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 Reed Business Information

June 2006

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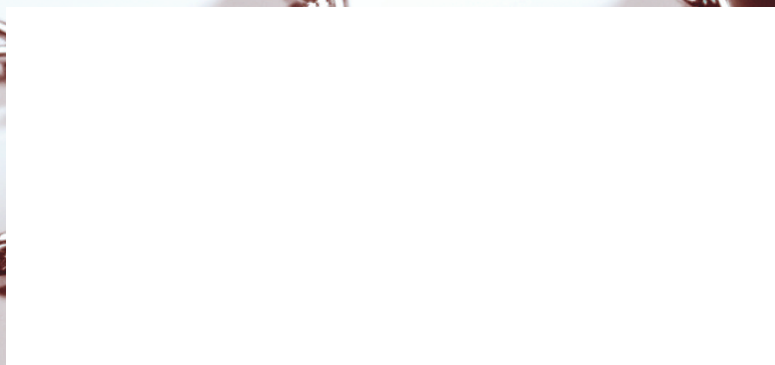
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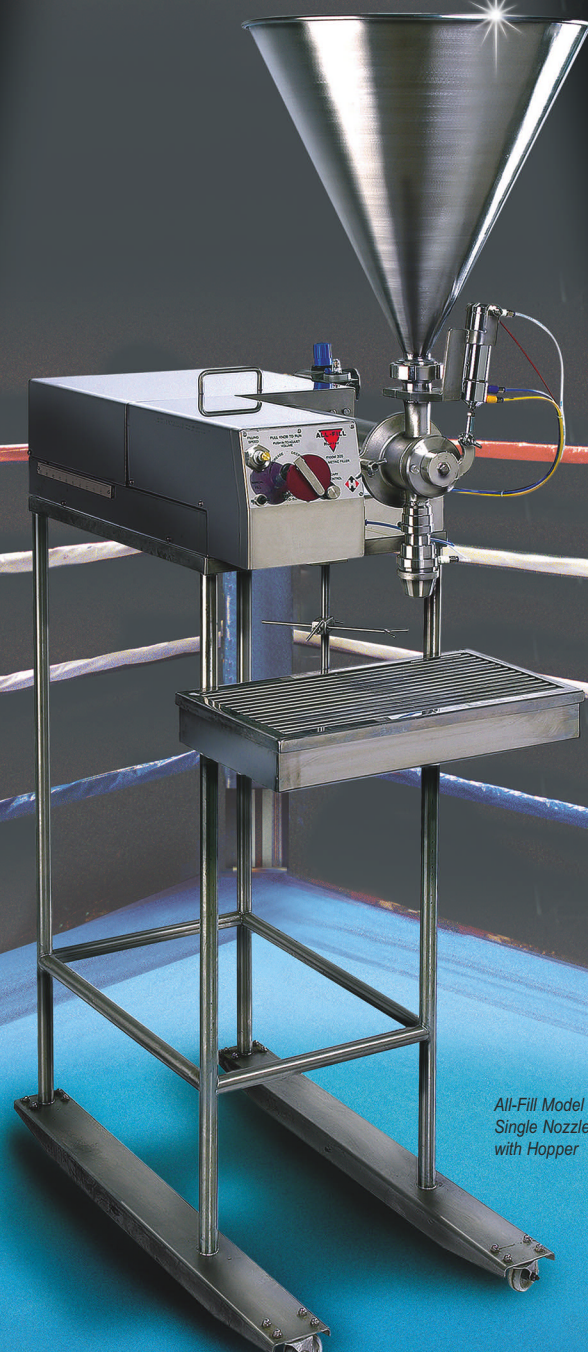
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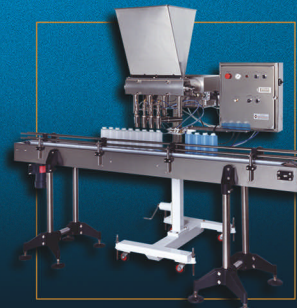
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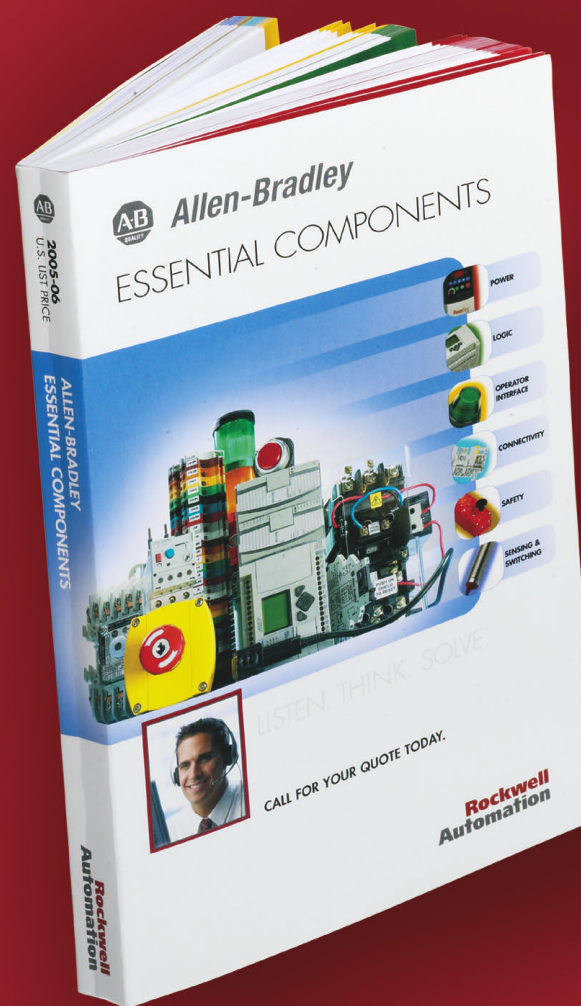
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design trends food packaging

Caffé Nero single-serve soups are convenient



Launched in October 2005, Caffé Nero's microwavable, single-serve soups have proved phenomenally successful, says the company. Caffé Nero had previously served soup in disposable cups from a soup kettle, but decided to change to a more convenient format that could be kept in the refrigerator and easily microwaved. Manufactured by Joubère, West Sussex, U.K., the product line comprises three core soups, plus a special soup of the month.

