box stores. Creating a package for cordage, otherwise known as rope, that can fit within the shelves of a Home Depot store but won't end up swinging in the wind, is a challenge, but carries a measurable payoff for Wellington, Inc.'s cordage products. For packs that stand out in a warehouse setting, design firm Proteus Design (www.proteusdesign.com) re-envisioned the entire rope product category. The products are typically sold in film bags labeled with product length and weight limits that may not be easily understood by everyone. To make it easy to distinguish differences not only between brands, but also between the various products, Proteus assisted with a complete facelift. Wellington had light, medium and heavy-duty rope categories. Color coding them with a "good/better/best" display encouraged trading up. Each new package includes a photo of the rope in use and a multipurpose Velcro® strap to hang the product at home as well as in-store. which keeps the brand name in view at

The new packaging also includes a large paperboard face label that clearly states each product's purpose, which together with the strap, really changes the way the cordage category is marketed at point-of-sale. The new packaging makes it possible for consumers to determine which rope suits their needs. The results of the new approach have gained more shelf space. Wellington's spool-like packaging allows consumers to neatly store the rope and to cut off the desired length needed, while the remaining rope is left neatly in the original package. An updated logo and tagline, "The Rope Authority," demonstrate to consumers Wellington's category-leader position.

The flexo-printed paperboard labels include one for marine cordage, comprising an .018 paperboard laminate, while hardware cordage features a .020 C1S paper label with an aqueous coating. The packaging, which serves more than 400 stockkeeping units, is produced by various sources in Asia, Mexico and the U.S.

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\*Now you know: Brand graphics on a 12-pack are 375% larger than on individual bottle labels.



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Mary Ann Falkman, Editor

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# Flexibles continue to grow, innovate

he term almost begs for a pun: Flexible packaging materials continue to encroach upon other materials because of their flexibility, versatility and, in some cases, economics. Proof of that fact can be seen in the winning entries in the Flexible Packaging Association (www.fpa.org) Achievement Awards, starting on page 22. At the recent annual meeting of the FPA, the presentation of the "2006 State of the Industry" showed yet again the broad scope and global reach of the flexible packaging market.

As the second-largest materials segment in packaging, at 17 percent of the total market (corrugated is the largest, at 26 percent), flexible packaging has been growing at an average 3.2 percent per year from 1996 to 2005, although last year, the increase was 3.6 percent over 2004—just a tiny bit higher than the growth of the U.S. GDP. North America and Western Europe account for the two largest markets, at 29 percent each, followed by Japan and Asia at 13 percent and 14 percent, respectively. Latin America and Eastern Europe weigh in at 6 percent and 3 percent each. By far the single-largest market segment for flexible packaging is retail food, at \$10.4 billion and 47 percent of total flexibles. Retail nonfood, at \$3.3 billion and 15 percent, ranks

According to the "State of the Industry" report, the industry outlook is generally optimistic but wary. Optimism is tempered by concerns over raw materials costs and uncertainty in the economy. However, expectations for this year are a 6-percent to 7percent increase in sales revenues and a 7-percent to 8-percent increase in volume. Looking further ahead, the forecast shows a 5-percent to 6-percent increase in revenue, and slightly more than that in volume, over the next three to five years.

A recent study from Freedonia Group (www.freedoniagroup.com) is even a bit more optimistic. "Converted Flexible Packaging" predicts that demand will increase by more than 4 percent per year to \$14.4 billion by 2009. The study's analyst attributes this growth to cost, performance and source-reduction advantages over most rigid packaging formats. Heightened barrier performance in many markets will drive increased demand for value-added materials to enhance shelf life or product protection. Technological advances such as breathable films and resealable standup pouches (both in evidence in the FPA awards), as well as manufacturers' needs for higher-performance packaging with enhanced graphics capability, will also spur growth. The study points to pouches, in particular, as the best opportunity, with that demand rising 6.6 percent per year to \$5.8 billion by 2009. Gains in the food market will slightly outpace other market segments because of increased demand for convenient packages. The fastest advances are seen in produce, meat and related products and beverage applications.

Overall, not a bad outlook. Flexible packaging is looking good.

Mary ann Falkman

















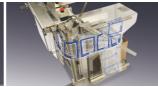
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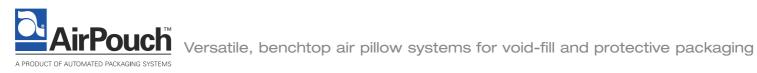


























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# new products spotlight

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# new productsmaterials

# Paper & Paperboard

Paperboard packaging Environmentally and consumer-friendly and theft-resistant, Natralock™ is a paperboard-based packaging material designed as an alternative to plastic clamshell packaging. Combining traits of paperboard and blister-packs, it makes more surface area available for printing text and graphics than traditional clamshells do, the co. claims. Tear-resistant, it deters theft while reducing "wrap-rage," and it minimizes the impact to the environment. Natralock is formed by running unbleached kraft paper or the co.'s Printkote® bleached kraft through a patented coating process that applies a heat-sealable material. An additional tear-resistant material can also be added during the process. Graphics can then be printed on the clay-coated surface. Natralock is said to seal easily without producing hazardous emissions.

MeadWestvaco, 804/327-6331.

www.natralock.com



# Ever notice how food packaging is all starting to look the same?

High-performance MultiFlex barrier paper effectively preserves product freshness and can handle any new graphic ideas you can dream up, and it's always aluminum-free for better performance. If you're worried about escalating petroleum prices impacting your packaging budget, relax. MultiFlex grows on trees—the world's most plentiful and sustainable natural resource. Available exclusively from Stora Enso, listed among the "Global 100" most sustainable companies.\*



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Holographic papers The co.'s line of holographic papers expands with a selection of stocks that are exhibited in a new chip chart. The Brilliance stock. which serves as the cover of the chart, is joined by Cadillac, Cadillac Embossed, Stellar, Metallic and Sun stocks, each featuring different traits to serve various applications. Brilliance includes foil, film-laminate and transfermetallized holographic patterns, manufactured using a proprietary transfer-metallization process, adding dimension, reflectivity and motion to printed projects. Cadillac cover includes 36 consistent colors in two weights. It's said to deliver a more uniform alternative to printing full-color coverage and can be die-cut and foil-stamped. Cadillac Embossed adds texture. Stellar's printable, UV-coated surface is ultrahard and glossy to resist scratches, scuffs and finger marks, making it suitable for applications requiring constant handling. Metallic has a rich, subtle foundation for offset, screen, letterpress and gravure printing. Comes in two calipers and four colors. Fluorescent Sun's dull-coated surface is available in seven colors and in two weights.

**Decorated Paper**, 800/882-3400. www.decoratedpaper.com



# Aseptic dispenser The Fresh

Flow™ tap is designed to dispense liquid product from a flexible pouch or a bag without allowing bacteria or oxygen to enter the package. A tamper-resistant closure with an airtight seal, the dispenser safeguards the product and reduces, or in some cases eliminates, the need for preservatives and refrigeration, the co. says. The tap is adaptable to most flexible bags, pouches or other, semi-rigid packages. It can travel through aseptic fillers and withstands irradiation and steamsterilization. Patented in several countries, it has a predictable flow rate and is user-friendly. Applications include beverages, flowable foods and pharmaceuticals, among others. Intl. Dispensing Corp.,

410/761-0070. www.idcdispensing.com

# new products applications

# Servo design facilitates carton-filling mechanics

**Mitsubishi Electric Automation, Inc. (www.meau.com),** a supplier of factory-automation solutions, and **Elopak (www.elopak.com),** a manufacturer of carton-filling machines for the juice and dairy industries, have implemented electric servo control as a replacement for traditional, mechanical devices. The new design is expected to eliminate half of the mechanical devices in a typical filling machine, reducing assembly time while improving performance and reliability.

The P-S50S gabletop carton-filling machine incorporates Mitsubishi's Q Series automation platform and MR-J2 super servos. These components join seamlessly in a multiprocessor system integrating complex servo motion with machine logic control.

"Our goal was to reduce assembly time and material costs in manufacturing the machine by simplifying operations," says Kenneth Poublon, project engineer for Elopak. "We chose Mitsubishi Electric's Q Series automation platform because it integrates several types of automation processes on the same system."

"The Q Series automation controller shares complex operations across several processors with an extremely rapid response," says Leroy Bowman, motion-control specialist for Mitsubishi Electric Automation. "By seamlessly integrating sequence control, complex servo-motion profiles, continuous process control and operator touchscreens, much of the traditional mechanical components and their associated issues can be eliminated from the machine."

During development of the P-S50S prototype, designers from Elopak, Mitsubishi Electric Automation and its distributor, **SunSource (www.sun-source.com)**, studied each mechanical aspect of the previous machine generation. Many mechanical requirements were reproduced using the Q Series motion processor, unique software and servos. The Q Series motion-control software allows the machine designer to use virtual mechanical devices such as gearboxes, clutches, line shafts, differential gears, cams and more, which exist only as graphical elements in the software. The end result is a coordinated, high-speed, complex servo-motion profile, says Mitsubishi. **Mitsubishi Electric Automation, Inc.**, 847/478-2100.

www.meau.com. Elopak, Inc., 248/486-4600. www.elopak.com. SunSource, 888/786-7723. www.sun-source.com.

# PAPERBOARD PYRAMIDS CUSHION FIXTURES

In-transit damage is no longer an issue at Norwell Lighting Fixtures, East Taunton, MA. Exquisite glass chandeliers, pendant lamps, wall sconces and other products are now shipped with loose-fill paperboard pyramids produced at the point of packing.

The 3D, 1½-in. board pyramids are formed from a perforated flat sheet processed by a machine that automatically bursts and folds the sheet, feeding directly into the shipper. Known as ExpandOS (for expand on site) from Vertex Internal Packaging Solutions (www. expandos.com), the pyramids are made efficiently, with one truckload of sheet expanding to fill 25 truckloads with the shockabsorbent material. The recyclable pyramids are said to have been tested successfully against ISTA and ASTM standards.

Norwell operations manager Jim Defley notes, "Damage has gone to zero since the implementation of ExpandOS. Employee training time was cut in half, and our packaging workspace requirements were drastically reduced."

Marking the cushioning system's rollout, Vertex says it is offering a free on-site demonstration, including packing 100 boxes at the user's plant.

Vertex Internal Packaging Solutions, 866/909-6266.

www.expandos.com.

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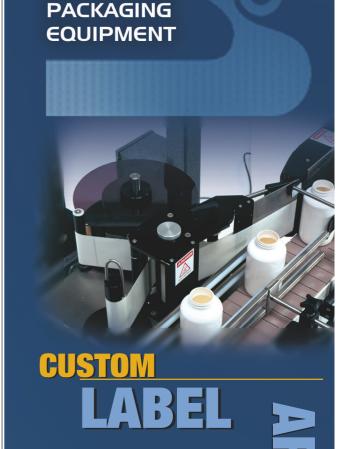
of Jackson, WI, it's critical. The product must lather without the use of a sponge or washcloth.

With the company's unique, proprietary formula, explains Lake marketing director Mike Kermendy, it was important for the packaging of this product to match the groundbreaking formula it contained. "So we developed the inverted plastic bottle to position the product as unique and make it easy for people to spot Beyond Fresh Intimates when it's on the shelf at the local grocery store, drugstore or mass merchandiser," he says.

The aerosol container is made of polyethylene naphthalate (PEN), incorporating dimethyl-2, 6-naphthalene dicarboxylate from **BP Chemical** (www.bp.com/chemicals/) and is not only transparent, but is also able to withstand high pressures and protect against water and oxygen transmission.

Another important PEN advantage for Lake is PEN's low sorption levels, so the colorful gels cannot alter the color of the bottle. Information isn't provided on the molding technique, bottle supplier or dispensing system. **BP Chemical**, 877/701-2726.

www.bp.com/chemicals/



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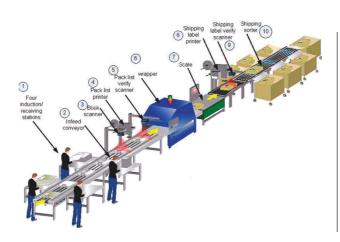


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# new productSequipment

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**Dorell Equipment, Inc., 732/247-5400.** www.dorell.com





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# Accumulation system An

advanced, zero-pressure accumulation system reportedly incorporates new technologies for ease of installation, operation and maintenance. EZLogic is said to adjust a conveyor's zone length to accommodate the length of the carton being conveyed, increasing carton throughput, accumulation density, conveyor efficiency and system flexibility. Zones may be sized for the smallest carton for greatest efficiency. Longer cartons introduced after installation do not obsolete the system, the co. says, and the low-usage long box is no longer a problem.

**Hytrol Conveyor Co., Inc.,** 870/974-5642. www.hytrol.com

# Personal computer The

Automation PC 620 and corresponding Automation Panel are offered in an innovative system for remote visualization applications. An integrated Smart Display Link allows for the transfer of all communications channels, including display, touchscreen, matrix keys, LED and service data at a distance of up to 130 ft using one cable. USB transfer is also supported, so machine data can be exchanged locally on the panel, for instance by a USB memory stick. The APC 620, with Pentium® M or Celeron® M CPUs, allows connection of another line with two Automation Panels, displaying different picture content than the panels in the first line.

**B&R Industrial Automation Corp.**, 770/772-0400.

www.br-automation.com



Traversing robots AE-RA and AE-SC are two series of traversing robots for use with molding machines. AERA-a and AERAII-a come in a range of configurations and stroke lengths and are made for 30- to 3,000-ton molding machines. Both are available with a subarm for three-plate applications. The AE-SC robot's telescoping, vertical arm handles payloads to 110 lb. With threeaxis servo drives, it reportedly is designed for molding machines in an 80to 4,500-ton range. Models range from simple pick-and-place operations to ultra-high-speed, the co. says. AEC, Inc., 262/641-3838.

www.aecinternet.com

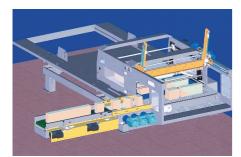
# new productsequipment

**Digital imagers** New models of Cyrel® Digital Imagers (CDI) include the Spark 2120 small-format, entry-level unit and the Spark 4835 middle-format imager. Both are designed for highquality flexo applications, with the 2120 aimed at narrow-web/label-trade applications, offering a small footprint and optional, bundled software. The 4835, for plates to 48 $\times$ 35-in., is supplied with a long-life, low-maintenance fiber laser and optical system, as well as a built-in plate loading/unloading table and the EasyClamp II to load and secure plates up to 6.35 mm thick on the drum. Esko-Graphics, 937/454-1721. www.esko-graphics.com

Color-management

**software** Profile Wizard™ colormanagement Mio software 3.1.100 is designed to help achieve accurate, consistent color at every step in the print-production process. The proofing software is said to generate International Color Consortium profiles that maintain color integrity for any input device, monitor display and output device. The software reportedly includes comprehensive ICC profile-editing capabilities, providing control over gradation, luminance and saturation, gray balance, white point and color correction.

Eastman Kodak Co., 203/845-7115. www.graphics.kodak.com



**Palletizer** For applications involving packaged products in cases as compact as 5 in. wide, a high-throughput, small palletizer is introduced. The machine's infeed handles the problem of tipping of high-center-gravity cases with innovations in metering, turning and rowand layer-forming sections. Modular plastic belts form smooth transitions between metering belts and from belts to row-former rolls. Product damage is eliminated through "soft-turn" technology, which uses close roll centers, allowing for accurate turning. A wide overhead reciprocating row pusher positively transfers a row of product. At the layeraccumulating table, plastic belting allows for a smooth transition from the rowforming to the layer-forming area. Columbia Machine, Inc., 360/694-1501.

www.palletizing.com

Placers Featuring Allen-Bradley MicroLogix<sup>™</sup> controllers and PIAB vacuum generators, the Model 4023 and Model 4024 placers accommodate rotary and reciprocating applications, respectively. Capable of speeds of up to 300 products/min, the Model 4023 offers a choice of a pneumatic or gearmotor drive and has a 24-in. inclined hopper. Options include variable speed control, a low-product sensor, vertical screw adjustments, a vacuum pump and casters. The Model 4024, with speed capabilities up to 60 ppm, is pneumatically driven and has an 18-in. inclined hopper. A missed-pick sensor, vertical screw adjustment and casters are among its available options. Both machines have a tubular steel frame and are equipped with leveling feet.

Packaging Systems Automation, Inc., 763/473-1032. www.psautomation.com





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# legal impact

Eric Greenberg, Attorney-at-Lav

# FDA guidelines vs. regulations



ometimes, the legal developments that may seem irrelevant to any individual packager may contain the seeds of important legal concepts. I have one such here. Stick with me, and I believe you will see the full significance of a seemingly obscure announcement by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration.

The executive summary is as follows. The government issued draft guidelines to help some food businesses operate more safely. However, some critics complained that these shouldn't be mere guidelines; they should be regulations with penalties attached for violations. But you must put yourself in FDA's shoes and ask, "Would I really want to make regulations out of these guidelines?"

We start by noting that FDA recently issued draft safety guidelines for companies that process and package freshcut fruits and vegetables. Not fresh, but *fresh-cut*, that is, fresh produce that has been processed by "peeling, slicing, chopping, shredding, coring, trimming or mashing, with or without washing or other treatment, prior to being packaged for consumption," says FDA. As examples, FDA offers "shredded lettuce, sliced tomatoes, salad mixes (raw vegetable salads), peeled baby carrots, broccoli florets, cauliflower florets, cut celery stalks,

shredded cabbage, cut melons, sliced pineapple and sectioned grapefruit."

Says FDA, "With \$12 billion in annual sales in the past few years, the fresh-cut sector of the produce industry is its fastest-growing segment." But, it adds, "From 1998 to 2004, forty foodborne-illness outbreaks were associated with the consumption of fresh produce. Of these produce-related outbreaks, twenty-five percent implicated fresh-cut produce."

So FDA's guidance document gets down into the nitty-gritty of the operations of those companies that pack fresh-cut fruits and vegetables, and offers specific suggestions on how to perform these processes, addressing 1) personnel health and hygiene; 2) training; 3) building and equipment; 4) sanitation operations; and 5) controls, from product specification to packaging, storage and transport. It also recommends that processors put in place control systems like Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP).

The recommendations also focus on decreasing the potential for packaging to be a source of microbial or other contamination, such as setting packaging specifications; using a first-in-first-out rotation system for packaging; and labeling products with recommended

storage instructions. The guidance also provides recommendations for using modified atmosphere systems, as well as guidance on the use of product shelf-life and "use-by" labeling.

The recommendations are not new and revolutionary in that many processors are already doing many or all of these suggested steps. However, the emergence of new and different products, and new processors, increases the need for clear guidance on how to pack these products safely.

Now, an analysis from the perspective of public policy and food regulation. As you might expect, a mere guidance document is not in all respects identical to a regulation. For one thing, guidelines don't set forth the one and only way to comply with a regulatory requirement. In fact, after years of wrangling, FDA was compelled to make that point explicitly on the guidance documents they issue. An inspector cannot claim you are in violation only because you fail to comply with a guidance document's recommendations. Instead, they have to find that your practices actually constitute a failure to comply with the law or regulations. Still, it's probably true that the easiest way to show an inspector that your practices meet regulatory requirements is to match the guidance document's recommendations.

On the other hand, if a regulation says to do something a certain way, and you don't, then that clearly is a violation, one that the inspector can add to his list of violations observed, and which might lead to more serious steps later.