Key to establishing these microwavable, single-serve soups was finding a container that fulfilled the need for microwavability and effective reclosability to allow for on-the-go consumption. In addition, the

packaging format needed to be easy for Caffé Nero's employees to prepare, and rigid enough to cope with the hot-fill, blast-chill filling technique without paneling. The company chose a plastic container produced by **RPC Blackburn** (www.rpc-blackburn.co.uk) that is heat-sealed with a printed film membrane and lidded with an overcap manufactured by **RPC Hereford** (rpc-hereford.co.uk). To prepare the product, the consumer only needs to remove the seal and place the lidded container in the microwave. RPC Blackburn supplied its 350-mL Shaw Pot, which is injection-molded in polypropylene, for a combination of durability and excellent contact clarity.

Retortable salmon pouch is the buzz at Bumble Bee

Bumble Bee Foods LLC, known best for tuna, is packaging prime fillet pink salmon steaks that offer busy consumers a quick, convenient meal option. Bumble Bee Prime Fillet Pink Salmon Steaks in 4-oz retort pouches are seasoned and ready-to-heat. Printed, laminated and produced in Asia by multiple, qualified suppliers there, the co. says the easy-open, vacuum-sealed pouch holds pink salmon steaks in two seasonings: Teriyaki and Lemon & Dill. The salmon steaks can be heated for 30 sec in a microwave oven. The



proprietary pouches undergo a four-layer lamination process in which the outer polyester layer is reverse-printed in eight to 10 colors by gravure to prevent ink problems during retorting or any scuffing. The polyester is laminated to nylon, foil and polypropylene. Bumble Bee says testing has shown that the pouches can be shelf-stable for up to three years. Bumble Bee's RTE salmon joins Prime Fillet Albacore Steaks in pouches.

Crisco's new spray sticks to a simple touch

The J.M. Smucker Co. has launched Crisco® Simple Touch™ no-stick cooking spray in a 6-oz aerosol can featuring what Smucker calls the Click & Go nozzle. Provided by **SeaquistPerfect Dispensing** (www.seaquistperfect.com), the Click & Go nozzle easily twists and clicks open and closed and has a broad surface that makes for easier handling. Resisting breakage, the spray nozzle is also known as the Moritz™ Click-to-Lock aerosol actuator. It's topped with a custom-molded shroud also from SeaquistPerfect Dispensing that covers the can's domed shoulder for a clean, finished look. A shrinkwrap is added to reinforce consumer confidence. The innovative vegetable spray is the latest in Crisco's line of products for cooking and baking.



Wish-Bone bottles are 'puttin' on the spritz'

Developed to address consumers' desire for "more control over the way they dress their salads," according to Matthew McCarthy, senior brand development manager for Wish-Bone, Unilever of Englewood Cliffs, NJ, has debuted its dainty, go-anywhere, Wish-Bone® Salad Spritzers™. Available in three vinaigrette varieties—Balsamic Breeze, Italian and Red Wine Mist—the 7-oz, sprayable

dressings come in a custom-designed bottle with a trigger sprayer that was engineered in tandem with the dressing formulations to provide the best flow through the bottle.

Elegant and sophisticated, the bottles' offset-printed (soon to be gravure) polyethylene terephthalate glycol shrink-sleeve labels from **Fort Dearborn Co.** (www.fortdearborn.com) set the stage for this new dressing category. Graphics for the richly colored labels, designed in-house, provide almost a theatrical approach, says Sharon Reiter Lindberg, design manager, Hellman's & Wish-Bone, Unilever Visual Branding Center, with a "curtain of lettuce, and the way that the black is presented, as well as illustrations showing off the flavor intent inside."

The bottles, which curve in dramatically at the neck, provide a considerable challenge to shrink-sleeve labeling, Lindberg adds. The high-density polyethylene bottles, supplied by **Silgan** (www.silgan.com), are opaque white, to provide the best protection for the dressing inside. The spritzers were introduced in early March for an average retail price of \$2.79.



Innovative Safe-T-Can™ 'whipps' up benefits for Basic American Foods

More value, less hassle and no-can-opener required are key features of the new reclosable high-density propylene can for Whipp™ Instant Mashed Potato granules from Basic American Foods. The new container includes a snap-off cap and a built-in grip for pouring, and the stackable design and the rack-compatible size make the Safe-T-Can easy to store, too. **Graham Packaging Company, L.P.**

(www.grahampackaging.com) designed the innovative Safe-T-Can for Basic American Foods in direct response to customer feedback.

Prior to the design process, Basic American Foods conducted extensive research to determine the packaging

features that were most important to its customers. Safety, ease of use and convenient storage were identified as the top priorities. Graham Packaging then designed the Safe-T-Can with features that address each customer priority. The wide mouth of the can and snap-off, reclosable cap eliminate the need for a can opener, which was identified as an important safety consideration by Basic American Foods' customers. A peel-back foil barrier under the cap further protects food contents. The Safe-T-Can also features a built-in handle to ensure easy pouring and a no-slip grip. The 105-oz, six-layer HDPE container replaces a No. 10 metal can.

"The Safe-T-Can is an example of designing a product that meets the specific needs of the end user," says Terry Keener, Graham Packaging's business development manager for food and beverage polyolefins. "We created a container that pairs design with functionality and offers all the features that are important to Basic American Foods' customers."



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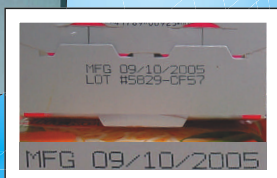
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design trends

H&M's cosmetic carton is an eye-opener



A growing number of cosmetics producers are doing a double take with the eye-popping brightness of new FROVI BRIGHT cartonboard from Sweden's **AssiDomän Frovi** (www.frovi.com). Adopted for cosmetics packages

such as those from British apparel retailer H&M for nail sculpting and permanent dye for eyelashes and brows, the 270-gsm board has the brightness essential for attention-getting products. The bright-white board combines the strength of unbleached kraft with a bleached-white and more luxurious reverse side. The four-layer, virgin fiberboard has a bleached top layer, coated with a chalk/clay mixture, while the reverse side is also bleached. Hangable for display, the H&M cartons are printed with the detailed information consumers want. The graphic design for the permanent dye package presents a clever fifth-panel flap providing more print space, which was used to include an informative picture on the front and a balanced layout of images and instructions in four languages on the inside. In addition to sharp eyes on the part of the consumer, the small print requires superior printability of the carton stock. Sold in self-service chain stores, the products are rack-merchandised at eye level, so the photo on the carton immediately tells consumers what the product is all about. "Both our private brands and producers' brands vie for attention in our stores—products have to stand out to be noticed," says Kristina Blom, store manager at H&M in Örebro. "A good package communicates the contents clearly, and naturally it has to stimulate sales. If it fails, the product is rapidly eliminated from the range."