So when critics complain that FDA has issued mere guidelines, their objection is based on the fact that the guidelines don't have "teeth." Only penalties, they say, provide industry with the incentive needed to get all or most members to comply, and provide the punishment for those who don't. Guidelines, they say, will not have the same effect, since some companies might feel free to ignore them.

Based on experience with similar patterns, I surmise that it's likely that FDA's thought process went something like this: "We want the producers of

fresh-cut fruits and vegetables to reduce microbial contamination, and to do that, we want them to tighten their operations. We can list ways to tighten operations. But if we make a regulation out of it, first of all, we have to make a proposed regulation, publish it in the Federal Register, collect public comments, and then revise and publish the final regulation. This so-called notice-and-comment rule-making process takes months or even years, and ties up a lot of our people's time.

"On the other hand, if we issue a guideline, it will be in industry's hands as soon as we can publish it in draft form, so companies can start to implement the recommendations long before we issue the final version, even as we collect input on the draft."

Also, FDA may have thought: "Once the regulation is final and published, then we have to add it to the things we inspect for and cite companies for failing to follow. Nothing wrong with that, as such," says the agency to itself, "but once a regulation is in place, if aspects of it are especially tough to comply with or otherwise problematic for industry, we might find ourselves defending the rules in court."

All of this—notice-and-comment; working the new rules into enforcement practices; and possible court actions—takes a lot of FDA's energy and time. An agency would therefore typically be inclined to use all this energy and time on issues that really demand this level of attention, issues that are a high priority for protection of the public health.

Agencies struggle to match priorities and resources, which leads them to make some requirements mandatory, while it recommends others. Regardless of the mechanism chosen, FDA's goal is to reap effective fruits from its labors.

Eric F. Greenberg is principal attorney with Eric F. Greenberg, PC, with a practice concentrated in food and drug law, packaging law and commercial litigation. Visit his firm's website at www.ericfgreenbergpc.com. Contact him by e-mail at efgreenberg@uhlaw.com, or by phone at 312/977-4647.

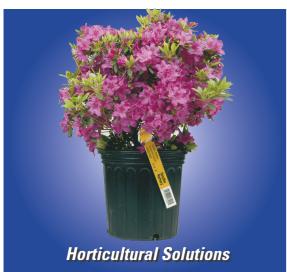
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APRIL 2006 PACKAGING DIGEST

# Flexible packs shift shapes with the times

Consumer convenience teams with technical know-how and some shapely new options in flexible packaging structures, along with high-tech visuals and maximum sales appeal in this year's Flexible Packaging Assn. competition. More than ever, pouches are replacing other structures as showcased by the 35 winners.



CACAO

NOEL

**Fondue** 

Lauren R. Hartman, Senior Editor

he 2006 Flexible Packaging Achievement Awards competition, produced by the Flexible Packaging Association (www.flexpack.org), which marks its 50 th year in 2006, proves that flexible packaging has many innovations to offer, with multifunctional attributes in the retail, institutional and industrial markets. This year, judges evaluated an unprecedented 127 packaging entries, with 35 taking 39 honors. The winners include standup bags for chocolate fondue, mayonnaise and coffee and, most notably, a growing list of flex-packs for fresh fruits and vegetables. Performance is critical this year, especially

involving the use of new, permeable materials and breathable films. One example is a microperforated pouch that keeps fruit fresh for up to two weeks. "Smart" or active flexible materials are also being combined with rigid packaging to improve how products are presented on the market. One is a thin-film bottle wrap that keeps beverages cold longer. Another rigid/flexible combination includes a vibrant shrink sleeve that secures stacked, glass pasta sauce jars into one sales unit. And there are several shapely, curvy, scalloped and angled pouches designed to lure consumers with a new appearance on store shelves.

The 12 top winners include 11 Gold awards and one Highest Achievement winner, all described here.

> The Silver Award winners are featured in an exclusive article on our website at www.packagingdigest.com/info/silver.

FPA's annual meeting in Naples, FL, the 2006 Flexible Packaging Achievement winners are recognized for outstanding converting and packaging in four categories—packaging excellence, technical innovation, environmental achievement and printing achievement.

#### Shaped pouch is a hit for sports drink

The Highest Achievement Award went to the pouch for Gleukos Performance Beverages, from Gleukos, Inc. (1). Ampac Flexibles (www.ampaconline.com) a division of Ampac Packaging, produces the custom, 16-oz pouch at facilities it acquired from Kapak Corp. last year.

Winning a Gold award for printing achievement and for packaging excellence, the standup pouch holds the first easily digestible performance drink in a container designed to mold to the body when placed in the pocket of a jacket or athletic apparel. The tall, hourglass shape is easy to hold and drink from. Gleukos wanted a slender, lightweight package that could support its innovative, new product formulation. Further, it wanted graphics to provide a high-tech look.

Ampac had to overcome engineering challenges in order to meet Gleukos' marketing requirements. In order to bring the innovative drink pouch to market, Ampac made the pouch so that it could stand up without assistance, despite its long profile and narrow base. When it came time to mate the fitment to the pouch and work within a tight insertion tolerance, Ampac modified its Hensen Packaging Concept (www.hensen.de) spout inserter to accommodate the fitment and allow for forming of the leakresistant seal—created by applying a heat source on the two opposite sides of the material/base assembly.

Pumping up the visual wattage are electric-colored graphics on the metallic foil lamination, a proprietary structure, believed to also include polyester, nylon and polyethylene. Gravure-printed in four colors, including black, silver and a shimmering, neon color





that corresponds to the beverage flavor, the sporty yet high-tech graphics were designed in-house by Gleukos. Though unique inks were not used, it appears as if they were, thanks to Lamiall solvent-based inks from INX Intl. Ink Co. (www.inxinternational.com), cured by heat; cylinders were etched by Southern Graphic Systems (www.alcoa.com/sgs/).

Ampac says it uses an eight-color **Toshiba** (www.toshiba-machine.co.jp) sectional drive GSN 120 press to reverse-print the pouch on its polyester layer. The three-piece dispensing assembly consists of a PE base fitment with a spout and a silicone valve, topped off by **Seaquist Closures'** (www.seaquistclosures.com) EZ Turn Cap, a tamper-evident, easy-turn closure that's large enough to prevent choking and accidental swallowing. Another important feature is the Smart Spout<sup>TM</sup> fitment/valve combination, which facilitates accessing the beverage without spills or leaks.

Not much has changed about Gleukos since PD covered the pouch last year (see PD, Nov. '05, p. 38 or view it online at www.packagingdigest.com/info/gleukos). Our last report mentioned that the hourglass-shaped pouch is being filled by contract packager, Jel Sert Co. (www.jelsert.com), West Chicago, IL. Portland-based Gleukos, Inc. offers the beverage in Lemon and Punch flavors. Additional flavors are forthcoming, the company says.

# Standup pouch for 'mayonesa'

The following entries all won Gold awards. One is a standup package available to the Mexican market (2) that protects mayonnaise from spoiling and has easy-opening and reclosing features. The Gold winner in packaging excellence, the Ponle un Chorro de Sabor, McCormick® Mayonesa y Aderezo, or Doy Pack, of mayonnaise, comes in four flavors marketed by McCormick de México and packed by Grupo Herdez

impact, stiffness and puncture-resistance become important," says Printpack.

"The structure required clean organoleptics, had to be cost-effective and had to have a barrier in order to maintain flavor consistency and shelf life. The products are actually in the dressing category [in Mexican markets]."

The plastic spout, from Menshen Closures (www.menshen.ch) in Mexico, makes it easy to reclose and return the pouch to the refrigerator.

The large surface panel accepts impactful, colorful graphics that enhance brand identity. McCormick de México's website indicates that the company will soon introduce a version of the pouch for yellow mustard.

Little is known about the specific structure of the pouch. Printpack U.S. describes the pouchstock as having an overall thickness of 6 mils. The film is a multilayer barrier lamination that incorporates polyester and a proprietary Printpack coextrusion, according to the converter. The Printpack plant in Mexico produces it on rolls for forming, filling and sealing on a proprietary, horizontal pouch machine. Flexo printing is in eight colors.

### Heat-and-eat fondue

A hot, new chocolate fondue pouch for Cacao Noel Fondue au Chocolat (3), marketed by Paris Gourmet, Carlstadt, NJ, won LPS Industries (www.lpsind.com) a Gold award in packaging excellence for its point-of-sale appeal. The standup, reclosable, zippered structure presents mouth-watering graphics on the outside, while the inside holds three disk-shaped pieces of melting chocolate that stay fresh in the pouch for up to a year.

While other fondue kits are packaged in paperboard cartons, this heat-and-eat product stands out in glossy, bright-red film.

The barrier pouch material is a polyester/polyethylene terephthlate (PET) construction about 4.5 mils thick that LPS adhesive-laminates, prints and converts into standup pouches using existing equipment. Reverse-printing of the polyester layer is in four process colors plus two spot colors on a Uteco (www.uteco.com) flexo press.

LPS also extrudes the handy, Top-Loc® plastic zipper profile to the top of the pouch and applies the zipper during the pouchmaking process. LPS can produce such pouches in small production run volumes, which it says gives an advantage to packagers that need small volumes or that want to conduct pilot or test runs .

Microwave-heated or boiled in water, the chocolate may be served right from the pouch, or it can be poured into a serving bowl. A simple but artistic graphic design features a strawberry being dipped into a bowlful of delicious, melted chocolate on the bright-red background—all that's necessary to promise a gourmet taste—a chocolate lover's dream.

With dimensions of  $7\times7$  in., the pouch has a 1-in. header and a  $2^1/_2$ -in. bottom gusset and holds 10 oz of product. Microwaving the package for one minute melts the contents. After cooling for another minute, the chocolate is ready to serve. There's no mixing or other extensive preparation.



WITH MADAGASCAN VANILLA
7.

Mesh-like pouch keeps 'fast-fruit' fresh

Flexible packages so often cater to the needs of the fast-food industry. McDonald's is no exception. Its Apple Dippers (4) fresh-cut, peeled apples are packaged in a clear, printed pouch that incorporates microperforation technology to keep produce fresh, crisp and sweet, without browning, for up to two weeks-an accomplishment, considering that sliced apples usually begin to oxidize and lose freshness within moments of being cut. Printpack took a Gold award this time for technical innovation, for the

portioned, sealed pouch it makes using Freshgard technology. The ready-to-eat apples are now part of McDonald's Happy Meals program, and can be purchased à la carte off of the Dollar Menu.

BIÈRE - BEER 5% ali

"Apple Dippers supports our efforts around our balanced and active lifestyle initiatives," says Mark Lepine, director of menu innovation and development at Oak Brook, IL-based McDonald's Corp.

The single-serve, 2.4-oz pack allows the apples to breathe, or respire, protecting their freshness for an amazing 10 to 14 days. The multilayer film consists of an outer layer of oriented polypropylene and Printpack's own sealant films under the PerformX brand, which it says offers a unique combination of oxygen transmission rate (OTR), clarity, seal strength and a broad sealing window. PerformX structures are roughly 2 mils thick. The PerformX film in this case is specially designed for fresh-cut produce applications.

Says Printpack's Mark Frascarelli, "The laminated, microperforated film allows users to 'dial in' specific oxygen- and vapor-transmission rates to enhance shelf life of fresh-cut produce. That's key to the technology for fresh produce, and makes Apple Dippers unique on the market. We accomplish this by combining an internally produced PerformX sealant film with lamination capabilities. For applications that need even more OTR transmission than films alone can deliver, we promote the use of microperforation technology."

The Freshgard family of breathable laminations and unsupported films for fresh-cut produce includes both adhesive- and extrusion laminations that are designed to accommodate the different varieties of apples Continued on page 24

# 1 Hourglass-shaped pouch for sports beverage p. 22

- 2 Spouted standup pouch for Mexican mayo p. 23
- 3 Tidy pouch for chocolate fondue p. 23
- 4 Micro-perforated pouch for fresh, sliced apples p. 23
- 5 Self-venting tray-pack for veggies p. 24
- 6 Glamourously printed coffee bag p. 26
- 7 Sassy retort pouch for U.K. sauces p. 28
- 8 Insulating sleeve label for cans of beer p. 30
- 9 Reclosable ice melter bag with handle p. 31
- 10 Shrink sleeve combines Barilla's two jars p. 32
- 11 Self-venting pouch for microwave-ready fresh vegetables p. 33
- 12 Space-saving pack for moisture-absorbing pads p. 33

S.A. de C.V. through which McCormick has a strategic alliance. Launched in October 2005, the gusseted, standup pouches with dispensing spouts come in 1-kg and 250- and 500-g sizes. **Printpack** 

(www.printpack.com) in Queretaro, Mexico, produces the packages, which place the dressings in a larger, flexible format. The move signals a trend whereby many packagers are successfully making a transition to a flexible package from a rigid container. These packs are additions to a rigid-container lineup, bringing an exciting and different format to condiments and dressings available in Mexico.

The spouts control servings and ensure that consumers can squeeze out nearly every last drop of dressing. There are major challenges between packaging mayonnaise in a large pouch versus packaging it in a shelf-stable, single-use, condiment size, especially for a product that has to maintain a nine-month shelf life. "The gauge has to be much heavier for large-volume pouches, where different requirements like drop

McDonald's can use. Further protecting the fresh flavor and color, the peeled apple slices are dipped in a Vitamin C/calcium solution prior to packaging.

"In some cases, because of the oxygen-transmissionrate requirements, we also use Freshgard Plus microperforation capabilities to increase the OTR of the structure," Frascarelli adds. "Freshgard is Printpack's brand of breathable laminations and films that are not microperforated, and Freshgard Plus is the brand of structures that are microperforated."

The bold, vibrantly printed graphics of Ronald McDonald on a green background are flexo-printed in eight colors at Printpack's Prescott Valley, AZ, facility.

A peelable, easy-to-open seal adds to the kid-friendly appeal. The proprietary package structure presented a number of challenges, but the breathable laser microperforations help achieve the variable respiration needs for the many apple varieties that could be contained in the pouch. "As far as we know, this is the first bag of its kind in the fast-food-chain market," Lepine points out.

"Perception is key," he adds. "We get a lot of questions why our apples in the Apple Dippers don't turn brown. We looked at modified atmosphere and several other options before deciding on this film."

With the growth of the fresh produce market, Lepine says the package provides several options for perishable fruit and other vulnerable products. "From McDonald's perspective, we love the visual of this film," he says. "It prints exceptionally well and has a nice sheen that improves overall appearance."

The microperforated lamination is supplied as

# With passive modification, the headspace around a product is not actively being changed, as it is during gas flushing.

rollstock, formed on various form/fill machines in place in at least six different McDonald's plants, Lepine adds.

We had a prior history with this type of film and use it for another perishable product item delivered to the 'back-of-the-house' of our restaurants," he points out. "For Apple Dippers, the work began during the spring of 2003, with qualitative research sessions.'

The first printed film test hit McDonald's restaurants in Altoona, PA, Chicago and Yakima, WA, in 2003. A national launch began in Spring, 2004.

### Fresh-veggie pack self-vents in the microwave

The Cryovac Food Packaging Division of Sealed Air Corp. (www.sealedair.com) has developed its Simple Steps<sup>™</sup> packaging for produce (5). Suitable for retail applications, foodservice or possibly use in vending machines, the new microwavable vacuumskin-pack for vegetables won a Gold award in technical innovation. Designed to steam and cook fresh or frozen vegetables in two minutes or less, the package is

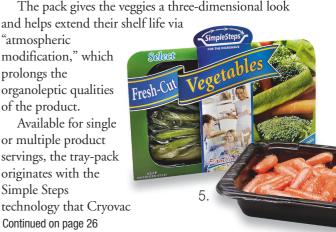
considered a breakthrough in technology. What's notable is its marriage of a highly permeable material which needs no perforations—a self-venting ability and the use of a microwavable tray in a vacuum-skin format. The vacuumizing of the lidding conforms to the contours of the product, improving presentation and merchandising appeal and extending shelf life to as much as 14 days.

A first in the marketplace for fresh produce, Simple Steps for Produce is being used with difficult-topackage vegetables such as asparagus, cauliflower, green beans and broccoli. Canada's Sun Valley Foods uses it for vegetables merchandised in paperboard cartons. Based in Kelowna, BC, Sun Valley sells broccoli, a vegetable medley, cut carrots and sliced zucchini in the tray-pack under the Smith's brand for \$3.49 to \$3.99 Canadian. The refrigerated shelf life for the Smith's brand of products is 12 days.

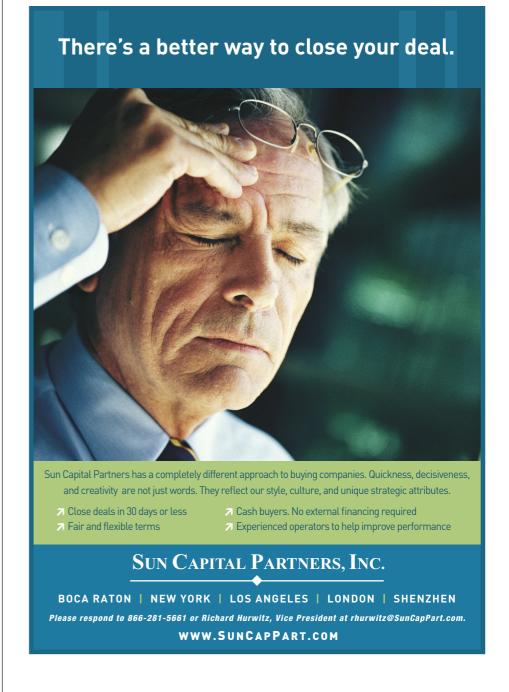
The pack gives the veggies a three-dimensional look

"atmospheric modification," which prolongs the organoleptic qualities of the product.

Available for single or multiple product servings, the tray-pack originates with the Simple Steps technology that Cryovac Continued on page 26







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commercialized in 2003 for heat-andserve tray-packs of precooked entrées. Those include products marketed by Smithfield Packaging (see PD, March '03, p. 34 and Sept. '03, p. 48), which won awards from the FPA and from DuPont at that time.

In development for about a year, the variation for produce uses a similar tray as the earlier technology but has a different, more suitable lidding film. Like the entrée version, the produce pack gives hurried consumers convenience in an easy-open tray that

allows vegetables to be prepared, and subsequently steamed, in three steps: Place the package in the microwave; cook for two minutes; peel open the package and serve. The film lidding "tents up" as the product heats and selfvents and relaxes over the food.

The self-venting feature requires no piercing or peeling of the film prior to cooking and no knife or scissors to open the package once the veggies are cooked. Stay-cool side handles also make it safe for consumers to remove the tray from the microwaye. The vegetables can be

served or eaten directly from the tray.

The package's hermetic-sealing technologies and highly permeable lid material for fresh produce allow for what the company calls "a passive modification of the package atmosphere." This eliminates the need for gas flushing to extend shelf life of the food by lowering the respiration and transpiration rates.

Myra Foster, manager of new business development at Cryovac, explains, "With passive modification, the headspace around a product isn't

www.fortresstechnology.com

actively being changed, as it is during gas flushing. Instead, its relies on the respiration rate of the product married to the oxygen-transmission rate of the material, to, over time, generate a certain change in the headspace atmosphere. The actual shelf life varies by the product, but is generally several days longer than fresh produce in other types of packaging."