Just a 'dropps' will do the laundry

Cot'nWash, Inc.'s new dropps™ concentrated laundry detergent is convenient for consumers in its lightweight, premeasured, water-soluble package. The space-saving, 1/2-oz packets dissolve almost immediately and ensure advanced cleaning and care for most types of laundry, the company says. The packets are made of polyvinyl alcohol cast films from **Monosol** (www.monosol.com). A package of 20 packets for 20 washloads is housed in a proprietary, hanging clamshell of clear polyvinyl chloride. A five-count travel pack and a family-sized package containing 40 packets are in the works. Launched in October 2005, the product is available online and through retailers and will go into national distribution soon, says Cot'nWash.



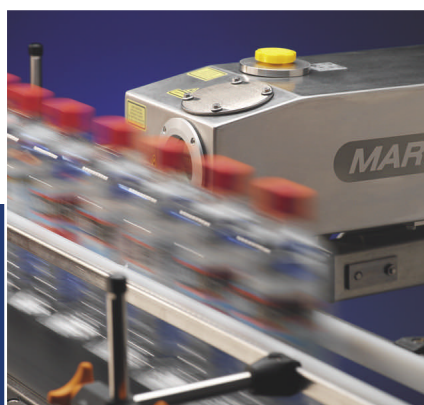
Tamper-evident neckbands look great

New heat-shrinkable neckbands also provide tamper-evidence on Orr Brothers Salsa Catsup and All American Burger Sauce from Orr Food Co., Woodland, CA. The company hired **Ameri-Seal, Inc.** (www.ameri-seal.com) to print four different labels, also known as neckbands, for two burger and two salsa products. The burger-sauce neckbands are printed in three colors, and the salsa catsups in five colors. All are gravure-printed on polyvinyl chloride film. Ameri-Seals® come in different grades to meet the needs of both automatic and manual applications, and can be gravure-printed in up to nine colors.



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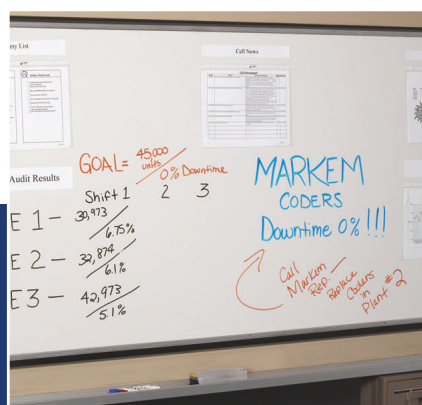
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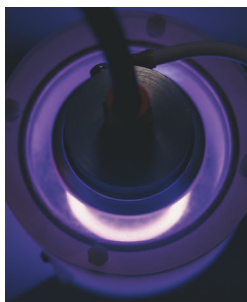


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design trends

Ben & Jerry's latest scoop is a milkshake

It's no wonder that Vermont's most famous ice cream maker, Ben & Jerry's Homemade, Inc., has launched a new line of milkshakes. A logical product-line extension, the new shakes are being introduced this summer, thanks to a licensing deal with PepsiCo, Inc. Described as frozen drinks, the milkshakes will head to convenience, gas and grocery stores nationwide, in time to cool off thirsty consumers on warm days. They'll be marketed in glass bottles designed by O-I (www.o-i.com). PepsiCo reports that it chose the glass bottles for the addition to its line of refrigerated and noncarbonated milk and coffee drinks under brands such as Frappuccinos, Starbucks Double Shots and Quaker Milk Chillers, because it says consumers prefer glass and associate glass packaging with pure, premium contents. The shakes, contained in a 9-oz bottle size, will include flavors similar to the company's ice cream flavor combinations. The bottles feature colorful labels reminiscent of those found on Ben & Jerry's ice cream containers.



Bags of fresh produce are easily resealed

Tesco PLC, a U.K.-based international supermarket chain, has begun marketing five varieties of its unwashed salads in flexible bags that feature an innovative resealing concept. The 60-g reclosable bags of Rocket, Lamb's Lettuce, Red Salad, Baby Leaf with Watercress and Rocket and Crisp Leaf went on sale in Tesco in February. Tesco is the largest British retailer, both by global sales and by domestic market share, and the fourth-largest retailer in the world.

The produce is packaged in TapeTop bags from **Amcor Flexibles** (www.amcor.com) at Langmead Farms in West Sussex, England. The bags are made from 35-micron oriented polypropylene with Amcor's antimist technology, which enhances the visibility of the salad on the retail shelf. The bags are flexo-printed in seven colors at the Amcor Flexibles plant in Ledbury, England. This is the first time that Amcor Flexibles' unique, reclosable Amcor TapeTop packaging is being used to pack fresh produce. Amcor TapeTop is an innovative, patented pack concept that utilizes a pre-cut band to allow multiple reclosures of the package.

The Amcor TapeTop system uses a slightly wider roll of material than a standard bag. The additional width of the film is cut off, and the band, which can be positioned anywhere on the bag through a patented process known as "cut and transfer," is used to reseat the bag. The TapeTop band is secured to the bag with a hot-melt adhesive supplied, in this case, by **Henkel KgaA** (www.henkel.com), and can be used to reclose the pack a number of times as more of the product is consumed, making it an ideal solution for any product typically not finished in one serving. Amcor TapeTop can be used with a range of peelable laminate structures as well as with OPP. It can be used for standard pillow bags and can be supplied by Amcor Flexibles as premade bags.

The TapeTop band is fully printable and, therefore, can be used for portion control and for general promotional opportunities. The system can be retrofitted to existing equipment or supplied with new vertical form/fill/seal bagging machines. Langmead Farms choose Netherlands-based **Convenience Food Systems** (www.cfs.com) for its machine modification.

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comment

Mary Ann Falkman, Editor-in-chief



Packaging machinery sales continue to grow

For the fifth consecutive year, U.S. domestic demand for packaging machinery will grow at about 3 percent in 2006 to an estimated value of \$5.854 billion. This continuing strength is attributable to sustained economic growth, strong cash positions held by U.S. corporations, improved rates of capacity utilization and ongoing efforts by manufacturing organizations to reduce costs and improve productivity.

This forecast comes from the *U.S. Packaging Machinery Purchasing Plans Study*, commissioned by the Packaging Machinery Manufacturers Institute. The personal care market segment will see the greatest demand, with machinery purchases increasing about 11 percent, followed by the beverage market and converting/printing market, both at 7 percent. In dollars, the food market understandably commands the largest share, with estimated spending of \$2.33 billion in machinery purchases. The next largest segment is beverages, at \$1.09 billion, followed by pharmaceutical/medical, at \$736 million in projected sales.

The number one reason for investing in new equipment is to replace existing machinery in order to gain efficiency, speed, flexibility and productivity (30 percent of survey respondents). The second most important reason is to expand production capacity for an existing product line. Also a motivating factor is the expansion of automation to reduce labor costs or to reduce maintenance.

About 36 percent of surveyed companies said they will actually increase packaging machinery expenditures this year, while another 25 percent said expenditures will remain about the same as last year. But not everyone is expecting to increase their investments in machinery—34 percent said their spending will decrease. Of their reasons for this decrease: 28 percent say they spent heavily on new machinery last year, and 35 percent say their existing machinery is still adequate. Other reasons include budget cuts, plant closings, consolidations and mergers.

About one-third of the surveyed companies plan to buy at least some used machinery, which is slightly less than in 2005. About 40 percent said they will upgrade some existing equipment through retrofitting.

The purchasing survey also asks companies about their use of contract packaging services. This year, 37.7 percent of the sample reported that they are currently using contract packagers, at least partially, down from 40.7 percent last year—and considerably reduced from the 56.7-percent usage rate reported in 1999. While business cycles have always impacted contract-out decisions, this steady decline over the last seven years bears watching.

If the companies are not spending money for contract services, they are spending on outsourced line integration and engineering. This year, 37.7 percent of survey respondents report using systems integrators, up from 32.8 percent three years ago. Many OEMs have ramped up their engineering departments to handle much of this demand for integration services.

Mary Ann Falkman

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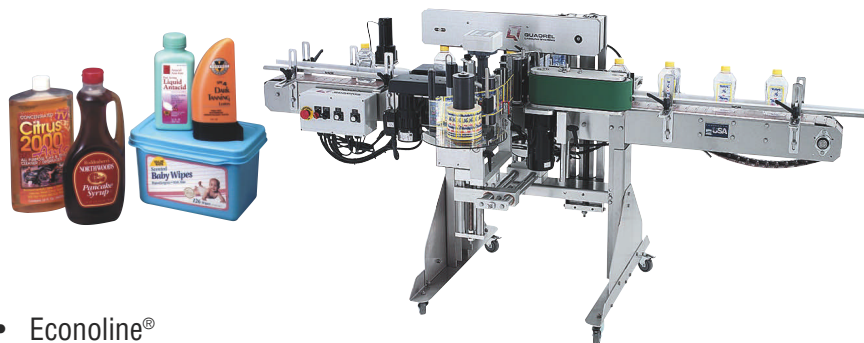
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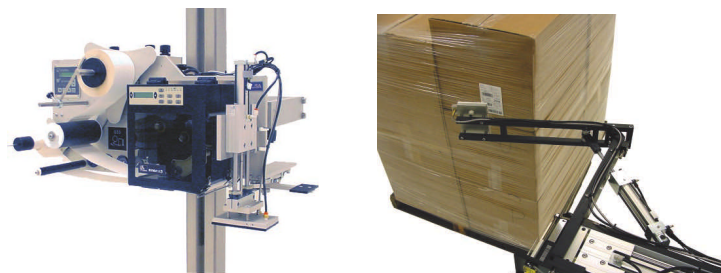
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new products spotlight

Labeling & Printing

Ink The new IROCART LMQ (low-migration-quality) package-printing ink is designed to prevent or dramatically limit the migration of chemicals in the ink formula within the barriers of a food package. The co. notes that, under strict testing, packaging printed with the new ink shows no ink oil in the packaged contents. It adds that process colors and a mixing system are available together with suitable fount additives and a specially developed water-based coating, which can be used for conventional offset printing on a wide range of substrates.

Sun Chemical Corp., 973/404-6000.
www.sunchemicalink.com

PLA shrink labels The partnering of two cos. produces the first cast-film shrink labels made of corn-based polylactic acid (PLA) as an alternative to oil-sourced films. EarthFirst® TDO, using NatureWorks® PLA resin, is said to be especially effective for uniquely shaped containers with high shrink percentages. Made in 50- and 60-micron gauges, the tented film is cited for superior ink adhesion with excellent shrink characteristics, superb gloss, low haze levels and excellent scratch-resistance and can be stored in temperatures to 104 deg F with no natural aging. Also used for tamper-evident bands, the film reportedly offers more predictable availability and pricing, with end users expected to realize performance benefits in labeling-line speeds and reduced energy consumption.

Plastic Suppliers, Inc., 866/378-4178.
www.earthfirstpla.com
Gilbreth Packaging, 800/630-2413.
www.gilbrethusa.com



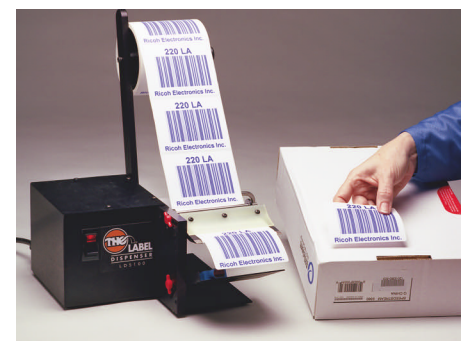
Printer Designed to speed up the mobile printing market via higher performance and durability is the MB200i. Reportedly the fastest in its class with a 32-bit CPU for high-throughput printing speeds to 4 in./sec, the MB200i handles a maximal 2.6-in. roll dia, meaning fewer roll changes and less downtime, with an outer polycarbonate construction and a shock-absorbing mechanism adding to its durability. An on-board mobile processor automatically reduces power consumption by shutting down unneeded or idle on-chip circuitry and doubling operation time per battery charge vs some competitors, the co. says. Bluetooth and 802.11b wireless Ethernet connectivity are available as optional factory-installed interface modules.