Efficient for processors and home cooks alike, the vacuum-skin format includes materials that generate fairly high oxygen-transmission rates, adds Foster. "It's a matter of using the right resins and coextruding them in a way that's amenable to seal to the tray, and those traits translate into a material with high oxygen and carbon-dioxide permeability." She says the material introduced has an oxygen transmission rate ranging from 6,000 to 7,000 cc/mm²/24/ hr.

The 3-mil, multilayer polyolefin

# The permeable nature of the film supplies enough atmospheric oxygen to the inside of the package, and that's how we achieve the long shelf life.

lidding seals to a rigid, microwavable, barrier tray thermoformed of PP and ethylene vinyl alcohol by Mullinix Packages (www.mullinixpackages.com) and laminated with an easy-open, multilayer, coex sealant. When vacuumized to the tray, the permeable coex lidding film, with a compatible polymeric sealant of its own, helps minimize the formation of ice crystals inside the tray, eliminating freezer burn.

The tray-pack can be vacuumized on Multivac's (www.multivac.com) T200 tabletop or T350 production vacuumskin rollstock machinery, explains Foster. "There were some modifications made to allow these machines to work with skin packaging," she says. "As the product respires or consumes oxygen and generates carbon dioxide, the permeable nature of the film supplies enough atmospheric oxygen to the inside of the package, and that's how we achieve the long shelf life."

Cryovac has successfully packaged various types of produce in the packaging, from including Sun Valley's assorted offerings. Foster adds that the Continued on page 28



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packaging can also be used for frozen vegetables, as it can withstand freezing temperatures to microwave heating temperatures up to 212 deg F.

#### Glitzy packs perk for coffee

The coffee aisle is being overstuffed with new introductions, exotic flavors and beautiful packaging, which prompted Loblaw Companies Ltd., Brampton, ON, to go one step further with its new, luxurious rendition of the President's Choice coffee pack. Converted by Genpak LP

(www.progressivepac.com), the unusual, vacuumized valve bag (6) won Gold for printing achievement.

Canada's largest food distributor, with operations across the country, Loblaws introduced the pouches in the fall of 2005. Notes Bill Reilly, development manager at Genpak, "Loblaws approached us with the design that was printed on cans at the time. We all knew that we would be able to deliver the kind of impactful packaging that would jump off store shelves.

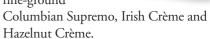
"The designers are enthused with the

superior packaging; the purchaser is satisfied with the minimum costs in the product launch. We print the rollstock for all of the stockkeeping units side-by-side, and the printing manager is delighted with the great output achieved while producing less waste. It's a win-win situation."

The 250-g standup valve bag for fragrant Costa Rican coffee features a rolldown opening that can be secured with a clip wrapped around the bag.

Costa Rican coffee is just one in a series of Loblaw's beautifully printed bag

motifs presenting artistic, tropical or sophisticated graphic designs. The coffee flavors include French Vanilla, Chocolate Swiss Almond, Flavored Decaffeinated Vanilla Hazelnut, fine-ground



COSTA RICAN

Costaricain

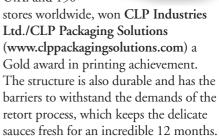
Genpak produces the rollstock for the bag at its plant in Aurora, ON. The three-ply adhesive/extrusion lamination consists of polyester/PE/foil, reverseprinted in eight colors on a 10-color Fischer+Krecke (www.fischerkrecke.biz/) flexo press at speeds of 300 m/min. The Costa Rican coffee's eyecatching, painterly graphics depict a green and yellow parrot on a rich, gradating, green-to-black background. The lush and eye-popping design is courtesy of Opaltone® digital separation software from Opaltone, Inc. (www.opaltone.com). Genpak says the software allows it to print 12 different coffee variety designs side-by-side, using the same eight colors. Reilly notes that Opaltone overcomes saturation deficiencies in cyan/magenta/yellow inks, producing greater optical contrasts and richer, brighter color appearances.

"Running jobs back-to-back using Opaltone, we eliminate ink washups and color matching, which saves time," he says. "When we wash up color, we can also create a certain amount of ink and solvent waste, which can be detrimental to the environment. Opaltone eliminates washups and is more environmentally friendly. It can reduce the material used to set up the press and reduces ink usage and waste by up to thirty percent, depending on the job."

# Marks & Spencer savors saucy retort pouch

Vanilla Custard

Looking good enough to eat, the graphics displayed on standup pouches for a line of shelf-stable sauces from Marks & Spencer (7), a U.K.-based retailer with more than 400 stores throughout the U.K. and 150



Marks & Spencer demanded luxury Continued on page 30

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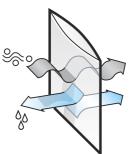




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 $\mathbf{Freshgard}^{^{\mathrm{TM}}}$  technology lets oxygen in, and keeps condensation out.



and high performance when it asked CLP to create an adhesive-laminated standup pouch for the sauces in time for the 2005 holiday season. CLP says the dwell time in the retort chamber is short, which prevents the flavors from developing an overcooked taste that could compromise a delicate vanilla sauce or a well-balanced gravy. "Retorting the same products in jars could conceivably also overcook the sauces," CLP reports.

A shiny, nonfoil laminate was chosen for four sauces in the line, which include

Turkey Gravy, Cranberries in Ruby Port Sauce, Blueberry Dessert Sauce and Vanilla Custard, because the nonfoil structure can be heated in a microwave oven. Converted in Israel using polyester films from India's Polyplex Corp. Ltd., (www.polyplex.com), PE from Plastosak Ltd. of Israel and adhesives from Rohm & Haas (www.rohmhaas.com), the 250-g, preformed, standup pouch consists of (from the outside) PET/high-barrier PET/biaxially oriented nylon/cast PP

microns (almost 4 mils). CLP prints, laminates and converts the pouches on a high-performance line equipped with a Cerutti (www.cerutti.it) gravure press and a Rotomec solvent-based laminator (Rotomec S.p.A. is part of the Bobst Group [www.bobstgroup.com]).

The white CPP gives the laminated pouch structural integrity and a rich, esthetic background for printing. The PET helps protect the delicate flavors of the sauces and adds structural strength, and the white CPP layer also eliminates the need to lay down a broad, opaque

white ink. The CPP also improves the look of the pouch, simplifies printing and offers the benefit of a strong sealing layer, CLP says. Metallic silver highlights underscore the brand image of richness that Marks & Spencer works hard at maintaining and acts as a base to boost the additional colors.

To prevent scratches, CLP does a precision job of reverse-printing the outer PET layer in eight colors using conventional inks (from Siegwerk Druckfarben AG [www.siegwerk.de] of Germany), including metallic inks that highlight and underscore the graphic elements. Designed in-house, the fullbleed graphics include rich, luminous elements that communicate elegance on the face panels. The color scheme of deep and light blue, metallic silver and cool whites dominates the graphics for the Vanilla Custard sauce. CLP makes the pouches on Totani (www.totaniamerica.com) equipment.

The pouch's height provides extra eye appeal, as well as plenty of space on the back panel for heating instructions and nutritional labeling.

According to Marks & Spencer, the pouch also has a larger shelf presence than the rigid jar it replaces, while the luminous graphics and superb print quality augment the performance of the PET laminate in protecting the delicate flavors of the contents. The products are copacked in Scotland by Baxter, which fills and seals them on a line from Japan's Toyo Jidoki Co. Ltd. (www.tyj.co.jp).

# Sleeve label keeps beer from losing its cool

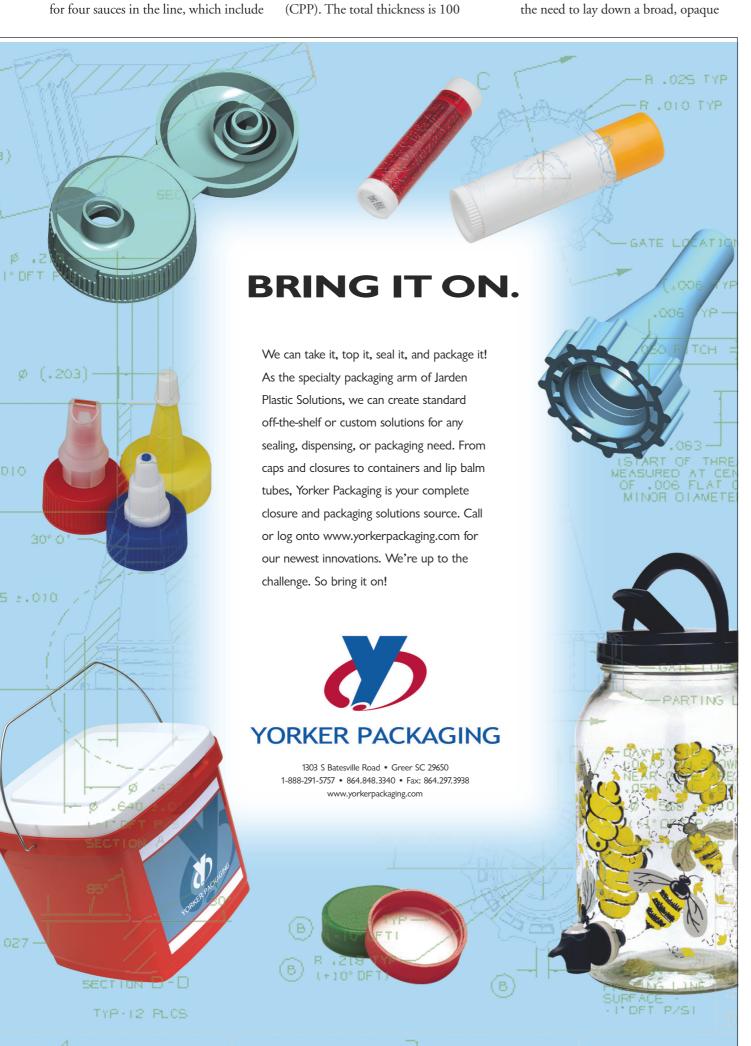
sleeve label (8) from DuPont Packaging and Industrial Polymers (www.dupont.com) won both a Gold in technical innovation and a Silver Award in packaging excellence. Adopted by Labatt Brewing Co. for 473-mL cans of Labatt Blue Pilsener, the Cool2go® wrap or coating protects the beer from heat transferred from warm hands, condensation and cold temperatures.

A specially engineered, insulative

Cool2go began appearing on the Labatt Blue Cold One™ in Canadian markets in May 2005 (see PD Aug. '05, p. 6). It keeps drinks cold and stays put on the can or bottle.

DuPont says the
Cool2go wrap is 8
made by placing a
polymer insulation
between two layers
of its Teijin Films' TM

Melinex® film, which results in a thermal barrier. DuPont says that once the beer is chilled, the wrap keeps the beer cold for up to 30 min longer than if the can were not wrapped. Cool2go can be used with or without a shrink-sleeve



label applied over it. In Labatt's case, a shrink-sleeve label is used and is gravure-printed in a striking blue, red, white and silver color scheme, which represents the well-established Labatt brand, highlighted by silver inks. Multi-Color (www.multicolorcorp.com) converts the shrink sleeve used in conjunction with the wrap at its facility in Scottsburg, IN.

The prepress work, including separations and cylinder engraving, was performed at Multi-Color's Graphics Services facility in Erlanger, KY. A patented process produces the thin, thermal barrier that locks in coldness. The labels are printed using DuPont Cyrel® NOW plates. The combination of wrap and sleeve label is applied by a custom shrink system at Alliance Labeling (www.alliancelabeling.com) in Oakville, ON. The cans come in a sixpack carrier in the same color scheme, printed using Cyrel plates.

Considered a smart package, the enhancement provides high performance without adding bulk and provides quality graphics found with conventional labels at pennies per package. Cans labeled with it can be recycled by major aluminum producers, and there's no energy penalty in cooling a can insulated with the sleeve label. DuPont's Susan Procaccini, venture manager of insulated packaging, says that Cool2go also appears on cans of beer copacked in Sao Paulo, Brazil, for Skol's Skol Geladona brand. Look for additional introductions this spring.

#### Totable bag breaks the ice

An eye-catching, angular pillow-bag with an angle cut on both sides and an integral, die-cut carrying handle, is helping to launch Day Saver Ice Enemy, a granular, concentrated ice-melter product from DampRid, Inc., Orlando (9). Convenience played a major role in the development of this package. As easy to handle as a rigid container, the zippered bag is lightweight and allows users to spread the product without additional tools or spreading devices.

Produced by Flex Pack USA, Inc. (www.flexpackusa.com), the marketing branch of film converter Nina Plastic Bags (www.ninaplastics.com), the package won Gold in packaging excellence for its ability to easily distribute a product in a heavy-weight size in a small- to medium-size area without additional equipment, preparation tools or special training.

Flex Pack began working with DampRid last fall on the project. The custom bag holds 9 lb of product and measures 13×14.7 in. Converted in a single pass by Nina, the bagstock is made with an outer layer of 1-micron (almost 50-ga) PET from Mitsubishi (www.m-petfilm.com), reverse-printed by flexo in eight colors on a Windmoeller & Hoelscher (www.whcorp.com) Novoflex® eight-color press. Showcasing the product in a

deep blue-on-blue color scheme, the graphics, created by Lam Design (www.lamdesign.com), illustrate product usage and its benefits.

The PET layer is adhesive-laminated to a three-layer, 150-micron (almost 6 mils) linear-low-density PE coex blend that Nina makes in-house. Nina applies the LDPE zipper in-line. Technipac, Inc. (www.technipacinc.com) produces the bags on equipment from Totani.

Once the top of the bag is opened by accessing a tear notch on one side, the bag's **Presto Products** 

(www.prestoproducts.com) press-to-close zipper can be used to close the bag for storage and later use. The bag opens to reveal a clear, 150-micron LDPE membrane inserted in the top that's diepunched with tiny 1/4-in. holes spaced 1/2-in. apart, through which the product releases when the bag is shaken. The membrane functions like a sieve when the bag is flipped over. The force of the product opens the membrane, which distributes the ice melter when the bag is gently shaken. The bag also resists Continued on page 32

















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moisture and helps to extend the shelf life of the product with its durable, barrier construction.

### Barilla stacks jars in its favor

Italy's Pasta Barilla, considered a world leader in pasta production, unveiled its Restaurant Creations sauces to the U.S. in a twin-pack of two, stacked glass jars (10) bundled in a PETG shrink sleeve. The sleeve is reverse-printed in eight colors by Alcoa Flexible Packaging (www.alcoa.com/flexiblepackaging).

Barilla touts the sauces as restaurant quality, each prepared separately to allow its fresh ingredients to maintain integrity and flavor (also see PD, Sept. '04, p. 4). Shape is a factor with this winner, too. A neat way to offer two different sized jars in one, the 50-micron shrink sleeve unitizes them in an eyecatching, hourglass shape that stands out from the rest on store shelves.

Winning a Gold in packaging excellence, Restaurant Creations separates the sauces until preparation, to provide a smooth, subtle taste. The dual-jar pairing needs no other packaging and may be the first of its kind available in the U.S.

The sauces go beyond conventional red sauces to reflect authentic Italian sauce usage with a blend of flavors that highlights key ingredients.

The sauces include a "chef's recipe" in the top jar, and a base sauce in the bottom jar, made of tomatoes and imported olive oil. The contents of both jars can be mixed with 1 lb of pasta for a tasty meal.

The perforated PETG sleeve covering



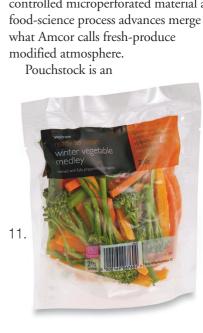
the body of both jars, affording tamperevidence and easy removal, is heat-sealed to the containers using a steam tunnel. When Barilla brought the original labels to the U.S., Alcoa and its cylinder supplier Southern Graphics Systems (a part of Alcoa) improved the graphics with a brighter look and sharper vignettes. An "anti-wet" overcoat eliminates air bubbles between the label and the jar. Alcoa prints the label graphics on a Rotomec press.

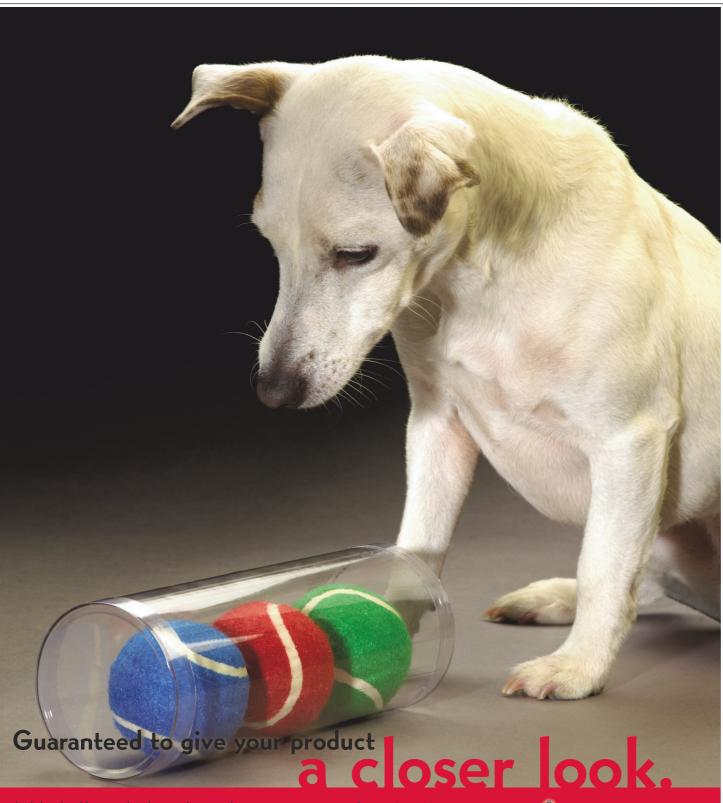
Restaurant Creations in the 17-oz package is available in metro New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Hartford/New Haven and Chicago in three varieties.

Judy Glass, manager of product development at Barilla America, Inc., Bannockburn, IL, says the company plans to move the brand into more markets with new varieties. "Our goal was to develop a pasta sauce that retains the integrity and fresh flavor of each of the ingredients, like a fresh, new recipe," says Glass.

# Veggies steam in venting pack

The Food and Drug Administration calls fresh-cut produce "the fastest growing sector of the fresh produce industry." It's no wonder that Amcor Flexibles (www.amcor-flexibles.com) developed a self-venting pouch (11) that can steam such veggies evenly in a microwave oven. Winning two Gold awards—for packaging excellence and technical innovation—SelfVent delivers an evenly cooked product that needs no additional preparation. A patented, controlled microperforated material and food-science process advances merge in what Amcor calls fresh-produce





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"These fresh vegetable packs don't respond well to gas flushing, so we



developed Amcor P-Plus modified atmosphere, microperforation technology to improve product quality and to extend the shelf life of fresh-cut produce," he says. "We match the permeability of the pack to the respiration of the produce and maintain an aerobic, modified atmosphere."

Prepared vegetable mixes usually achieve a shelf life of seven to 10 days in the P-Plus MAP package, depending on the produce, he adds.

Flexo-printed on a Fischer+Krecke 16S gearless press, the pouch is gravure-pattern-coated with an antifog coating on the inside. Whitrose uses the pouch for ready-to-steam, fresh vegetables, as is Tesco for the EasySteam vegetable line.