SATO America, Inc., 704/644-1650.
www.satoamerica.com



Label dispensers Semi-automatic electric label dispensers are introduced under the TheLabelDispenser™ name, all with fully adjustable photo sensors for greater ease in operation. Dispensing p-s labels in a range from 0.125 to 12 in. long and 0.25 to 8 in. wide, the 18 models are designed with all-metal constructions. As the operator removes a label and a noncontact sensor winds the reel forward to present the next label. Machines reportedly handle all material and shapes, including die-cut parts.

START International, 800/259-1986.
www.startinternational.com



Thermal-printer upgrade Aiming to take the expense and complexity out of printing international characters on-demand, the co. says its new Global Printing Solution now includes Unicode-compliant encoding and font support on its bar-code, label and receipt printers. All major European, Middle Eastern and African (EMEA) languages plus custom characters and logos can now reportedly be printed right out of the box, with Chinese, Japanese, Korean and other Asiatic languages added via a simple font upgrade. The co.'s industrial and high-performance Xi series, 105SL and Z4Mplus/Z6Mplus model printers and PAX4 print engines accept the Global Printing Solution, which is standard for all applicable printers and engines shipped in EMEA, co. says.

Zebra Technologies Corp., 866/230-9494.
www.zebra.com/globalprinting

new products materials

Bottles & Closures

Bottle A three-cornered partnership yields a clarified-PP concept bottle for personal care applications. The co.'s "grippy" is extrusion/blow-molded in a 12-oz size to vividly demonstrate the advantages of PP's clarity, surface gloss and durability. The clarifying agent is Milliken Chemical's Millad® 3988, blended into the resin, Phillips Sumika's Marlex® RCZ-020, which reportedly imparts exceptional drop height and impact strength. The bottle accepts full-body shrink labels or bands that show product color. Fort Dearborn Co. has designed windowed, shrink-sleeve labels specifically to showcase the bottles.

Silgan Plastics, 314/542-9223.

www.silgan.com

Milliken Chemical Corp., 864/503-2200.

www.millikenchemical.com

Phillips Sumika Polypropylene Co., 800/231-1212.

www.phillipssumika.com

Fort Dearborn Co., 847/357-9500.

www.fortdearborn.com



Take-out containers To provide alternatives for take-out, microwavable two-piece packaging for hot foods, the co. introduces Versatainer® oval containers from Newspring® in black and white versions. Said to withstand microwave temperatures to 250 deg F, they're dishwasher-safe for customer reuse, and said to be stackable. The containers are produced in a range of sizes from 6 to 32 oz to accept a variety of menu items.

Pactiv Corp., 800/476-4300.

www.pactiv.com



Cartons What are said to be North America's first folding cartons made from a polylactide-based polymer debut under the NatureSource™ Visual Packaging name. With polymer made from corn, a renewable resource at a relatively stable price, the cartons add clarity and durability to compete for high-end applications, including liquor and cosmetics. The co.'s cartons are created in partnership with NatureWorks LLC, which makes the resin, and BI-AX Intl., which manufactures the box-grade substrate used by the co. to produce cartons that reportedly offer exceptional stiffness. They're said to crease beautifully and fold cleanly as well as maintain a crisp shape. Decoration is via offset, flexo or screen printing, with embossing and foil stamping as options, the cos. add.

AGI/Klearfold, 877/918-3023. www.agiklearfold.com

NatureWorks LLC, 952/742-0400. www.natureworkspla.com

BI-AX Intl., Inc., 519/357-1818. www.biaxinc.com



Films For pharmaceutical and nutraceutical applications requiring outstanding moisture protection and enhanced performance, the co. introduces Pentapharm® alfoil® SG films in two-layer (PVC/PVdC) or three-layer (PVC/PE/PVdC) for medium to high moisture barriers. Also reported to provide excellent surface slip for higher productivity and yield, the films are said to require no modifications for preheat plates and to have improved mold and blister-to-blister denesting properties for higher fill rates. Are sealable to standard vinyl-compatible lidstocks.

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

www.kpfilms.com

Multipacker Challenging corrugated for multiples of glass and PET bottles, the co.'s Diamond carton for 18-, 20- and 24-pack quantities bows under its Duodozen® name. The multi-ply design uses dual substrates. The co.'s 0.27 Coated Natural Kraft® (CNK®) with wet-strength additive, a blend of softwood and hardwood fibers, offers optimal printability. Inside plies are Kraftpak® board, with additional rigidity and strength around the Duralift® handles. Can also include the Ice Pack technology.

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Ink-jet coders New capabilities are reported for the co.'s 5000 Series hot-melt ink-jet case coders. Enhancements enable users to operate up to two printheads on the Model 5200 and up to four printheads on the Model 5400 with one controller. Both models are said to produce a print that maintains integrity and legibility regardless of variations in corrugated or recycled content and that is unaffected by moisture or condensation; and include the ability to print on shrink wraps with readable bar codes. They can be used in moist or wet washdown environments. **MARKEM Corp.**, 866/263-4644. www.markem.us

Servo motors/amplifiers Designed to operate at ambient temperatures to 131 deg F without overload, 32 combinations of servo motors and amplifiers are offered. The Sigma II Series AC servo line is produced in 240 and 480 VAC for application requirements up to 15 kw within a range of 13.5 oz-in. of rated torque through 1,550 in.-lb of peak torque at speeds reaching 6,000 rpm. New technologies, including speed observer control, are integrated into the series to achieve higher performance, the co. says. **Yaskawa Electric America, Inc.**, 800/927-5292. www.yaskawa.com



Laser coder Said to be the fastest in its class, the Videojet® 3320 laser coder is designed to create consistent, crisp marks on high-speed production lines. Printing standard and 2D bar codes, expiration dates, batch codes, symbols and manufacturers' marks at rates of 1,300 characters/sec for speeds of 15 product marks/sec, the coder reportedly accepts most common data formats, enabling the use of standard CAD and graphics programs. It is operated by hand-held or online PLC or host computer with Ethernet, USB or RS232/422. Jobs are generated by the Windows®-based software SmartGraph™. **Videojet Technologies, Inc.**, 800/843-3610. www.videojet.com



Hot-melt protection For its hot-melt adhesive systems, including the Series 2300, Series 3000, 3100, 3400, 3500, 3700 Multiscan® and Vista™, ProBlue® 4, 7, 10 and 15, and DuraBlue® 4, 10 and 16, the co. offers a protection package to keep equipment operating efficiently while reducing the costs associated with unexpected downtime. The co.'s trained technical representatives perform scheduled, 23-point crucial system checks and service to keep its systems, including melters, guns and hoses, in peak operating condition. The representatives use genuine replacement parts to preserve reliability and warranty, meeting original factory specs. **Nordson Corp.**, 800/234-0506. www.nordson.com/packaging