Five Amcor sites are involved in developing the SelfVent pouch, including AF Winterbourne in the U.K., which provided bespoke, peelable CPP that AF's Colodense facility laminates to PET. The P-Plus MAP technology was applied at AF Ledbury, where the pouches were flexo-printed and pattern-coated with an antifog material. A three-ply laminate for the gusset is from AF Schupbach in Switzerland. Converting takes place at AF EuroPouch in Denmark.

# Space saver makes a compression

The Compression Pack for Cryovac's Dri-Loc® Pads (12) won the final Gold award, which is for environmental achievement. Made by the Cryovac Food Packaging Div. of Sealed Air Corp., the absorbent Dri-Loc pads are compression-packed in two-color-printed PE film and are overwrapped in a clear PE dust cover to create a tight, compact bundle.

The space-saving packaging can

reduce cube volume by up to 40 percent, says Cryovac. PD hears it can also improve storage and freight efficiency and lowers solid waste weight by about 80 percent.

With an easy-open prescored paddispensing feature, the economical, caseless package holds the same number of pads as similarly sized corrugated csae, Cryovac says. After the wrap is removed, the compressed bags can be carried into a processing area without dusting. **Bunzl** (www.bunzldistribution.com) will be distributing the product for Sealed Air.

#### More information is available:

Flexible Packaging Association, 410/694-0800. www.flexpack.org.

Amcor Flexibles, 44 1452 634100. www.amcor-flexibles.com..

Ampac Flexible Div., Ampac Packaging, 513/671-1777. www.ampaconline.com.

Alcoa Flexible Packaging, 804/281-2395. www.alcoa.com/flexiblepackaging.
CLP Industries Ltd., 973/808-4441. www.clppackagingsolutions.com.
Cryovac Food Packaging Div., Sealed Air Corp., 864/433-2000.
www.sealedair.com.

**DuPont Packaging and Industrial Polymers,** 800/438-7225. www.dupont.com. Flex Pack USA, Inc., 407/857-2883. www.flexpackusa.com.

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# Physicians' samples prescribe blisters

A new packaging line at Sanofi-Aventis' St. Louis plant produces two-unit blister-packs of Ambien supplied to physicians to hand out as samples.

Jack Mans, Plant Operations Editor

anofi-Aventis is the world's third-largest pharmaceutical company, with facilities in more than 100 countries. Its plant in St. Louis is strictly a packaging operation that runs products brought in from other Sanofi operations as well as from third parties. The newest line, installed in 2004, produces physicians' samples packaged in blister-packs. During PD's visit, the line was running blister-packs containing two 6.25-mg tablets of Sanofi's new extended-release AmbienCR®.

The operation starts with a Model UPS4-MT intermittent-motion blister-manufacturing machine from Uhlmann Packaging Systems (www.uhlmannusa.com). "We have other Uhlmann equipment here in the plant, and we're very satisfied with it," says engineering group supervisor David Powell. "We consider Uhlmann to be the Cadillac of blister machines, and we wouldn't consider anyone else.'

The machine was running a roll of clear, 10-mil Pentapharm® polyvinyl chloride mono film from

Klöckner Pentaplast (www.kpfilms.com) for these tablets. This is a single-layer film, but other products run on this line use film that includes a layer of Aclar® fluoropolymer film from Honeywell Specialty Materials (www.honeywell.com) laminated to the PVC. Ineos Films Inc. (www.ineosfilms.com) also supplies film for the blisters.

Film enters the machine and travels through a preheating station and then to a forming station, where compressed air with a plug assist forms 12 blisters per index, while the machine has paused between cycles. After the blisters are formed, the film moves to the tablet-feeding section, where a GFSII feeder from Gemel Precision Tool Co., Inc. (www.Gemel.com) moves up and down to fill 12 blister-packs with two tablets during each cycle. Tablets are conveyed from a floor hopper beside the Uhlmann machine up to a smaller hopper on top of the feeder. From there, a vibrating pan delivers the tablets into a bowl on the GFSII feeder that moves up and down and fills 24 individual plastic tubes that carry the tablets to the blisters. The feeder has two

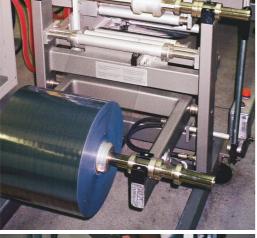
plates that reciprocate during the feeding cycle. Both plates incorporate o-rings that capture the tablets, while transfers are taking place. These o-rings, which minimize product damage, are a key feature of the Gemel feeders. During each cycle, the top plate opens, and the line of tablets in each tube drops the length of one tablet to the o-rings on the top plate, after which the top plate closes across the tube, and the o-rings hold up the remaining tablets. The bottom plate then reciprocates, and the tablets drop down plastic chutes into the cavities in the blisters on the conveyor below. This vertical gating technique with the o-rings minimizes cleaning time and provides easy and gentle product release.

The web then travels beneath an Uhlmann VisioTec Visiochrom inspection system, which checks the blisters for position, presence, chips, shape and color fidelity. Results are displayed on the machine's touch-screen monitor, which records statistics for each blister and documents all parameters and measurement results for validation. When the system detects a bad package, it signals the programmable logic controller, which logs the blister into a shift register. This tracks that specific blister to a reject station located beneath the die-cut station, where it is ejected.

After leaving the inspection system, the blisters pass through a lidstock-sealing station. The lidstock is a roll of foil/poly/paper-laminated film, which is printed with the Ambien logo and colors on the foil top side, and contains instructions for opening the blister as well as dosage instructions on the paper bottom side. Suppliers of lidstock include Alcoa (www.alcoa.com), Alcan Packaging Pharma Center (www.alcanpackaging.com), and Hueck Foils (www.hueckfoils.net).

The lidding material enters from the rear of the machine and travels through a Model B12 flexo printer from Adolph Gottscho, Inc. (www.gottscho.com) that prints a lot code and expiration date on the paper side. The material is then pulled up above the machine and passes through a reversing shoulder that rotates the material 90 deg Continued on page 36

A roll of clear, 10mil vinyl film is mounted at the inlet of the blister machine, far left, top. After the blisters are formed, the film enters the tablet feeder, where tablets are delivered to the individual blisters, far left, bottom. Lidstock enters the blister-manufacturing machine, passes through a flexo printer and then travels down to be sealed onto the top of the blister, left.









# E Z - E S T

No question about it: easy-opening pull-top ends on metal food packaging are driving new sales gains virtually everywhere.

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so that it is parallel to the forming material passing below. The lidding material then travels down to be sealed

STAR SCIENTIFIC packs "cigaletts," a smokeless tobacco product, into child-resistant blister-packs using a high-speed thermoform/fill/seal machine. Read about it at www.packagingdigest.com/info/star

onto the formed web. A printregistration system looks for a black rectangular mark on the lidding material in order to ensure that it lines up correctly with the formed web.

A single-stroke index immediately after the lid-sealing station pulls the material through the machine at 12 blisters/index. Next is a compensation loop that brings the material to the multistroke section of the machine, where the stations operate four times faster than the forming and sealing stations. The web of sealed blisters travels through a station that perforates the blisters so that a user can peel away the lidding material to access the product. The web of blisters then enters

a multistroke index, which advances one blister row per index. This is followed by a punch station, where the three blisters in that row are cut out of the web. The waste web is shredded, after which it discharges into a large plastic bag.

A lowerator device uses vacuum to hold the individual blister-packs and place them onto a cross conveyor as they are punched out of the web. At this point, blisters that have been selected to be rejected by the Visiochrom inspection system or other defect sensors are removed. As a further check, a reject-



End-load cartons are picked from a magazine by a rotating pickup system that prebreaks and preopens the cartons as they are placed into lugs on the conveyor.

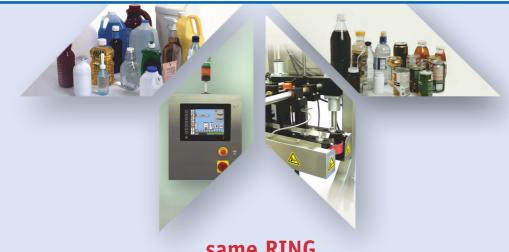
verification system confirms the presence or absence of the blisters passing on the conveyor after the reject station, to make sure the packages that were supposed to be rejected were actually removed. If it detects a package that is not supposed to be present, it shuts down the blister machine and sounds an alarm.

A model Neslab HY300 chiller from Thermo Electron Corp. (www.thermo.com/tc) chills the water that is pumped through the blister machine to cool the blisters after they have been formed and after the top film has been applied and sealed.

he blisters travel single-file up the conveyor from the

Uhlmann machine to a Model SC6 Cartopac cartoner from IWKA PacSystems, Inc. (www.iwkapacsystems.com). The blisters drop into a vertical magazine from which an oscillating feeder places them into lugs on a conveyor passing below. Following this, a feeder from RonTech AG (www.rontech.ch), which IWKA PacSystems supplied, picks inserts from an inclined magazine and places them on top of the blisters in the lugs. Sensors installed downstream from the insert placer check for missing blisters and/or inserts, while a bar-code scanner checks to ensure that the correct insert has been placed.

Next the blisters and inserts travel to the carton-insertion section of the machine. End-load cartons are delivered in a magazine and are picked up by suction cups on three arms on a rotating pickup system that prebreaks and preopens the cartons as they are placed on the conveyor. An embossing wheel stamps lot code and expiration date on a major flap of each carton as it passes on the conveyor. Arms push the blisters and inserts into the cartons, after which the ends are tucked into place. The machine control keeps track of cartons that should be rejected because of an error, and a reject verification scanner checks exiting cartons and shuts down the machine if any discrepancy is detected. Another bar-code scanner checks each Continued on page 38



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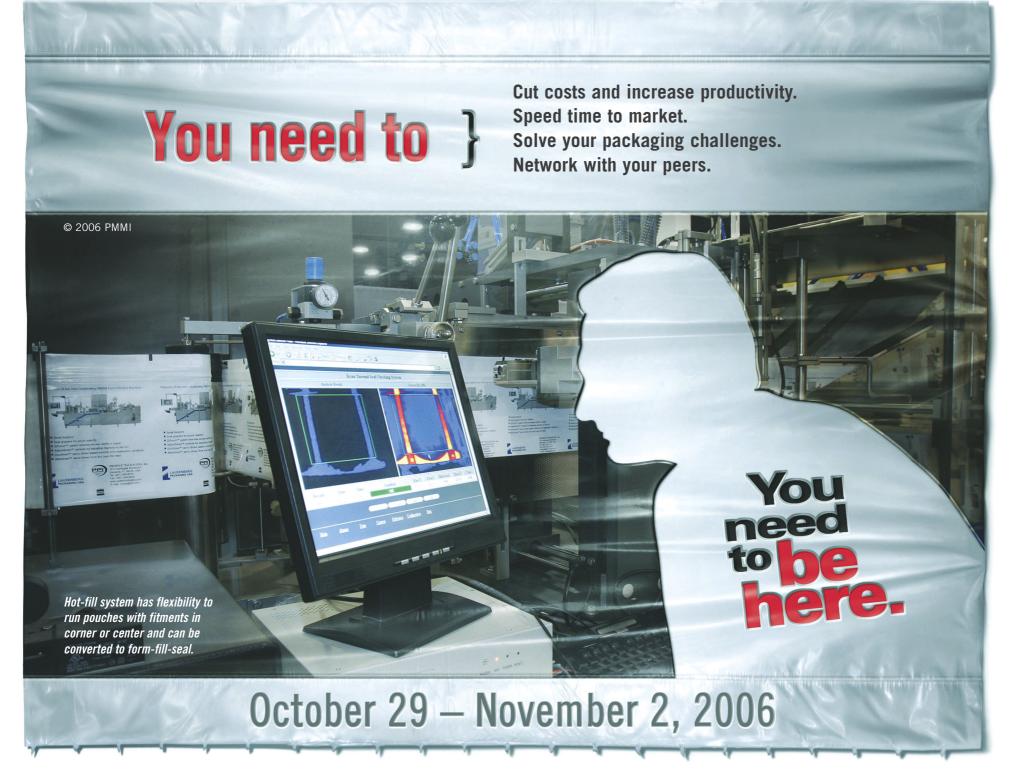
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The cartons then travel over a Model 1500 checkweigher from Boekels USA/IAI (ww.boekels.com). Next, they are manually placed into trays that travel past an Excel ink-jet printer from Videojet Technologies, Inc. (www.videojet.com), which applies the lot code and expiration date.

The trays enter a Model SE-10C bottom-loading case packer from Sabel Eng. Corp. (www.sabelengr.com). A servo-driven collation module stacks the incoming product in four layers of four

trays each and transfers the load to the elevator platform. Vacuum cups pull a flat case from the case magazine, and open and place it over the elevator platform, which rises to place the load inside the case. The bottom inner flaps are folded as the filled case is pushed free of the elevator platform, after which the remaining flaps are folded, and the top and bottom of the case are sealed with tape using tape-heads from 3M (www.3m.com). Sabel's Model SE-10C is very compact and can be changed over in less than 10 min without using tools.

The case is then conveyed through a



Case labels are printed with two sets of product descriptions and bar codes, and the labels are applied around one corner of the case so they can be viewed from two sides.

labeler from Quadrel Labeling Systems (www.quadrel.com) with an M8485se print head from Sato America, Inc. (www.satoamerica.com). Each label is printed with two sets of product descriptions and bar codes, and the labels are applied around one corner of the case so the information is visible from two directions. The cases travel over a Micromatic checkweigher from Mettler-Toledo Hi-Speed Inc. (www.hispeedcheckweigher.com) for fill verification, after which they are manually palletized.



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Alcan Packaging Pharma Center, 502/647-2308.

www.alcanpackaging.com. Alcoa, 804/281-2262. www.alcoa.com. BoekelsUSA/IAI, 201/651-0500. www.boekels.com.

**Gemel Precision Tool Co., Inc.,** 215/355-2174. www.gemel.com. **Honeywell Specialty Materials,** 908/730-6048.

www.honeywell.com/aclar. Hueck Foils, 732/974-4100.

www.hueckfoils.net. Ineos Films Inc., 302/838-4000. www.ineosfilms.com.

**IWKA PacSystems, Inc.**, 973/227-5575. www.iwkapacsystems.com.

Klöckner Pentaplast of America, Inc., 540/832-3600. www.kpfilms.com.

Mettler-Toledo Hi-Speed, Inc., 607/257-6000.

www.hispeedcheckweigher.com. **Quadrel Labelng Systems,** 

440/602-4700. www.quadm.l.com. RonTech AG, 0041-0-81-257-01.

www.rontech.ch. Sabel Engineering Corp.,

707/938-4771. www.sabelengr.com. Sato America, Inc., 704/644-1650.

www.satoamerica.com.

Thermo Electron Corp., 800/258-0830. www.thermo.com/tc.

3M, 800/722-5463. www.3m.com. **Uhlmann Packaging Systems,** 973/541-6271.

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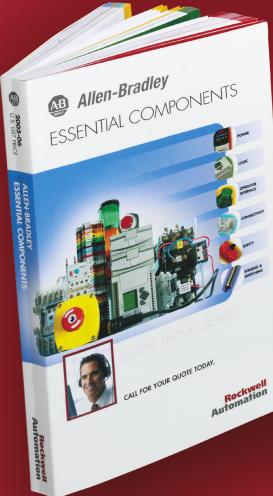
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Flexing their muscles.. with innovation

Flexible packaging experts highlight the latest trends to be showcased at PACK EXPO International in late October.

nnovation is one of the packaging industry's most prevalent themes. But, according to major players in the U.S.'s \$21.3 billion flexible packaging industry, innovation isn't seen as innovative thinking at all—it's accepted as the industry norm. And this mindset won't be changing anytime soon. Building on more than five decades of continuing innovation, industry leaders maintain that this key competitive advantage has allowed them to outpace other packaging options by nimbly responding to customer needs, aggressively pursuing opportunities to expand market share and forcefully moving into other product segments and geographic regions.

Let's look at the numbers. A recent study by the Flexible

Packaging Association (www.flexpack.org) reveals that the flexible packaging industry directly employs more than 80,000 people in the U.S. alone, accounting for more than 17 percent of the \$124 Continued on page 42

The Hot N Handy® pouch, top, was developed by Robbie Manufacturing to replace leaky and greasy packs for deli rotisserie chickens. The Microperf Dialyzer package, center, is an ethylene-oxide-sterilizable pouch adopted by Baxter Healthcare. Rollprint Packaging Products won the Highest Achievement and a Gold Award in the 2005 FPA awards competition

for this package. Wasatch Ice Water Co. is bringing 20,000-year-old artesian water to market in a standup, flexible pouch, right, from Ampac Flexibles.

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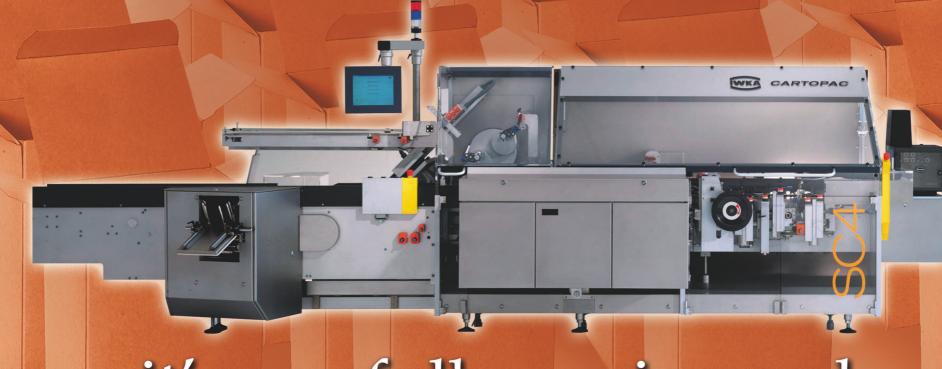
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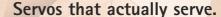
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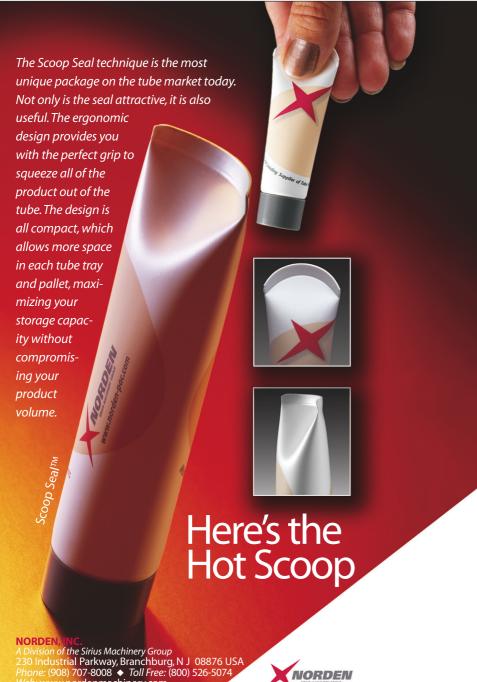
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Kraft is providing consumer convenience to its shredded cheeses with a reclosable slider zipper from Zip-Pak.

billion domestic packaging market. More than 55 percent of flexible packaging is for retail and industrial food applications.

With that kind of power, it's no wonder flexible packaging advancements will be in abundance at this fall's PACK EXPO International 2006 (www.packexpo.com), sponsored and produced by the Packaging Machinery Manufacturers Institute (PMMI [www.pmmi.org]). Here's an early preview of some of the trends that will be highlighted at the show, being held Oct. 29 to Nov. 2, at Chicago's McCormick Place.

tudents of World War II will readily recall the Big Three of that era: Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt and Josef Stalin. Overseeing the war effort and planning the shape of the post-war world, this trio left their imprint on the world. Their decisions, and the ramifications of their agreements, continue to reverberate.

Flexible packaging thought leaders have their own Big Three to lead them in the battle for market supremacy. The following key themes will undoubtedly mold the industry's growth in the years

Safety: The development and implementation of new films and protective substrates will allow the industry to expand its reach within the food industry while also making strides in other markets.

Consumer Convenience: Packaging that eases consumer use (and reuse) and incorporates materials that can withstand heating and freezing, along with visible, value-added features such as reclosable technologies and convenient carrying handles, will grow in importance.

Shelf Appeal: The catchphrase across all packaging segments has clear implications in the flexible packaging arena. Advances in materials, printing technologies and structural designs add up to enhanced branding and in-store marketing opportunities for both consumer product companies and burgeoning private-label retailers.

While an obvious issue, safety remains, quite rightly, a primary focus for the industry. "Product safety, absolutely, is a very important factor in packaging decisions," says Alan Roberts, vp of processor sales for **Robbie Manufacturing** 

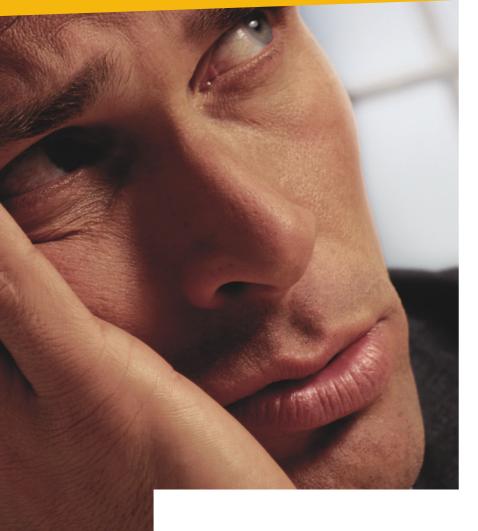
To view the **SILVER AWARD WINNERS** from this year's Flexible Packaging Association competition, go to www.packagingdigest.com/info/silver

(www.robbiemfg.com). "Films used in today's packaging have to be top quality to meet the needs of specific applications. They are required to be puncture-resistant and engineered with barriers for moisture and gas transmissions for both hot and cold applications." Citing examples from frozen foods' sharp edges that tear packaging and provide openings for contamination to tampering of deli packaging handled many times in the cases before being selected, Roberts maintains that "structural integrity is extremely critical."

But the food market isn't the only place where safety comes first. Expansion into pharmaceutical and medical-device applications, which currently makes up 8 percent of flexible packaging's market share, according to Smurfit-Stone Container Corp. (www.smurfit-stone.com), reinforces the need for safety.

According to Tony Paolino, director of sales and marketing for Rollprint **Packaging Products** (www.rollprint.com), "medical and pharmaceutical packagers continue to look for lower-cost alternativeswithout sacrificing performance.'

Marla Donahue, president of the FPA, concurs that nonfood flexible packaging growth will be seen in the Continued on page 44



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medical-device and pharmaceutical arena, as well as increased use of shrink and stretch films. Advances in barrier and multifunctional films play a large role in this key area of growth in flexible packaging. Also driving growth are "innovative materials that add to product safety and protection, as well as materials that add traceability," says Donahue.

Working closely with film manufacturers, consumer product companies and private-label manufacturers continue to develop new films that are tough enough to stand up

# Flexible packaging thought leaders have their own Big Three to lead them in the battle for market supremacy.

to the changing environments of production, shipping, hot deli cases and other retail displays, freezer cases and home storage.

Safety remains a primary benefit of flexible packaging; one compromised package can inflict great harm on a product or brand.

The rise of the two-income family, extended work hours and the effects of globalization on lifestyle choices are among the pressures today's busy consumers face. Flexible packaging continues to innovate to meet the needs of a more harried, time-pressed generation.

George Thomas, vp and general manager of Ampac Flexibles (www.ampaconline.com), maintains that the convenience trends taking over the entire packaging industry will continue to favor flexible packaging over other structures in the future. "The ability to mold and design more convenient packages that preserve the nutrition and quality of foods and protect drugs is only going to improve," he says.

"The desire for convenience and product protection is driving the need for more and more resealable packaging solutions," concurs Robert E. Hogan, director of international sales and marketing for Zip-Pak (www.zippak.com). "Focus-group studies reveal that consumers embrace flexible packaging with zippers and are willing to pay a premium for the added convenience. This trend is demonstrated by the popularity of 'slider' technology."

Robbie Manufacturing's Downing also agrees: "Packaging attributes designed to cater to the on-the-go lifestyle of the busy consumer will continue to grow in importance. In addition to easy-opening features and reclosable zippers, other innovations like handles for easy carrying and leak-resistant technology are important."

FPA's Donahue notes that strong growth is forecasted in meat, cheese, dry foods, shrink multipacks and overwraps for beverages.

Rollprint's Paolino sums it up, stating that "technology-driven flexible packagers constantly have to search for unique applications that require value-added structures and services."

n the quest for consumer success, product safety is an essential attribute. And while many convenience-enhancing features, such as reclosable zippers and easy-to-carry packaging are easily identifiable, other technological innovations are more covert, adding to functionality but hidden from busy consumers faced with an ever-increasing selection of products on store shelves. This leads us to the linchpin of the Big Three: Shelf Impact.

"Consumers are the driving force in today's move to flexible packaging," asserts Downing. With consumers spending only seconds in the grocery store aisle making their purchase decisions, Downing says that marketers and package designers are using "highend, attention-grabbing designs to help differentiate products on the shelf to help the consumer in their decision making. The overall package communicates the integrity of the product inside."

Donahue agrees, citing that "advances in printing and materials have resulted in the dramatic shelf impact of flexible packaging." Examples can be seen in the FPA's 2006 Flexible Packaging
Achievement Award winners (see page



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22). Within the printing category, winning packages include a standup pouch produced by CLP Packaging Solutions (www.clp-packaging.com) for a Marks & Spencer sauce. "Its rich, luminous graphics clearly communicate luxury," says Donahue

"Another FPA winner, the M&M Holiday Special package, uses SonoMet technology from Sonoco Products Co. (www.sonoco.com), a combination of ink and cylinder technologies aligning specific cylinder engraving patterns and design manipulations, giving the packaging a metallized appearance," Donahue continues. A newer innovation, using a reverse-printed, flexo prepress platemaking process, has improved graphic reproduction, offering

# Marketers and package designers are using high-end, attention-grabbing designs to help differentiate products on the shelf to help the consumer in their decision making.

"increased image sharpness, brighter colors, higher densities, smoother vignettes and cleaner text," she notes.

In addition to moving product off the shelf, successful packaging must also communicate safety and convenience. Thanks to several technology advancements, flexible packaging seems well positioned to deliver the right mix of impact and convenience that today's consumers seek.

"With 3D CAD systems design, high-speed, computer-based motion controls and high-tech composites and materials, technology is changing the way we produce, fill, distribute and use packaging to improve the quality of life," summarizes Ampac's Thomas.

The results of these advancements are reflected in packages recognized by the 2006 Flexible Packaging Achievement Awards program. Winning designs will also be featured in The Showcase of Packaging Innovations<sup>TM</sup> at PACK EXPO this fall.

he themes of safety, convenience and shelf impact clearly comprise the Big Three in flexible packaging. These key attributes and benefits will continue to aid in the growth of flexible applications domestically and internationally, both in its traditional role in the consumer food industry and in other market segment applications.

Although challenged in the last year by increased raw material costs and lower profitability in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, growth in the flexible packaging industry still came in at a robust 3.8 percent, continuing its trend of outpacing the GDP.

Should we be surprised? Not at all. After all, 50 years of inspired innovation and continued growth demonstrate

that this is one industry prepared for a profitable and growing future. For those wanting to join in for the ride, a visit to PACK EXPO International this October is a great place to start.

For more information about PACK EXPO International 2006, visit www.packexpo.com. Or contact PMMI's Show Department at 703/243-8555; fax 703/243-8556; or e-mail expo@pmmi.org.

#### More information is available:

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Smurfit-Stone Container Corp., 877/772-2932. www.smurfit-stone.com.

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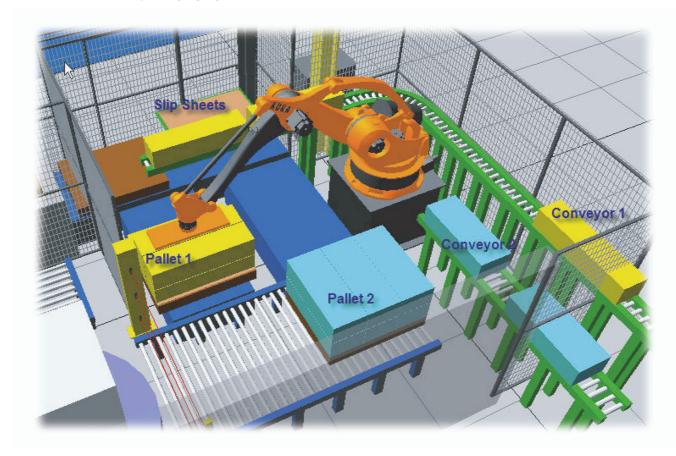
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# Palletizer does double duty

uida's Milk & Ice Cream, New Britain, CT, is one of the largest independent dairies in New England. Since 1886, Guida's has had the reputation of supplying the finest products and service to its large customer base. With its fleet of more than 200 vehicles, Guida's Milk & Ice Cream delivers fresh dairy and dairy-related products throughout southern New England. Its service area includes Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, northern New Jersey and New York State, including Long Island. With an 18-day code on all of its fluid milk products, Guida's can

High-speed robotic palletizer at Guida's Milk & Ice Cream packs a wide range of case sizes on two pallets simultaneously.

guarantee the utmost integrity of its product line. The company also processes a full line of ice-cream mixes, fruit juices, fruit drinks and water to meet virtually all of its customers' needs.

Until recently, the dairy's production line ended with manual palletizing of its 8-oz to 1-gal milk products. Employees, who were needed elsewhere in

manufacturing, were required to do the physically demanding and potentially dangerous work. The company needed to find a solution that would increase the efficiency and speed of the operation and provide a safer working environment for employees. Guida's turned to its partner, Dyco, Inc. (www.dyco-inc.com), to develop a solution. For the past 10 years, Guida's has been working with Dyco, a leading manufacturer and integrator of turnkey container-handling systems, for all its handling needs

Dyco had recently developed a new palletizing system using robotics and, after evaluating the dairy's operations, suggested a fully automated

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palletizing system using a Kuka KR 180 PA robot from Kuka Robotics Corp. (www.kukarobotics.com). The company's new automated system is being used to palletize two lines of milk products. Depending on production demands, the Kuka KR

placed into the tray-packs for transport via this second conveyor line to the palletizer. The two conveyor lines enter the palletizer area, one above the other, and one line wraps around the back of the robot, resulting in a conveyor on each side of the palletizer.

# An additional unique feature of the robot is its ability to assemble partial pallets of the products it is palletizing, thus allowing the company to palletize and ship less-than-full pallets without additional labor costs.

180 PA robot runs from 12 to 16 hours a day, six days a week, making the dairy more productive and efficient. Additionally, the new system has allowed the company to free up two employees who are now assigned to less physical and more intellectually demanding projects elsewhere in the dairy. This increases job satisfaction and safety for the employees, while increasing production speed and accuracy for the company.

n one production line, the milk is filled into half-gallon or gallon jugs, depending on which product is being produced that day or that shift, and is conveyed to the palletizing cell. Eight 1/2-gal jugs or four 1-gal jugs are placed in corrugated cases, which are then conveyed to the Kuka KR 180 PA robot to be palletized. Simultaneously, on a different filling line, either 10- or 16-oz, single-serve bottles are being filled and placed into tray-packs. Twelve 10- or 16-oz containers are

The new system has a pallet conveyor on each side of the robot that slides an empty pallet into place. The pallets are fed to the robot by a pallet dispenser that holds about 25 pallets and dispenses them out the bottom one at a time. The robot cell, controlled by a centralized programmable-logic controller, palletizes product onto each

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of these two pallets.

The gallon cases are palletized four cases at a time, three rows per layer and four layers per pallet, for a total of 48 cases per pallet. The 1/2-gal cases are palletized five at a time, three rows per layer and four layers per pallet, for a total of 60 cases per pallet. The pint and 10-oz packs are picked four at a time, 20 packs per layer. Pallets of pints Continued on page 48





The new, automated system uses a four-axis robot with a passive fifth axis to palletize two lines of milk products simultaneously. One line runs one-gal and 1/2-gal jugs that have been placed in corrugated boxes, left, while the other runs 10- and 16-oz plastic containers that have been packed in trays, right.





contain 120 packs, and the 10-oz packs are palletized at 180 packs per pallet. When it is running at full speed, the robot can make seven picks per minute, turning out a full pallet in less than four

The smaller, tray-packed products come into the cell at a faster speed. To compensate, the robot is programmed to palletize some product from Line One and then some from Line Two, alternatively picking up from the two lines until there are two complete pallets.

n additional unique feature of the robot is its ability to assemble partial pallets of the products it is palletizing, thus allowing the company to palletize and ship less-than-full pallets per its customers' specific purchase orders without additional labor costs. Additionally, the robot has the ability to intersperse



The carbon-fiber-composite robotic arm demonstrates extremely high stiffness characteristics that enable it to stack loads weighing up to 180 kg to heights up to 3 m.

slipsheets (thin pieces of paperboard approximately 40 ×46 in.) between case layers to provide stability to the finished pallet. Once a pallet is complete, the pallet-conveyor system moves the pallet out of the cell to a stretch-wrap cell, and a new empty pallet takes its place.

The Kuka KR 180 robot used in the operation is a four-axis robot with a passive fifth axis, whose applicationspecific, kinematic system guarantees an efficient palletizing process. It is specifically designed for high-speed, heavy-payload palletizing/handling tasks, up to 180 kg. The robot's large working envelope and small footprint enable it to service several conveyors with a minimum space requirement. Its arm is made of carbon-fiber-composite material, giving it a smaller moment of inertia and, thus, allowing the arm to achieve excellent acceleration rates. Despite its lightweight construction, the arm demonstrates extremely high stiffness characteristics, allowing the KR 180 PA to stack loads weighing up to 180 kg to heights up to 3,000 mm at rates as high as 1,800 palletizing cycles/hr.

Guida Dairy's new, automated operation has allowed the company to increase production, efficiency, throughput and job satisfaction, while decreasing work-related injuries. Dyco's integration expertise, coupled with Kuka Robotics' high-performance, high-speed robot, successfully met and exceeded the dairy's palletizing challenge.

#### More information is available:

Dyco, Inc., 570/752-2757. www.dyco-inc.com. Kuka Robotics Corp., 866/873-5852. www.kukarobotics.com.

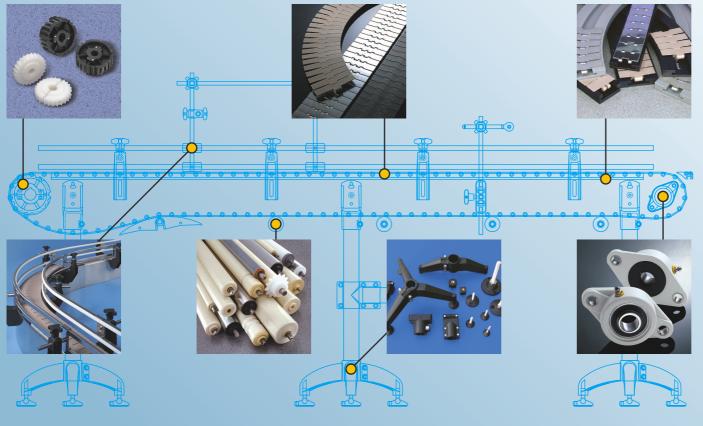
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# Optical technologies protect luxury goods

Luxury goods brand owners Domecq Bodegas of Spain and China's Hongta Group rely on high-end, optically variable devices created by Kurz Transfer Products, L.P. to secure and authenticate their wine and cigarette products, respectively.



Anne Marie Mohan, Senior Editor

or those of you who may believe fake goods are confined merely to cheap knockoffs of handbags and sunglasses, "law enforcement officials say that your perception of the problem is perhaps a generation out of date," reads a recent report from the National Chamber Federation (www.uschamber.com/ncf), an independent, nonprofit, public-policy think tank affiliated with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. According to the NCF, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Interpol and the World Customs Organization, approximately 5 percent to 7 percent of the world's annual trade is in counterfeit goods. This translates to nearly \$512 billion in global sales lost each year.

In the last decade, counterfeiters have gained increased accessibility to technology and other resources, so that virtually anything that can be manufactured, traded, imported or sold is now a potential target for intellectual property (IP) theft. Those items most under siege include high-value products such as pharmaceuticals (\$22 billion globally), software (\$12 billion) and apparel and footwear (\$12 billion), as well as cosmetics, cigarettes, alcohol and more.

But the cost of IP theft goes far beyond the dollars and cents: Counterfeiting quashes investment and innovation, threatens public health and safety, results in lost jobs (more than 750,000 in the U.S. alone) and has links to terrorism and organized crime.

Now, more than ever, it is vital for brand owners to implement brand-protection strategies that secure their IP investments and maintain the integrity of their products. One of the major tools in the brand

owner's arsenal is security packaging, which involves the use of various materials and technologies to authenticate their brand. These technologies can be overt (easily identified by the human senses), covert (detectable with simple technical tools) or forensic (only revealed through sophisticated forensic tools), or a combination of all three.

In the case of two luxury-brand owners, vintner Domecq Bodegas of Spain and cigarette-maker Hongta Group of China, complex, optically variable

# We're doing our job if somebody tries to

# knock off our OVD because we're going

# to be able to tell if it's fake.

devices (OVDs), also known as holograms in their simpler forms, from Kurz Transfer Products, L.P. (www.kurzusa.com), are providing brand authentication to thwart would-be counterfeiters.

olography is an advanced form of photography that allows an image to be recorded in three dimensions. Invented in 1948, the science of holography did not advance much until the 1960s, when the laser was introduced. In packaging, holograms are used for two purposes: promotion and security, with brand

enhancement making up an estimated 90 percent of the market, according to Brad Long, business development manager, Brand Protection, for Kurz.

Long adds that the most widely used type of hologram for package decoration is the dot matrix, which consists of computer-generated arrangements of dots in a screen that give off different light effects from different viewing positions. "Dot-matrix technology is the one you see on the toothpaste boxes, on videos and on gift-wrapping paper," he says. "This is very prevalent. There are thousands and thousands of manufacturers of this type of imagery."

Standard holograms, which include dot-matrix, two-dimensional, three-dimensional and 2-D/3-D styles, are made up of a collection of microscopic peaks and valleys, called interference patterns, on a plate surface. Two-dimensional holograms are based on a 2-D graphic image, where all elements of the design appear in a single image plane. Threedimensional styles are produced by capturing a 3-D model in a 1:1 size ratio. Three-dimensional holograms show a realistic, in-depth image that requires a strong, direct light for optimal viewing. Two-dimensional/3-D holograms show two or more 2D images in parallel image planes, producing a "perspective effect" and creating the illusion of depth.