Case erector The Duraformer 3 case erector's design focuses on innovation and ease of use, the co. says. The machine erects and seals with tape at speeds to a reported 30 cases/min, also functioning reliably with no operators required and creating a safe work environment. **O/K International Corp.**, 800/700-5677. www.okdurable.com

Controller The new SoftMotion Controller, the co. says, enables engineers to use its LabVIEW graphical development environment to create powerful distributed-motion applications for Copley CANopen and ORMEC IEEE 1394 intelligent drives. Packaging engineers and others can use programmable automation controllers, including industrial PC- and PXI-based hardware, for distributed-motion applications. The co. notes advantages over centralized motion, including simplified cabling with lower setup and maintenance costs, plus the ability to incorporate vibration monitoring, web connectivity and high-speed analog I/O into distributed-motion applications. **National Instruments**, 800/258-7022. www.ni.com/motion

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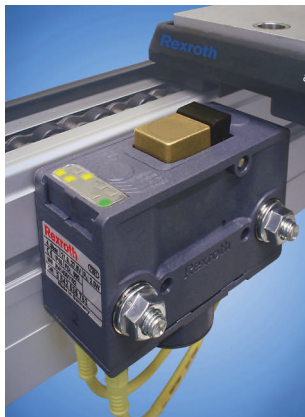
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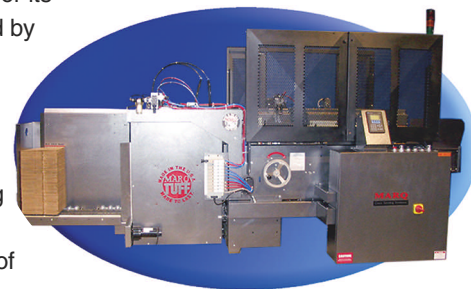
Stopgate Reportedly simplifying sourcing, installation and setup of power and free conveyor stops used with its TS-style assembly conveyors, the co. debuts its VE2/MP stopgate. The model combines the functionality of an earlier gate with a pneumatic solenoid valve, an embedded microprocessor, three proximity sensors and an array of LED indicators to provide extensive operations control and feedback in a self-contained package. The VE2/MP includes a pair of 3-pin connector plugs that provide six I/O connections for greater control and feedback capability.

Bosch Rexroth Corp., 800/739-7684.
www.boschrexroth-us.com



Case erector/gluer New standards for its case erector/gluer equipment are announced by the co. The system handles minimum case sizes now of 6.125 in. long, 5.375 in. wide and 7.5 in. high. Maximum sizes are now 12 in. long, 12 in. wide and 18 in. high. The co. also announces that it is now powder-coating its machines, introducing a method of plating using zinc phosphate that gives a salt spray of 250 hrs, preventing corrosion and anti-galling.

MARQ Packaging Systems, Inc., 800/998-4301.
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Code reader Compact code reader PD50 is introduced to read 2D codes a full 360 deg or if it's stained, chipped, tilted or reversed, in approximately 30 ms, the co.

says. The IP67 unit is said to be easily configurable with the co.'s three-step software, with its powerful algorithm

providing high repeatability results. Two red LED guide lights ease installation at the optimal height position, with up to eight rejected images stored and uploaded via the co.'s PDTOOL software.

Panasonic Electric Works Corp. of America, 908/464-3550.
www.pewa.panasonic.com



Printers Two new families of direct thermal-transfer printers are announced by the co. The Coditherm™ and Swing models are both cited for their ability to print in high resolution—up to 600 dpi—on rigid, uneven surfaces, including chipboard or corrugated, or on contoured containers or products. The printers provide excellent adhesion even on nonporous substrates with no need for special additives and allow messages to be input/changed digitally in real time. Included are four Coditherm models and one Swing printer in a variety of widths.

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



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Aiming to cut costs and boost efficiency for customers, Exel, contract logistics and freight management company based in Westerville, OH, is implementing a pioneering radio frequency identification (RFID) order fulfillment program at its Harrisburg, PA center.

The first step in the program involves delivery of a Q-300 semiautomatic stretch wrapper from **Lantech** (www.lantech.com) with fully integrated RFID tag-reading capability. At the stretch wrapper, the XR400 RFID reader and wireless bridge from **Symbol**

Technologies (www.symbol.com) are mounted inside the mast, with ST's AN400 area antennae are on adjustable brackets attached to the roll carriage. Since a load rotates several times during wrapping, the application provides "an ideal opportunity for extremely reliable and complementary read point in achieving optimal, system-level read rates," notes William Caudill, Lantech mktg mgr for automated products. "The reader is active only when the machine is wrapping," he adds, "so it can't generate false leads



from a pallet on a passing forktruck." Tag data transmission from the wrapper to the warehouse management system is wireless, so the machine can be moved around the facility. Symbol's XR400 reader has reportedly been Gen 2 certified.

Lantech, 800/866-0322.

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GERMAN RETAILER PILOTS RFID PALLET-LEVEL INLAYS

Food retailing and specialty stores company REWE Group is moving toward the end of an extensive pallet-level radio frequency identification (RFID) program at its Norderstedt, Germany distribution center.

Following what it describes as RFID mandates from major global retailers, REWE, with more than 11,500 retail outlets, launched the program in mid-December and will complete it on May 15. Its purpose is to strengthen its competitive edge by optimizing the joint supply chain with its suppliers.

The program uses UHF Gen 2 inlays provided by UPM Rafsec (www.rafsec.com), involving two different label types, a standard 4- x 6-in label and the UPM Rafsec FlagTag(tm) which, developed together with SATO (www.satoamerica.com), is seen as a universal solution for tagging pallets with problematic content including fluids, metal and glass. With the FlagTag, the portion of the label containing the UHF tag projects vertically from the pallet surface to create free-air performance from the tag perspective.

The pilot's first phase involves up to 30 of REWE's suppliers. In order to help them access quality RFID labels at a competitive price of 23 euro cents each, REWE says it decided to bundle the projected need to one supplier. The partners have had easy access to a label pool via the REWE RFID intranet to order the labels.

REWE says that, in comprehensive tests at the distribution center, the FlagTag UHF tags "demonstrated excellent readability to guarantee outstandingly reliable pallet labeling throughout the entire supply chain."