Hologram creation involves simultaneously exposing a selected piece of artwork, either a 2-D graphic or a 3-D model, and a photosensitive recording material with laser light in a certain way. Through this process, the desired image is recorded as a complex, microscopic pattern called a holographic interference pattern, or a master hologram. The master hologram can then be replicated via nickel electroforming to create a working shim, or what Kurz Continued on page 52

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Integrated solutions for end users and OEMs include covert marking.



Whether the project is printing on the sides of low-profile soda cartons,

replacing high-maintenance continuous inkjet systems or providing covert carton marking for an auto parts supplier, HSAUSA has "been there, done that."

HSAUSA serves the packaging industry with product handling, marking and coding solutions that include printers, controllers and software designed to meet the requirements of the pharmaceutical, cosmetic, food and other industries.

HSAUSA offers printers that incorporate HP thermal inkjet technology because HP cartridges with no moving or wearing parts provide the maintenance-free service and low cost-of-ownership on which HSAUSA has built its reputation.

HSAUSA printers are available with stalls for up to eight HP cartridges which can print at resolutions of up to 600 dpi. Both top mount and side mount stalls for marking carton tops and sides are offered. One model incorporates four print cartridges arranged side-by-side using a different color ink in each so that they can run ½ inch-high, CMYK four-color printing. An eight-cartridge printer can produce one-inch-high, four-color printing.

The company's line of controllers ranges from high-end multi-tasking units to compact, low-cost units that can fit almost anywhere.

HSAUSA's top-of-the-line controller is the HSAJet-CT. It includes a 15-inch monitor and full size keyboard with integral trackball mouse and operates with Windows XP Professional. HSAUSA's user-friendly OBJ (Object Oriented) Ink Draw

software is included with the controller. The CT features Ethernet and RS232 connectivity to link up with a host computer or it can operate independently. The CT can control up to eight print stalls or, optionally, up to 12 HP print stalls.

An HSAJet-CT Controller running two HSAUSA side mount print stalls with three HP cartridges each was recently installed as part of a solution for Shasta/National Beverages Corp. The installation prints crisp, clean barcodes—which the previous equipment could not do—low on the sides of 24-pack soda trays before they are wrapped in plastic.

### HSAUSA printers replace high-maintenance continuous inkjet systems in the application of lot codes and expiration dates on chipboard cartons.

Solvent-free HP inks are printed on the trays at more than 200 fpm. HSAUSA equipment also is used to mark and code boxes of Shasta one-liter soda bottles.

At the opposite end of HSAUSA's product line is its low-cost, high-volume controller, the HSAJet-TCU "Tiny Controller Unit." The HSAJet-TCU is available with or without a two-line, backlit LCD

display and keypad. It prints 1 to 16 messages and operates two HP print stalls.

The HSAJet-TCU is a fast selling product that is being used in combination with HSAUSA printers to replace high-maintenance continuous inkjet systems in the application of lot codes and expiration dates on chipboard cartons. The snap-in, disposable HP print cartridges with integral nozzles virtually eliminate printer cleaning and maintenance. HSAUSA estimates the cost of the TCU/HP thermal inkjet system to be about a third of that for a CIJ system.

HSAUSA also promotes covert marking solutions using UV and IR inks. The special inks are used with the HP series 45 cartridge in HSAUSA printers to protect brands by preventing illegal product diversion and counterfeiting.

For a maker of retail auto parts, HSAUSA furnished not only the controllers and printers to apply covert carton marking, but also the vision systems and scanners to work with the barcodes that are visible only under IR light. HSAUSA also provided integration software to track and trace random serialized 2D barcodes.

HSAUSA operates through a network of 20 nationwide distributors and supports 10 OEM equipment suppliers who incorporate their solutions in a variety of different applications.

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calls an approval shim. From this, a production shim is generated through recombination and a galvanic-forming process. The production shim is then used to emboss the hologram onto a specialty coated plastic film.

Although a number of proprietary techniques may be employed to emboss a hologram, in generic terms, the process is similar to a web-printing operation in that a continuous web of film passes between nip rollers, on which the embossing plate is mounted. The holographic information—submicron in size—is imparted into the film or a coating on the film with heat pressure and/or radiation, either UV or electron-beam.

Unlike printing, hologram embossing does not use any ink. The colors seen in a hologram are derived from diffraction of the light from the surface.

Kurz can produce holograms, including 2-D, 3-D, 2-D/3-D and dot-matrix, in the form of hot-stamping foil, laminating foil, self-adhesive labels, tearstrips or other, project-specific formats. But for the purposes of brand protection, standard holograms do not provide enough complexity, relates Long. "With typical holography, some counterfeiters have become sophisticated enough to replicate the designs," he says.

uring a recent visit by PD to Kurz's U.S. headquarters in Charlotte, NC, technical project coordinator Max S. Astor explained that the more complex holograms used for security, such as the proprietary designs manufactured by Kurz, are referred to as OVDs. Kurz's highend brand-protection solution, the Trustseal®, differs from a standard hologram in that it is a fully exposed image, without the peaks and valleys evident in dot-matrix, 2D, 3D and 2D/3D holograms. The Trustseal, proprietary to OVD Kinegram Corp. (www.trustseal.biz), a member of the Kurz Group, is a synthetic, computer-controlled, diffraction-graphic element that is created by using special, proprietary equipment, materials and knowledge.

Because of the way it is produced, Long relates, the Trustseal exhibits a greater brilliance and color control, and can incorporate many different optical techniques (see sidebar at right). "For brand protection, you need to have overt, covert and forensic features within your package or product to have the most robust program," says Long.

"If you could create the perfect authentication device, it would be an overt technology that would allow you to just pick up a package and know immediately that it was the real thing. But there is no such product. That's why brand owners need to use something that's very complex optically on their packaging.

"We're doing our job if somebody tries to knock off our

### 'Compass' points to complex OVD features

The "Compass" is a tool used by Kurz and **Brady Corp.** (www.whbrady.com) to demonstrate the various techniques possible with Trustseal OVDs.

**A.) Colorful area:** By tilting the design to an extreme angle and viewing the sample obliquely, the area appears

in color.

B.) Hidden information: The field contains two areas of different, hidden information not visible to the human eye. The filled ring of the compass behind the letter "W" contains specially engineered, diffractive structures that project the image 'GENUINE" when illuminated with a special, laser-

based verification device. The background of the field contains diffractive structures that project the image "OK."

- **C.) DeepView, lens effect:** Bright beams of light appear to converge on, and diverge from, a virtual point beneath the surface of a design. When viewed using a bright lamp, the beams of light can be seen as a spectra of colors.
- **D.) Grayscale image:** A stylized image in various shades of gray can be seen in the central viewing position. When the sample is tilted left and right, the shades of gray are seen to vary and appear to change dramatically.
- **E.)** Diffractive black: The Brady and Kurz logo appears dark in contrast in nearly all viewing positions. By tilting the Trustseal security device about the horizontal axis and viewing the sample at an oblique angle, the design element appears in a

bright, blue-green color.

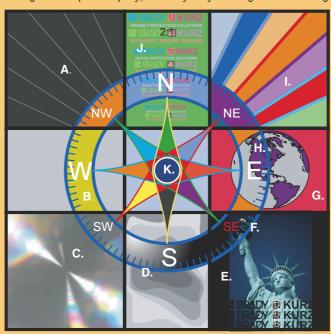
**F.)** Nano-image raster (nano-text version): An image of The Statue of Liberty with continuously varying brightness levels is seen by the unaided eye. By viewing the nano-image raster with a

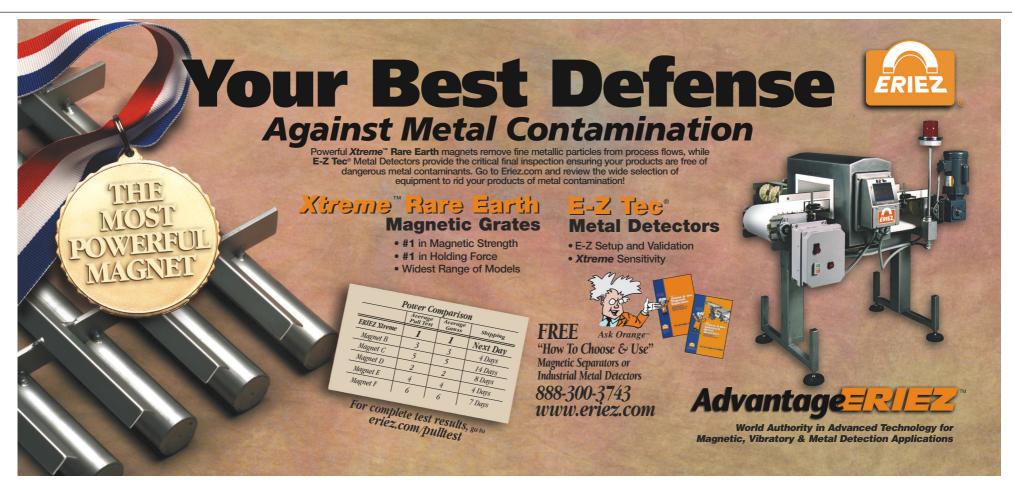
magnifying glass or microscope, one discovers that the image is actually composed of a plethora of microscopic texts of varying thickness

G.) Nanotext: The text "Trustseal®" and the © logo appear in the ocean of the globe, which appears bright and colorful in the central viewing position, with letters that are 75 microns in height.

This feature can be verified using a magnifying glass or microscope.

- **H.) ConTrust®:** The ConTrust security feature is integrated into the globe. In the central viewing position, the globe appears bright and colorful in contrast against BBB. By rotating the Trustseal security device by 90 deg in its plane, the contrast between the elements will flip.
- I.) Various color rays: The rays appear to change in hue and color as the sample is tilted back and forth.
  J.) Mini text: The logos and text appear in bright and colorful letters against a colorful background.
  K.) Image flip: By tilting the sample from left to right, one alternates between three images. On one side, the logo of Kurz is seen. On the other side, the Brady logo. In the central position (shown), the whole image of the compass appears in bright colors





OVD because we're going to be able to tell if it's fake. Nobody is going to be able to duplicate it exactly."

In the case of Spanish winemaker and exporter Domecq Bodegas, a part of Domecq PLC, a pressure-sensitive Kurz Trustseal label verifies that its Campo Viejo Rioja wine is from the prestigious Rioja region of Spain, which is said to produce some of the best red wines in the world from the tempranillo grape. This distinction is important, as Rioja was the first of Spain's

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wine-producing regions to obtain the government's official appellation designation, or

"denominacion de origen," in 1926. Nine years ago, the Rioja region became the first and only in the country so far to be granted the "denominacion de origen calificada" or "qualified appellation."

But Domecq Bodegas is not the only vintner to employ this label. For the past three years, Kurz has supplied all 400-plus manufacturers of Rioja with this p-s label, which includes an overt Trustseal OVD, as well as sequential numbering and other Rioja certification graphics.

Relates Long, "Several years ago, companies not from the Rioja region were marketing Rioja wines. It is similar to someone saying that a wine is a Cabernet when they are not using Cabernet grapes." In the case of Rioja wines, the Rioja Appellation Regulatory Council (www.riojawine.com) came up with the idea of the certified seal. Although Long says that he can't comment on the whether the Rioja Trustseal label has eliminated knockoffs, he does relate, "a few years later, the label is still being used."

For Chinese tobacco company Hongta Group, the need for brand authentication is just as vital, especially considering the environment in which the company operates. It is generally acknowledged that China is the single-largest source of counterfeit and pirated products worldwide. According to the Quality Brands Protection Committee (www.qbpc.org.cn), a group of more than 100 multinational companies with investments in China, approximately 100 billion counterfeit brandname cigarettes are produced in China each year.

Hongta Group was established in 1956 as a small-scale tobacco recuring factory. Today the company is

not only the largest tobacco company in China, but it is also a multinational enterprise. Last November, five of the company's brands—Gonghexinxi, the Great Hall of the People, Ashima, Mount Hongtashan and Yuxi—were named among the top 10 Chinese cigarette brands in terms of quality by China's State Tobacco Monopoly Administration.

To protect and decorate its cigarette cartons, Hongta Group employs several overt features from Kurz, including a demetallized laser tear-tape around the carton opening, a laser hot-stamp foil decoration on the carton's panels, a red, metallized hot-stamp-foil logo and a Trustseal OVD.

t Kurz's Charlotte facility, the process of creating a customized OVD begins when Kurz meets with the brand owner to discuss the scope of the brand's counterfeit problem and to identify what types of overt and covert elements can be used to provide the most effective solution. From this discussion, Long explains, Kurz creates a hard-copy design proposal. "The design proposal just shows the brand owner on paper what we're going to do," he says. "Obviously it doesn't have the optical components of a hologram or an OVD, but it outlines what the image will include."

Another tool used by Kurz to illustrate a proposed design is computer animation of the hologram, which Long says is used about 75 percent of the time. Designed in-house, the program is "a pretty useful tool for holographers because it allows them to look a lot closer at what the image is going to look like," he adds.

Once the design proposal is approved, an approval shim is made. At this point, because the design involves Kurz's proprietary exposure technology as well as the brand owner's security solution, it must be manually delivered to the brand owner for approvals. When the approval shim is given a green light, it is then used to step and repeat to fabricate the production shim, according to the brand owner's specifications.

During embossing, the production shim is mounted as a sleeve, and the original master hologram's diffractive grating is repeatedly stamped into a fast-moving web of material—usually hot-stamping foil or laminating film. To maximize yields, it is common to gang more than one image on a shim, so each transfer creates multiple holograms that can be die-cut into separate units during

the final converting and finishing steps. Rolls of embossed holograms can be further processed and/or fed into hot-stamping machines, labelers or laminators, depending on the end use.

From the initial analysis of the brand owner's requirements to the shipment of the OVD, the process takes approximately eight weeks, Long says, with standard Trustseal originations built to fit any budget. "If there are custom covert features in the OVD, the cost will go up," he adds.

An optimal solution is one that can be used for 12 to 18 months before being changed, Long says. "A lot of times, brand owners keep the overt technology pretty static because it's part of their brand identity, but typically it is changed about every eighteen months," he says.

f the industries presently using Kurz's OVDs, pharmaceuticals has been the slowest to implement this technology, Long relates. "We're putting a lot of effort into that industry because we think it is the one that needs it the most," he says, adding that sales of counterfeit pharmaceuticals are projected to grow at 10 percent this year—far outstripping the 2-percent increase in sales expected for legitimate pharmaceutical drugs.

"I think that more pharmaceutical companies will use OVDs once the ROI is figured out—what you're going to get for putting five cents into your label rather than one cent, and how much it money it saves when you are selling your real product, rather than counterfeiters selling your product. But that hasn't been done yet," he says. "I'd love to have the formula."

#### More information is available:

Kurz Transfer Products, L.P., 800/333-2306. www.kurzusa.com.

**OVD Kinegram Corp.,** 41 41 724 47 00. www.trustseal.biz.

Brady Corp., 800/541-1686. www.whbrady.com. National Chamber Federation, 202/463-5500. www.uschamber.com/ncf.

Quality Brands Protection Committee, 86 (10) 6505-5127. www.qbpc.org.cn. Rioja Appellation Regulatory Council, 34 941 500 400.

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# Tea in a pouch is easy to use



A multilane, vertical form/fill/seal machine runs stick-shaped, laminated paper pouches of flavored tea containing 0.075 oz of product for 4C Foods Corp.

otally Light Tea2Go<sup>TM</sup> from 4C Foods Corp., Brooklyn, NY, is impacting the way America drinks bottled water. Just pour a single-serve packet of the powdered-tea mix into a bottle and enjoy. 4C Foods, which has been supplying iced-tea mix for more than 30 years, introduced last year the stick-shaped, laminated pouch, which contains just the right amount of flavored tea mix for a half-liter bottle of water.

The powder pouch is an old, familiar sight. Think of your table setting at a restaurant and the container of those little pouches holding sugar and sweetener. Now, the on-the-go, as-you-need-it packaging concept for single-serve has gone a step further with Slim Stick® packaging from Technical Help in Engineering and



Stick-pouch machine filling speeds are being increased by adding additional lanes to as many as 26 lanes/machine.

Marketing (www.them.net), Marlton, NJ. Made of high-quality, multilaminate materials, Slim Stick packaging has a slim shape that makes it easy to pour its contents into the opening of a water bottle, and it fits in a purse, a pocket or a gym bag, to offer single-serving, convenient packaging you can take with you wherever

'We chose to utilize the stick-pack technology for the full line of our new Totally Light Tea2Go iced tea mixes," says Robert Goetz, 4C Foods director of purchasing. "Originally, a colleague recommended T.H.E.M. for their equipment capabilities. That was certainly a plus, but I was impressed by their level of experience." Their test lab and a small production facility convinced Goetz that T.H.E.M. could help 4C Foods introduce a new

product in this package format with great ease. Says Goetz, "The Tea2Go concept is all about convenience, and the stick-packs deliver that on every level."

Slim Stick packaging is more than just a sales booster; it is also a cost-effective packaging option that saves manufacturers and marketers up to 35 percent on the cost of film versus the traditional pouch. And with its high-quality construction, it can hold virtually any product that can be packaged into a traditional shape. "The slender, tubular design of the Slim Stick package makes it easy to dispense premeasured products of all kinds," says Ken Botterbrodt, senior vp at T.H.E.M.

T.H.E.M currently produces the Tea2Go pouches for 4C at its New Jersey facility on a FC-1000 high-speed, multilane vertical form/fill/seal machine from Sanko Machinery Co., Ltd. (81-3-3733-4211), which T.H.E.M represents in the U.S. 4C is in the process of procuring a Sanko machine to run the pouches at its Brooklyn production facility.

The FC-1000 slits the web into individual lanes for precision, multilane production. Stick length is

# The Tea2Go concept is all about convenience, and the stick packs deliver that on every level.

adjustable through a patented system without any part changes, while different pouch widths are achieved with optional tooling. Timing is controlled digitally, which makes adjustments easier than with conventional cam mechanisms, and a touchpanel provides immediate finetuning of production. The touchpanel stores timing settings in memory for instant recall and allows for quick production startups and changeovers.

4C's pouches contain 0.075 oz of product, but the package can be designed to accommodate a range of sizes from a fraction of one gram to 35 gm of product. Production can be adjusted for package sizes from 50 to 180 mm long and 12 to 60 mm wide. Totally Light Tea2Go pouches are sold in a 20-pack carton that sells for \$4.99, as well as in a 10-pack carton.

#### More information is available:

Technical Help in Engineering and Marketing, 856/988-8436. www.them.net. Sanko Machinery Co., Ltd., 81-3-3733-4211.

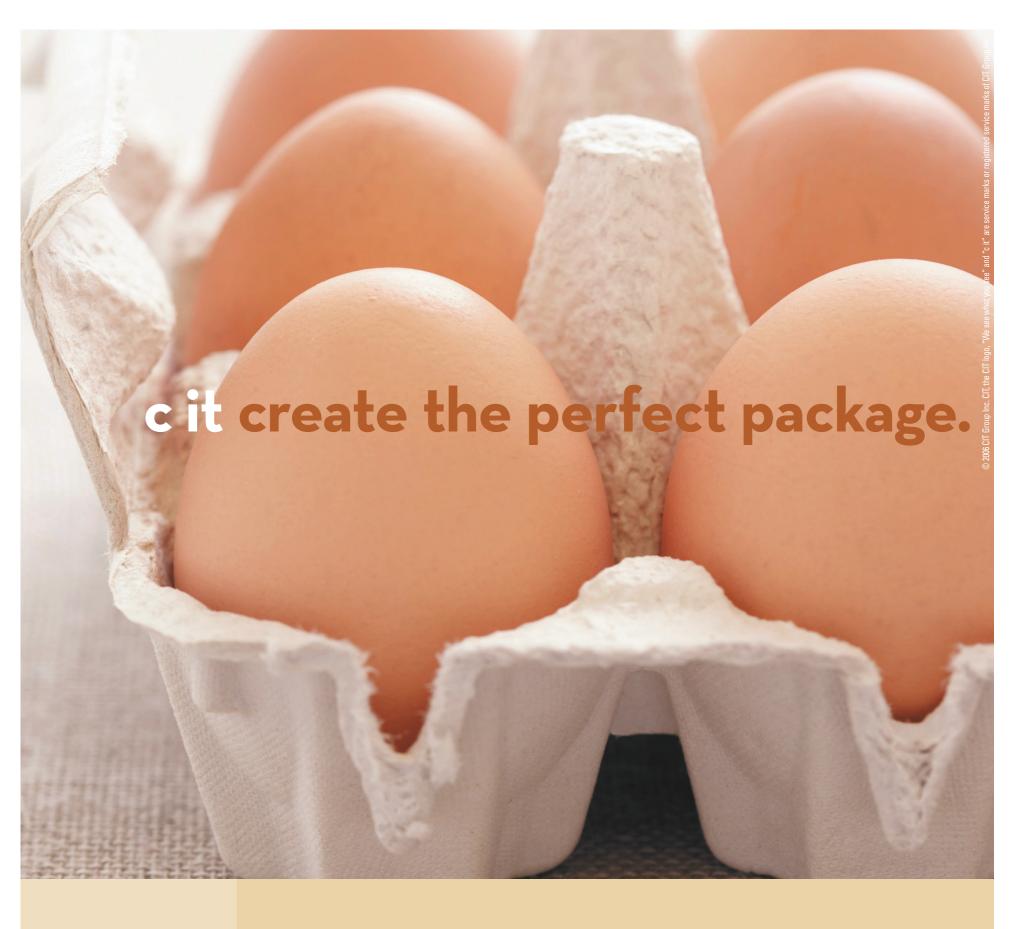
### Stick pouches poised for a sharp rise in usage, applications

The stick pouch is one of the hottest package formats in the market today, generating more than 30 percent annual growth in specific market segments. It has come a long way from being completely unexplored in North America just 10 years ago.

According to a new study on stick pouches from Allied Development Corp. (www.allied-dev.com), Burnsville, MN, stick pouches were first commercialized in approximately 1970. The stick-pouch industry began in Japan, using equipment that was developed by Sanko Machinery Co. Ltd. to package dry products. It wasn't until 1990 that the ability to package wet products in stick pouches was developed in Europe.

The dry-products segment remains the largest industry segment to date, with Japan a major user. It is also clear that stick pouches in the dry-product segment are expanding beyond their traditional use for condiments. In the-wet product segment, stick pouches are used for the unit-portion condiment market (ketchup, mustard and others) in certain regions, such as Europe. In the U.S., General Mills introduced its Go-Gurt yogurt in a stick pouch in 1999, which catalyzed a number of wet-product, stick-pouch applications. This created a new category of products that is now an accepted part of the stickpouch product mix. Pharmaceutical, personal care and other industries are also increasing their use of the stick

Many factors drive stick-pouch consumption. One of the most important is its unique shape, which is a defining characteristic. The shape of a stick pouch provides a natural means of dispensing from a small opening, providing good control. A person can tear the end from a stick pouch, and, even if the tear is not well-controlled, end up with a small Continued on page 56



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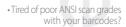
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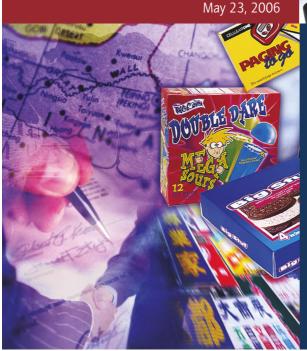
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#### **Stick pouches (cont.)**

opening from which to pour. This advantage is further enhanced through the use of flexible spouts, tear notches and combination packages, which feature dual chambers that contain different, but related, products in each chamber, such as a yogurt-and-fruit combination.

The stick pouch is an efficient material design. Material cost savings and pricing for new applications will outweigh any drag from filling-rate deficiencies.

Products in stick pouches offer several types of end-user convenience. Premeasured quantities of food are easy to use, and stick pouches are primarily a unit-portion or single-serve package that capitalizes on this ability. Dry-drink mixes, for example, provide the right amount of drink mix for a bottle of water. In the future, the pharmaceutical industry will take even greater advantage of premeasured doses with stick-pouch offerings for a variety of pharmaceutical products. Stick pouches are also portable, easy to store and can be opened without using an opener.

Stick-pouch machines can now accept sophisticated films in addition to the basic coated paper often used for dry condiments. The ability to use highbarrier packaging, such as laminations containing aluminum foil or glasscoated films, means the barrier requirements can be met for pharmaceutical gels, cough syrup, pudding, dry beverage mixes, epileptic medications and many other products.

Technological advancements in dosing systems are significant. The ability to accurately micro-dose products in increments of less than 1 gm has triggered the healthcare industry to take a closer look at the stick pouch. Unit-dose stick pouches of many healthcare products, including cough syrup, pain relievers, epileptic medications, antacids and others, are on the market now, or are coming soon.

Pellet technology is another dosing technology that is primarily important for healthcare products. Pellet technology formulates pharmaceutical products into small, consistent-sized, spherical particles that can be taken orally without the aid of water. In addition, the product can be designed to dissolve easily, so it is not irritating to the consumer's digestive system. Dosing systems are able to count the number of spherical particles needed to fill each stick pouch with the correct dosage for that product.

Stick-pouch machine filling speeds are increasing, primarily by adding more lanes per machine. Today, the typical machine has eight to 10 lanes, with offerings of up to 26 lanes.

The future consumption of stick pouches looks very strong, with growth of all categories projected to be 10.1 percent annually from 2005 to 2010. Stick-pouch consumption will jump from 196.7 billion stick pouches to

> 318.8 billion in that period. Dry products in stick

> > pouches comprise 85 percent of the market, due to the fact that they were developed first and have been successful for decades.

However, wet products in stick pouches are gaining market share, albeit slowly. The percentage of

pouches that contain wet products will grow from 14.9 percent market share in 2005 to 15.9 percent in

Dry food is clearly the largest category, and it will grow 8.9 percent per year from 2005 to 2010. Drycondiment volume (sugar, sweeteners, salt and pepper) is large and overshadows other categories. Removing the dry-condiment volume from the dry-food category reveals that dry food other than condiments will grow at 16.1 percent per year through 2010—a much higher rate than condiments (7.8 percent per year). In fact, all of the other categories will grow rapidly: 9.1 percent per year for wetfood products, 20.4 percent per year for healthcare products, and 22.7 percent per year for other products. Condiments/sauces will lead the wetfood market through 2010, with growth of 8.8 percent per year.

Overall annual growth of stick pouches in North America is expected to average 16.5 percent per year broken down as follows: 17.8 percent for dry food, 5.8 percent for wet food, 30.5 percent for health, care and 37.5 percent for other products.

The information in this article was taken from "Stick Pouches, Global Markets, Economics, and Technologies 2006 to 2010," which was written and published by Allied Development

For a prospectus or to order a copy of "Stick Pouches, Global Markets, Economics, and Technologies — 2006 to 2010," call Packaging Strategies at 610/436-4220 (ext. 11) or e-mail at orders@packstrat.com.

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SECURITY PACKAGING



# Shrink labels blast onto shelves

North American Beverage turns to converter SleeveCo to produce shrink labels for its newest line of milk drinks.

or the full-body Moose logo on North American Beverage Co., Inc.'s newest milk-drink product—Mega Moose<sup>TM</sup> Strawberry Blast—the company needed a full-body, shrink-sleeve label. Says the company's marketing partner, Ben Stone at 4th Floor Design

(www.beveragebusiness.com), "This is the first time the moose on the label is pictured as a fully realized figure, playing soccer, unlike the Chocolate Moose Premium chocolate milk line, where we use only the moose's head as part of the logo lockup. Mega Moose is positioned as a wholesome energy drink. It is real milk fortified with vitamins A and D. So we wanted to convey activity on the label."

Based in Ocean City, NJ, North American Beverage distributes its drink products nationally, including its Chocolate Moose line, which comprises flavors such as Premium Chocolate, Diet White Chocolate and Cookies & Cream. Mega Moose Strawberry Blast is distributed nationally where it is shelf-stable for up to 24 months. The milk drink appeals to consumers aged 12 to 24 and to mothers who are looking to serve their kids healthy drinks.

In introducing Mega Moose Strawberry Blast, the company wanted to differentiate the product from its other varieties, while communicating that the drink is part of the Chocolate Moose family of brands.

SleeveCo, Inc. (www.sleeveco.com) was the natural choice for printing and converting the new Mega Moose label, since the converter already produces a full-body shrink-sleeve label for North American Beverage's Chocolate Moose and Havana Cappuccino lines (see PD, Dec. '02, p. 44, the company says. Only this time, according to Martin Wilson, vp of sales and marketing at SleeveCo, the converter worked with North American Beverage to



The shrink labels help Mega Moose achieve a contemporary look for the new energy drink product.

design a metallic-silver label. "It's the first time that we needed so much background coverage in metallic ink," he says, "and it had to look high-end."

family-owned manufacturer of shrink- and stretch-sleeve labels, SleeveCo is based just outside of Atlanta in Dawsonville, GA. The company uses what it says is the industry's only 11-color, 800-ft/min Chesnut 150 gravure press from W.R. Chesnut Engineering

(www.chesnuteng.com). The company also uses a proprietary ink-matching system that can reproduce virtually any color, accurate within 1/1,000 lb of ink. SleeveCo specializes in metallics, as well as in pearlescents, thermatics and matte varnishes.

With its single focus on sleeve labels, SleeveCo partners with shrink-film manufacturer Klöckner Pentaplast (www.kpfilms.com). "We have used vinyl and polyethylene terephthalate glycol films from Klöckner Pentaplast since the beginning of our history," says Wilson. "We just know that we can

count on their Pentaprint® film for its precise tolerances. Pulling off full silver coverage [on the Mega Moose Strawberry Blast label] was possible because of the film's excellent gauge uniformity. Because, not only did we need to lay down a lot of metallic silver, we also had to get the print resolution spot-on to capture the moose in motion.'

For the Strawberry Blast shrink-sleeve label, Klöckner Pentaplast provides 2-mil polyvinyl chloride film specifically engineered for excellent anchoring of the required ink systems.

The film's uniform shrinkage, along with its excellent ink adhesion helped North American Beverage achieve the goal of "a contemporary look for a new product," says Stone. "The ready-to-drink market is very competitive. We wanted to capture the look of the new aluminum bottles that are on the market using sleeve technology. No doubt, the shelf appeal of Mega Moose energy drink is catching on, as sales have been brisk since it launched last June.'

As Stone explains, it was important to get the drink on the market at the beginning of summer because, although the season for energy drinks is year-round, sales spike with the temperature. "We were still putting the last details together in April of 2005, so that's a quick timeline," he adds.

etting to market quickly was another reason SleeveCo proved vital to the project. The company has a prepress department that cuts its own gravure cylinders in-house at a competitive price. This allows packagers to get products to retail faster because there's no outsourcing.

Before SleeveCo made the cylinder for Mega Moose Strawberry Blast, the converter worked with the client's design team to get the artwork approved. Continued on page 60



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Then they were ready to size and engrave the cylinder.

After cylinder engraving, the film is printed. The process begins when a roll of unprinted Pentaprint film is mounted to an automatic unwind unit. The film then moves over a dancer roll to a Fife (www.fife.com) edge guide, which provides a proper oscillating roll wind. From there, the film travels to an infeed draw group inside the printing press. The press is equipped with a butt splicer; inline automation, die-cutting for pressure-sensitive labels and lamination; extended

dryers; and reverse-print stations for backside printing.

At the first color station, the film passes over the print cylinder, which applies the first ink color onto an engraved cylinder. An ink dam forces ink into gravure cylinders and applies the image to the film. In the next step, a doctor blade removes any excess ink from the film. Standards set down by the National Electric Code ensure that the press's dryer system is classified as explosion-proof.

States Wilson, "We run into

challenges with ink adhesion with 'highend' metallics and pearlescents. And in the case of the Mega Moose Strawberry Blast label, the biggest challenge was laying down the silver-metallic ink. That's why we really appreciate the good ink adhesion we get with Klöckner Pentaplast films. We are aiming for the highest reflectivity possible, and we feel we get it."

An eltromat (www.eltro.com) DGC 650 register control monitors the film by sequential codes. Then BST Promark (www.bstpromark.com) high-resolution





A quality check, above, assures the film's printing registration and integrity.

cameras inspect the film and check its print quality and density values.

After the film is edge-trimmed on a Rotoflex (www.rotoflex.com) VLI slitter, it undergoes automatic print-defect detection. A DCM (www.dcm.fr) Babycat sleeve machine and rewinder then uses an inspection device to check the finished shrink-sleeve seam for print registration and integrity with a black light.

ums up Wilson, "With a 250-plus line screen and brilliant picture imagery, gravure printing achieves vibrant colors. The gravure method is also often used to assure the readability of small fonts. The [Mega Moose Strawberry Blast] shrink-sleeve label definitely stands out."

He concludes, "We are very pleased with the sleeve labels. In fact, everyone seems pleased, from the client and the retailer to the distributors. It was a huge area to design, 360 degrees around, from top to bottom. And the colors reproduced brilliantly with kudos to Klöckner Pentaplast films."

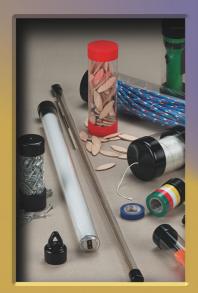
Jim Mullen, business unit manager for shrink films at Klöckner Pentaplast, says, "When a product is competing for consumers' attention, our films display the graphics to their best advantage by ensuring proper ink adhesion."

# ■ More information is available:

BST Pro Mark, 800/796-9621. www.bstpromark.com. DCM, 33 141 375270. www.dcm.fr. eltromat Electronics, Inc., 757/487-8849. www.eltro.com. Fife, a Maxcess Intl. co., 800/639-3433. www.fife.com. 4th Floor Design, 617/598-1922. www.beveragebusiness.com. Klöckner Pentaplast, 540/832-1470. www.kpfilms.com. Rotoflex Intl., Inc., 800/387-3825. www.rotoflex.com. SleeveCo, Inc., 800/624-0204. www.sleeveco.com. W.R. Chesnut Engineering, 800/746-7873 www.chesnuteng.com.



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accommodates a range of products, including tablets, caplets and hard or soft capsules, ranging in size from 2 to 25 mm dia. It can handle both plastic and glass containers in sizes from 30 to 2,000 cc. Most changeovers can be accomplished in less than 45 min, without tools. A CFR21 part 11-compliant software package is available as an option. A PC-based system, it features a color touchscreen control panel with password-protected access. NJM/CLI, 603/448-0300.

www.njmcli.com

**Vf/f/s machine** The VPL-180 is a continuousmotion vf/f/s machine featuring a patented jaw-jam



detection system and linear servo drive technology. Operating at speeds of up to 220 cycles/min, it's suitable for high-speed applications such as candy and snacks. The unit allows users to set functions such as sealing time and pressure, cooling time, speed and all jaw movements, providing flexibility. The compact

machine produces pillow-style bags ranging from  $1.97\times11.8$  to  $7.01\times11.8$  in. Size changeovers are said to be quick and simple to perform.

Rovema Packaging Machines, 770/513-9604. www.rovema.com



Label printer The Vivo! is a high-speed, direct-digital, short-run label printer that produces photo-quality labels on roll-fed stock, the co. reports. Designed for moderate- to high-volume label-printing jobs, the Vivo! prints glossy, durable labels that are said to be abrasion-, moisture- and solvent-resistant. It prints labels using an electrophotographic process similar to laser printing that incorporates LEDs rather than lasers. It's designed to be an alternative to flexo and offset printing.

QuickLabel Systems, 877/757-7978. www.quicklabel.com



Case palletizer The co. has enhanced its A-780 case palletizer offering, which is particularly suitable for single-line applications in the food and consumer goods industries, with a selection of new options. A recirculating row pusher improves case flow and facilitates higher palletizing capacities with rates up to 45 case-ft/min. It's offered as an alternative to the palletizer's standard reciprocating row pusher. A highspeed hoist is designed to increase capacity when handling short loads or large cases, and a patterngeneration utility provides users with the ability to create new stacking patterns through the machine's interface. A pattern-timing utility is now standard. The palletizer is equipped with close-center rollers and a biparting apron, enabling it to handle a variety of case and pallet sizes. It's RFID-enabled, giving it various capabilities such as changing patterns on-the-fly, managing end-of-run clearing and tracking production and inventory information.

FKI Logistex, 314/993-4700. www.fkilogistex.com

Digital servo drive The Whistle miniature digital servo drive weighs only 1.76 oz and measures 2 cu in., delivering up to ½-kw of continuous power at up to 99 percent efficiency. A 2×1½-x¾-in. package delivers a peak of 1 kw of power. Made to be mounted to the motor housing or in close proximity to the motor, the servo drive interfaces to brush DC, brushless PM, linear and/or voice coil motors, with power provided by an external, 7.5- to 95-VDC isolated DC power supply. A smart supply control algorithm enables the servo drive to operate with a single power supply, eliminating the need for a separate logic supply.

Elmo Motion Control, Inc., 978/399-0034. www.elmomc.com



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syntax. The memory device formatted as file memory can hold data stored, not as raw register data, but as user-specified, formatted strings of data. As such, the data can be encrypted or stored in commonly used formats for spreadsheet or database applications. A removable storage media feature allows days, weeks or years of data to be stored in a single device that can be easily removed and replaced. Support for USB 1.1 and CompactFlash Type 1 and 2 allows users the flexibility of choosing a storage device. It also has a real-time clock feature for embedding date and time values in the data strings.

**Wago Corp.**, 800/346-7245. **www.wago.us** 

**Label-printing software** The newest version of EASYLABEL® software includes XML (Extensible Markup Language) support for Oracle and SAP enterprise-management systems. EASYLABEL version 5.5 Platinum's XML monitor "watches" a file directory or TCP/IP port, automatically printing RFID or bar-code labels when a compatible XML file is received. This feature provides a direct connection to Oracle, SAP or other applications capable of generating a properly formatted XML file. It provides seamless printing of RFID or bar-code labels from supply chain or manufacturing software, the co. reports.

Tharo Systems, Inc., 800/878-6833. www.tharo.com

**RFID label applicator** The -3115/11 RFID air-blow applicator, the latest addition to the co.'s RFID solutions line, includes a velocity-compensation feature for improved label-placement accuracy. Zero-downtime labeling allows production to continue without interruption. Product and label queuing and missing-label compensation virtually eliminate unlabeled products, the co. says. Advanced RFID features include EPC, Class 0, Class 0+, Class 1 and Gen2 tag encoding, fully integrated UHF/EPC technology and user-friendly RFID tag-formatting software. The unit also has a tag-rejecter mechanism.