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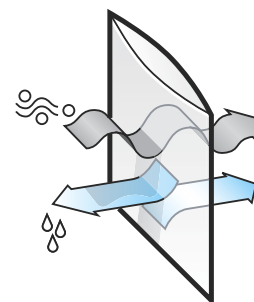


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Retorted pet-food pack is a breed apart

Nestlé Purina PetCare takes the can out of canned dog food with new Beneful prepared meals, considered the first ready-serve foods for dogs in a resealable, plastic container with a one-year shelf life.

Lauren R. Hartman, Senior Editor

Juicy beef stew, simmered chicken medley, savory rice-and-lamb stew and roasted pork sound like tasty ingredients for a delicious family-style meal, right? Well as of March, these dinner combinations began going to the dogs. One of the country's top brands of dry dog food is barking up a new tree as Nestlé Purina PetCare launches Beneful® Prepared Meals.™ While Beneful has experienced double-digit growth each year since its introduction in 2001, St. Louis-based Nestlé Purina hopes to reinvent the wet dog-food category by taking the can out of canned dog food and digging into new product-formula ground.

One look at the product and it's clear that this is not your typical "wet" dog food. Resembling more of a stew, a crock-pot meal or something at a Chinese buffet, the new products look more like "people food" than pet food, and that's by design. They're made with vegetables such as carrots, peas, spinach and green beans; real beef, chicken, turkey, pork or lamb pieces; and wholesome grains such as wild rice, barley and pasta. All eight varieties are designed to deliver the "perfect balance of taste and nutrition," the company says.

Equally breakthrough is the product's nonround plastic container, which is retortable. Probably a first of its kind in the U.S., the retortable container is shelf-stable for at least 12 months, similar to wet dog food in cans. It holds 10 oz of food, has no sharp or hard edges and incorporates a resealable, snap-on lid and a film/foil inner membrane seal. Introduced regionally in 24 states, which represent about half of

the U.S. population and about 70 percent of wet dog-food consumption, Beneful Prepared Meals is available in pet specialty, grocery, mass-merchandise and clubstore channels. Produced and developed by Printpack's Rampart Packaging Div. (www.printpack.com), the package is thermoformed of a proprietary, clear, seven-layer polypropylene/ethylene vinyl alcohol coextrusion designed to achieve specific barrier and performance requirements. The innerseal locks out air and other



The container's heat-shrinkable full-body sleeve label is overall-printed except on three panels where a product-viewing window is placed.

harmful elements to protect nutrients while the container's full-body, heat-shrinkable sleeve label includes product-viewing windows on three panels to clearly show off the food's chunky, multifaceted ingredients and to reinforce its quality and wholesome appeal. If the entire amount of Beneful Prepared Meals food isn't used in one feeding, consumers can easily snap on the lid back to reseal

the container. Any unused product can be refrigerated after opening.

Says Steve Crimmins, vp of dog food marketing for Nestlé Purina PetCare, "Our extensive research with highly involved dog owners reveals that there is a sizable segment of consumers who are not currently satisfied with their existing wet dog-food choices. One of the biggest trends we're seeing among devoted pet owners is the desire to feed their dogs the way they feed themselves—choosing food made with real, high-quality ingredients that offer the perfect balance of taste and nutrition."

Crimmins goes on to say that more than ever, people want to pamper their pooches. They consider their pets to be highly important companions they treat as true family members. "With Beneful Prepared Meals, we've added epicurean polish to pet food to meet the needs of today's highly involved pet owners who want food for their dogs, not dog food," he says.

To position the new food distinctively among the competition, Nestlé Purina asked a group of involved dog owners to provide hands-on consumer involvement to help create Beneful Prepared Meals and its packaging, from test kitchens to the national store level. In fact, Beneful Prepared Meals is the most extensively tested, new item in Nestlé Purina's history, notes brand manager Mark Stoddard. "We spent three years bringing it to market. We used a methodology called 'consumer creation research,' where we bring people in and they

Continued on page 26



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market' of real, wholesome ingredients. Our nutritionists adapted the recipes to ensure that the food would provide one-hundred-percent, complete and



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balanced nutrition. We'd like to think that we may be re-inventing the wet-food category with this product."

What the company discovered is that consumers want a shelf-stable, plastic container. "The consumers we

researched wanted a modern [container] design and definitely wanted plastic," Stoddard tells PD. "We asked consumers to bring in their ideal packaging for the

meal, and many of them brought in the same type of package—a clear container with a resealable lid, which fits the trends we see in the

category today. People want to eat food that's tasty and nutritious. It's apparent that pet owners want to provide the same thing, as well as a lot of variety, for their dogs."

Along with the trend toward more

humanizing of pets, Crimmins says that pet-food packaging is also changing. "Dog owners have become more interested in the food they feed their dogs, including the ingredients on the label and the way the food is packaged," he adds. "We are the first pet food manufacturer to put such a clear container on the shelf."

Stoddard goes on to say that consumers had a few requests in common, such as a nonmetal and transparent container, which many brought in as examples. "Transparency and convenience were really important,"

he adds. "We worked really hard to try to incorporate that into the Beneful Prepared Meals package."

"Over and over, we heard from people who said they want to see what they're buying, so we left areas of the sleeve label completely unprinted, so that consumers can see the wholesome ingredients. The container is also stackable, and can go into a pantry easily."

Nestlé Purina also discovered that resealable packaging ranks high on the critical list, regardless of the package size. Since a lot of people have smaller dogs, the 10-oz size can provide more than a single feeding, so the request for a snap-on lid came in as loud as the bark of a German Shepherd. The materials incorporated in the coextruded PP/EVOH package structure were

We asked consumers to bring in their ideal packaging for the meal, and many of them brought in the same type of package—a clear container with a resealable lid, which fits the trends we see in the category today.

selected to optimize package performance, shelf life and cost, Printpack says.

Developing such a clear plastic container that could be retorted wasn't without its challenges. Working against an 18-month commercialization schedule, Printpack says Rampart had to develop a distinctive package that could appeal to pet owners, provide the proper barriers needed for extended shelf stability and provide the ruggedness and performance needed to withstand retort processing to achieve optimal food safety. It also had to preserve taste, flavor, color and vitamins. All of this was a tall order, considering that few, if any, plastic tubs can handle thermal processing at conventional, metal-can retort temperatures.