Label-Aire, 714/441-0700. www.label-aire.com

Pneumatic valve islands The VM valve island family has been extended to include the new VM15. With a flow-size rate of 1.0 Cv, the 15-mm-wide VM15 has a valve manifold range that provides high performance, economy and a value-engineered solution, the co. says. Installation times can be reduced, thanks to the use of integrated, push-in fittings. Should machine specifications change, the configuration can be modified rapidly via interchangeable valve types. The modular islands have an engineered polymer construction that withstands



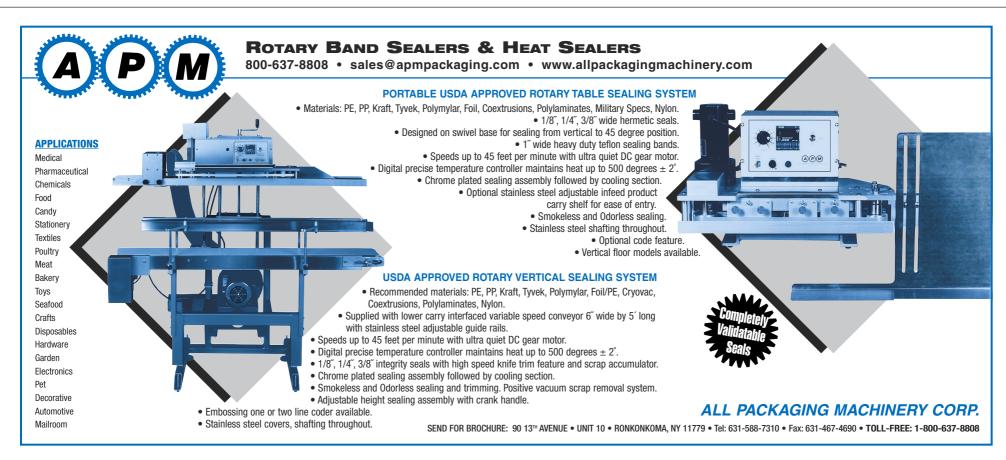
harsh environments and chemical washdowns. They are also suitable for use in a variety of space configurations and applications. Mounting options include DIN-rail, through-hole and sub-base. The VM series can be configured from four to 16 stations, with single or double solenoids.

IMI Norgren, Inc., 303/794-2611. www.norgren.com

**Gabletop carton packers** Initially designed for the dairy and juice markets, the co.'s line of case packers for gabletop cartons is suitable for applications where gabletop cartons are packaged into corrugated cases. Packers can be designed as either horizontal, top- or bottom-load vertical machines and can pack half-gallon cartons at speeds of up to 33 cases/min, depending on the pack pattern. The horizontal case packer is designed for repeatable, rapid changeovers from 3-pack convenience cases to 4-, 6- and 8-pack cases of half-gal cartons. Other machine designs are available to accommodate half-pt, pt, qt and gal-sized cartons. Features include Allen-Bradley Logix controls, a multiple-case-size magazine and touchscreen operation with diagnostics. An open, stainless-steel construction meets NEMA 4X requirements. A carbon-steel construction is available, and requirements for NEMA 12 can also be met.

Schneider Packaging Equipment Co., 315/676-3035. www.schneiderequip.com



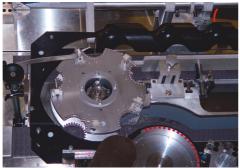


# new products

HMI line Engineers and scientists can now use new flat-panel touchscreen, touch-panel computer and panel PC human machine interfaces (HMIs) with the NI LabView graphical development environment to develop user interfaces. LabView offers a rich user interface development environment with royalty-free deployment for the interfaces with LabView Application Builder, the co. says. Each touchpanel interface includes a LabView PDA module deployment license. Targets a wide range of distributed, programmable automation controller products (PACs), including highperformance PC-based I/O with PXI or industrial PCs, distributed I/O with Compact FieldPoint, FPGA-based, high-speed I/O with CompactRIO and distributed-vision systems with the Compact Vision System. Engineers can deploy LabView applications on the FPT-1015 15-in. industrial flat-panel touchscreen with a color LCD and resistive touchscreen, the TPC-2006 touchpanel computer and the PPC-2015 15-in. color-panel PC with resistive touchscreen and a 2.0-GHz Pentium 4 processor. Connection via Ethernet is available to a wide variety of PAC hardware. National Instruments, 512/683-6490. www.ni.com

#### **Roll-fed labelers**

The Marathon® U Series of roll-fed labelers, including the new Marathon XLU, features a 180-deg, U-shaped conveyor and a servo-driven infeed feedscrew. The labelers are designed to maximize container stability and production speeds while offering processors another line-configuration option with a right-side infeed and a



discharge. The labelers are equipped with SMARTdrive,™ an all-electric drive train, and five independent servo motors. And with advanced digital, multi-axis timing control, they eliminate complex mechanical linkages such as gears, belts and chains. The design simplifies operation, maintenance and changeover by using fewer moving parts and digital automation. Recipe downloads for each container allow the Marathon labelers to automatically adjust machine settings, and lightweight, color-coded, rapid changeover (RCO®) changeparts ease changeover. Built on a modular platform, the labelers can be tailored to meet specific needs. An optional handle-orientation feature applies labels to containers in relation to the container handle.

**B&H Labeling Systems**, 209/537-5785. www.bhlabeling.com

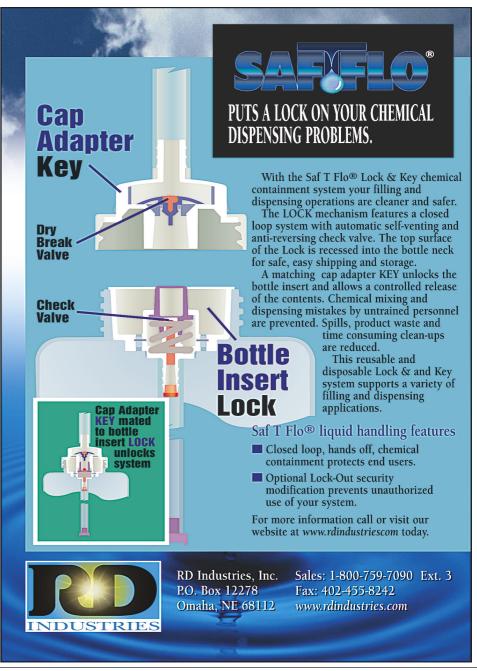
**Controller** The MP940, a member of the co.'s MotionSuite™ family of electronic machine controllers, is a single-axis motion controller. Its modular design provides integral mounting with all Sigma II servo drives, the co. reports. The controller's features include RS-232 and RS-485 serial interfaces for programming and operator-interface connections. A choice of high-speed serial networks, such as DeviceNet and Mechatrolink, gives operators full network communication. The controller handles advanced motion-control functions like phase adjustment, digital gearing, external encoder input and more.



Yaskawa Electric America, Inc., 800/927-5292. www.yaskawa.com

**Bar-code label printer** The new S4M printer is built with a metal enclosure and a die-cast frame for long life and reliable performance. The printer provides an economical choice for on-demand code printing in manufacturing, distribution and logistics applications, the co. reports. Media-management features help minimize downtime and promote productivity. The printer holds 8-in. label rolls that can be inserted via a side-loading mechanism with guides that make it easy for operators to change rolls without threading. A two-line LCD and a keypad offer a streamlined menu to change setup options. The unit processes label formats for both the ZPL and EPL printer command languages. It is also available with the ZebraLink Alternate Programming Language (APL) for competitive printing environments. Connects from 10/100 Ethernet, USB, 802.11b wireless, parallel and RS-232 serial ports. Includes support for multiple, linear and 2D bar-code symbologies and prints at 6 in./sec in label widths of 4.5 in.

Zebra Technologies, 800/423-0442. www.zebra.com





# new products equipment

RFID starter kits The co.'s selection of RFID starter kits combines specific RFID smart labels and thermal-transfer printer ribbons to aid users in establishing pilot programs to meet emerging compliance initiatives. The kits contain the co.'s exclusive SmartTrak RFID smart labels, p-s labels that provide a choice of 96-bit read/write RFID inlays. The smart labels are available in  $4\times2$ -,  $4\times4$ - and  $4\times6$ -in. sizes. Each roll



consists of 500 tested and verified labels. Also part of the kits is one thermaltransfer printer ribbon and a roll of 500 p-s labels without RFID inlays for use during system setup and calibration.

Weber Marking Systems, 800/843-4242. www.webermarking.com

Registered shrink-film wrapper Capable of running at speeds of up to 200 bundles/min on a single row, the Baumer nonstop, print-registered shrink



wrapper is designed for medium- to highspeed applications. It can pack products with or without partitions and has a user-friendly touchscreen operator interface. Its flexible design accommodates a variety of product types, the co. says, and it can be changed over in 2 to 15 min.

Polypack, Inc., 727/578-5000. www.polypack.com

#### Ink-jet printhead controller The

SX32 is a new, low-cost, user-friendly ink-jet printhead controller for the co.'s Drop-on-Demand™ (DOD) technology printheads. A range of enhanced-valve or traditional printheads may reportedly be used with the controller to print high-quality graphics, logos and date codes from 0.2- to 5-in. heights on porous and nonporous substrates, with each



unit capable of controlling up to four printheads. The Co. offers a variety of proprietary, pigmented inks for dark or light surfaces, along with several VOC-free inks.

Matthews Marking Products, 412/665-2488. www.matthewsmarking.com



# sample it!

Case-sealing tape BetterSeal™ tape provides a strong, tamper-evident seal when used on corrugated cases. A water-activated tape, it

bonds with the case following application, producing a sturdy, secure seal, the co. reports. The tape offers two-ply strength and is environmentally friendly and temperature-resistant. It comes in more

than 15 different styles, including reinforced and nonreinforced, in lengths ranging from 375 to 3,000 ft. An

E-Z® Pull Tab style provides an easy-to-open tearstrip, and custom colors and optional printing are available. The co.'s Code Taper and Optional Security Ink accessories can also be used. Samples are available from:

Better Packages, Inc., 800/237-9151. www.betterpackages.com

Trial controller The co. will send a Micro 64 PLC with software to a customer for 90 days, free of charge. After the 90 days, the customer can purchase it at a special, reduced price or return it at no charge. The co. offers several sample packages with Micro 64 only, Micro 64 with Ethernet®, Micro 64 with an operator interface and Micro 64 with a stepper motor and amplifier.

GE Fanuc, 434/978-5100. www.gefanuc.com

Die-cut packets Digitally die-cut sample packets using a range of substrates demonstrate the software of a system that synchronizes laser powering with the details of part geometry, such that burn-throughs and other defects in early-generation lasercutting technologies are eliminated.

Customized sample packets, including special features of specific substrates, are also available on request. Samples are

**Spartanics-Klemm**, 847/394-5700 www.spartanics.com

available from:

Clear plastic packaging The co. offers a line of clear PVC and PET blister-type packaging that allows various products and their accompanying printed literature and labels to show through. The line includes clamshells, blister-packs and trays. The customizable components provide design flexibility and product protection. The packs are also easily nested. Samples are available from:

VisiPak, 800/797-7886 www.visipak.com



#### Models C-50 & C-100 Stand-Up Pouch Capabilities



Compact in size, these high-speed form/fill/seal packaging machines feature exceptional precision and reliability, along with quick-change features for versatile operation.

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- fast, automatic sealing of bags
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- maintenance and quick change over for minimum down time
- economical to operate
- · servo drive system



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# new productsmaterials



DVD slider case The DVD version of the DBS Discbox Slider case is made exclusively of paperboard and can accommodate three discs and a booklet. The case fits into existing storage displays and saves in terms of material and transportation costs, the co. says. Based on renewable raw material, the paperboard case is durable and won't crack while providing protection against sunlight. The co. offers offset printing, converting and filling services.

**Stora Enso Packaging Boards,** 715/422-3111.

www.storaenso.com

Paint cans Peel & Paint™ is an opening and resealing system based on Easy Peel® technology. It features an aluminum lid sealed to an aluminum ring with a plastic cap. In addition to providing an easy-opening solution, the paint-can system also provides a tamper-evidence closure. The system is currently developed for 0.5-, 0.75- and 1-L cans.

Impress, 33-1-56-89-56-52. www.impressgroup.com



**Tins** A new decorative tin "Holographic" features a 3D plaid design that produces a spectacular color display from every angle, the co. says. Each color of the rainbow is visible on the tin, which has a matching cover and body. The tin measures 65/k×113/16 in. **U.S Can Custom & Specialty**, 410/682-7105.

www.uscanco.com



**Bottles** Firenze PET square jars feature art-deco-inspired, beveled corners and a low profile. Available in 125-, 188- and 250-mL sizes with a 70/400 neck finish and a 500-mL size with an 89/400 neck finish, the jars are suitable for a variety of personal care products, including creams, ointments and dry products. They can also be used for large tablets and gelcaps.

Alpha Packaging, 314/427-4300. www.alphap.com

**Resin** Developed for microwavable food packaging applications, DYLARK FG styrenic copolymer resins provide high-heat rigidity and low-temperature toughness for freezer-to-microwave performance. The resin's

polymeric structure retains stiffness and part strength through a temperature range typical of microwave ovens and high-heat foodservice applications. DYLARK FG trays reduce the risk of spillage when handling hot-food containers, the co. says. Nova Chemicals Corp., 866/275-6682.

www.novachemicals.com



**Packaging ideas** The co. offers clients and prospects new ideas along with a simple and creative approach to meeting timelines and expectations. Experience with suppliers from all over the world provides customers with a vast array of capabilities combined with a customer-service-driven support organization, the co. reports. **Pbideas**, 800/562-7668.

www.pbideas.com

Void-fill pillows AirPouch™ void-fill air pillows are now available in larger 8×10- and 8×12-in. sizes, yielding almost twice the volume of smaller sizes, the co. says. Separating easily via EX-Tear™ perforations, the pillows are produced by AirPouch Express 3, a portable, benchtop machine that makes strips at more than 50 ft/min using DuraClear™ PE.

Airpouch Div., Automated Packaging Systems, Inc., 888/288-6224. www.airpouch.com



**Adhesives** New Coseal™ cold-seal adhesive overcomes two major obstacles that have long plagued converts of moisture-sensitive and oxygen-sensitive packaging, such as those used for candy bars, ice cream or even gummy snacks. The adhesive provides an improvement in sealing performance for those packaging converters who have relied on natural rubber, while bringing converters that use existing synthetic cold-seal adhesives a new, lower-priced, higher-performance synthetic alternative, the co. says.

Rohm and Haas Co., 215/592-6922. www.rohmhaas.com





# nowcase

For more information, contact Barbara Levin at (630) 288-8474, blevin@reedbusiness.com

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E: info@ronchiamerica.com, www.ronchiamerica.com

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Hi-Speed X-series is a timesaving, IP 69K compliant, "no tools required" checkweigher. X-Series is ideal for packaging lines requiring frequent washdown. This totally new design features smooth contours, a highly visible 15" user interface proven to withstand very harsh environments, and a controller that seamlessly integrates multiple inspection functions.

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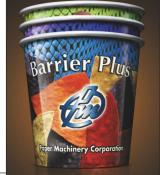
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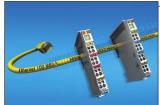
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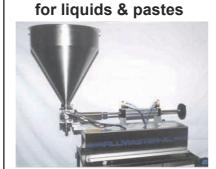
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### newsmakers

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#### **MOVERS & SHAKERS**

**Alcan, Inc.** makes Richard "Dick" Evans its president and CEO, succeeding the retiring Travis Engen. Evans remains a director of the board.

Alcoa adds V. Lance Mitchell as president of its Closure Systems Intl. business. Mitchell most recently served as a group vp for PolyOne Corp. Sato America, Inc. appoints Gary Krause as its new director of marketing. He joined the co. three years ago as a distribution sales manager.

Ampac Packaging, LLC names Jon Powell managing director of its newly created Ampac Europe operation. Powell brings more than 25 years of experience. Colder Products Co. promotes Rick Garber to the position of vp of marketing. Garber developed the co.'s awardwinning RFID capabilities and is a leading advocate of smart technology. R.A. Jones & Co., Inc. promotes Tami VanVooren to the position of natl. account manager for the foods industry. She joined the co. in '98.

OMAC Packaging Workgroup adds William Henderson to its executive board. Henderson is a marketing manager for the Automation and Motion div. of Siemens Energy & Automation, Inc.

#### **HAPPENINGS**

SCA Americas (www.sca.com) relocates its North American hq to an 81,200-sq-ft facility inside Philadelphia's Cira Centre office tower.

Wulftec Intl., Inc. (www.wulftec.com) expands its Ayer's Cliff, Quebec, plant

with a 26,000-sq-ft addition.

Dematic Corp. (www.logistics-assembly.siemens.com) a subsidiary of Siemens, opens as a supplier of automated materials handling systems and solutions. The co. is the successor of the former distribution and industry group of Siemens Logistics and Assembly Systems, Inc.

KHS (www.khs.com) changes its name to KHS USA, Inc. to better align its corporate identity following the merger last year of Klöckner Bartelt and Kisters Kayat.

Sato America, Inc.

(www.satoworldwide.com) purchases Checkpoint Systems, Inc.'s former BCS businesses and its hand-held labeling systems in the U.S.

Allen Coding Systems, a U.K.-based manufacturer of premium contact coding systems, joins the ITW family of cos.,

reporting to Norwood Marking
Systems (www.itw-norwood.com).

Pro Mach, Inc. (www.promacinc.com) acquires the product line and certain assets of Mahaffy & Harder Engineering Co.

The Packaging Machinery
Manufacturers Institute
(www.pmmi.org) and BDMetrics
(www.bdmetrics.com) sign a five-year
deal with Packexpo.com, Inc., a whollyowned subsidiary of PMMI, to create a
next-generation analytic platform for the
packaging market. The relationship
utilizes one common database to create
personalization around unique roles,
providing a 365-day tool for attendees'

and exhibitors' business challenges.

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Visit www.packagingdigest.com/info/events for more event information.

May 16-18 The Packaging Summit 2006. Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont, IL. 262/782-1900. www.pkgsummit.com
June 6-8 EastPack 2006.

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, New York. 310/445-4200. www.devicelink.com/expo/epack06/ June 27-30 ExpoPack Mexico 2006.

Centro Banamex, Mexico City.
703/243-8555. www.expopack.com.mx

June 19-23 NPE 2006: The Intl. Plastics Showcase. McCormick Place, Chicago. 800/SPI-0015. www.npe.org

Sept. 12-14 HBA 2006 Health & Beauty America. Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, New York. 212/600-3000. www.hbaexpo.com Oct. 29-Nov. 2 Pack Expo Intl.

McCormick Place, Chicago. 888/275-7664. www.packexpo.com

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# newsbytes

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#### Nestlé to trial smart labels for opened products

Global food company Nestlé is about to begin full-scale trials of Timestrip smart labels within its U.K. foodservices division. Timestrip labels monitor how long packaged food has been open and are claimed to give a highly accurate indication of when the food should be used.

#### Kraft's new lineup includes disposable mac 'n' cheese

This year, the Northfield-based food giant will launch new convenienceminded products such as Country Time lemonade and Kool-Aid singleserve stick packs, Macaroni and Cheese in disposable cups and Kraft "to go" packets containing Triscuits and cheese.

#### Consumers need more nutritional help from food companies, study says

Most Americans are unaware of the nation's new dietary guidelines, but a majority of consumers say they would like to see companies offering more health tips on their product labels, according to a new study.

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