States John Kirouac, business development manager of the Rampart Div., "This container fits within the scale of generally recognized retort-processing conditions emerging in the market. It's designed to handle temperatures, pressures and cook times associated with standard air-overpressure retort-sterilization technology. From our perspective, the goal was to achieve a package capable of



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withstanding retort conditions for a highly sensitive product with a functionally challenging shape profile," continues Kirouac. "We recognized we had committed to a timeline and were determined to exceed expectations wherever possible."

The container graphics and different overlids are color-coded in a paintbox of hues to differentiate between product varieties. The attention-getting colors create a rainbow when the different containers are stacked on shelves or in displays. The colored overlids seem to pop on store shelves in bright orange, cranberry, aqua, purple, pepper red, cornflower blue and more.

"Color coding really helps pet owners more easily find the products they're looking for on the shelf," Stoddard points out. "Once they find the brand, they want to be able to differentiate between different products in the line."

To reinforce the wholesome, high-quality theme, sleeve-label graphics present an overall pattern reminiscent of Beneful Dry's existing brand imagery and visuals. The design showcases assorted key ingredients in the food, such as chunks of meat, stalks of grain, pea pods and others against a clean, white background. The Purina and Beneful logos appear in large, black type, next to a photo vignette of the charming Beneful mascot, a furry Wheaton Terrier that romps across the main panel.

Printed with the same graphics as the sleeve label, the tabbed, peelable film/foil inner membrane provides a tight seal over the top of the filled tub. The plastic overlid on top of that is embossed with the Purina and Beneful logos. While retort equipment does include overpressure for the containers, which helps add processing protection, Printpack says it designed the container with functional sealing characteristics that match those of the innerseal so that the tub would perform well during the retort process.

Rampart's facilities in Williamsburg, VA, use a proprietary process to form the container to a 2:1 draw depth, based on surface area, using solid-phase pressure forming (SPPF). Kirouac adds that a combination of factors was key to the retort container's successful development, including the specific coextrusion and forming processes, a certain container geometry, profiling and the container's thicknesses.

Rampart sends the finished containers to a Nestlé Purina facility where they are filled, sealed and retorted on a new, dedicated packaging line installed just for the new Beneful product-line extension.

"It was an extreme challenge for our production team to come up with such a new package structure," says Stoddard.

"We also had a great working relationship with Printpack. They've

been a great partner in bringing this package to market."

Echoes Kirouac, "We recognize the need for individual product-to-package harmonization and are very pleased with the results for Nestlé Purina. We are working on developing other opportunities with the technology. Probably the largest groundswell in packaging innovation is around meeting consumer demands with plastic alternatives to traditional containers (such as metal cans for single-serve pet food, in this case). At Printpack, we are aggressively commercializing programs

to offer customers a choice of either rigid or flexible packaging options."

Available in singles, the new Beneful Prepared Meals 10-oz containers are shipped to stores in easy-to-stock, corrugated display trays that hold eight packs of a single meal variety. Retailers participated in the design of the display trays in order to streamline things on their end. "Retailers get a nice-looking billboard presentation on shelves for the entire line," says Stoddard. "We hope that the launch of Beneful Prepared Meals will

allow us to bring the same innovation to the 'wet' side of the business as the original Beneful dry food brought to the dry side."

Despite the ambitious investment in product development and packaging technology, the packs are reasonably priced at \$1.59.

More information is available:

Printpack, Inc., Rampart Packaging Div., 404/691-5830.
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Frozen pizzas, below, single-file into a film-overwrapping system to be enclosed in clear PVC shrink film before conveying to a shrink tunnel.



Shrink film scores a home run for pizza

Chicago-based pizza icon Home Run Inn, which carries a ballpark's worth of frozen pizza products, switches its film overwrap for frozen pizza to streamline packaging production.

Lauren R. Hartman, Senior Editor

It all started when the winning run from a neighborhood baseball game shattered the front window of a tavern newly purchased by Mary and Vincent Grittani back in 1923. From then until the late 1940s, the Grittani's Home Run Inn remained a neighborhood spot where Vincent served the drinks and Mary prepared the

noon meals. In 1947, Mary Grittani partnered with her son-in-law, Nick Perrino, and named what became their restaurant Home Run Inn. Today, the name Home Run Inn is a Chicago icon, with seven Chicago-area pizza-restaurant locations and a frozen-pizza business that markets pizza in 15 states. Still family owned and operated, Home Run Inn continues to make pizza according to the original

Grittani family recipe they created in 1947.

Since the 1950s, the Grittani's frozen-pizza business has seen decades of growth, popularity and expansion, which continued as the family opened new Home Run Inn restaurants and carry-out locations. In the mid-1980s, Home Run Inn hit a grand slam, with the construction of its first Continued on page 30



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manufacturing facility in Chicago, to keep score with the ever-increasing demand for its legendary pizza. The Home Run Inn company has been growing steadily ever since.

Recently, the company battled another hit when it began using a new clear film overwrap—Alcoa Flexible's (www.alcoapack.com) Reynolon® 2044 polyvinyl chloride shrink film, approved for direct-food contact, to protect its frozen pizzas. Home Run Inn uses the film to wrap its frozen pizzas in 21 varieties before the pizzas are inserted into SBS paperboard folding cartons.

The film is used for seven types of 6-in. pizzas, five 10-in. varieties, six 12-in. versions and three kinds of deep-dish products. Mike Kelly, who manages plants in both Chicago and Woodridge, IL, says the company was becoming increasingly frustrated with the appearance and performance of an imported film. Kelly gave Joe Bures, Home Run Inn's maintenance manager, the task of resolving the issues related with running the material.

"We had used that film for almost two years, mainly due to its attractive price," Bures explains. "But it created



Above, the film-wrapped pizzas index into the cartoner, where pusher arms insert them into cartons the machine opens and prebreaks from blanks. Film overwrapper, right, runs the new film at lower temperatures with no rewrips.



unsightly dog ears on the four "corners" of the wrapped pizza, which would interfere with cartoning. We had to re-open and discard multiple cartons, as the dog ears would interfere with the carton seals. If these packaging-quality issues weren't caught on the production floor, they could possibly make their way into retail outlets and result in costly returns."

Home Run Inn worked to overcome these issues, as daily business operations began to include a buildup of pizza cartons that had to be reworked. This caused line downtime and extra costs that would add up per hour. What's more, seals on some of the wraps could break. But with the pizzas becoming so popular that the Woodridge facility runs at close to 100-percent capacity, carton rework is considered a very foul ball.

"We make a premium product at

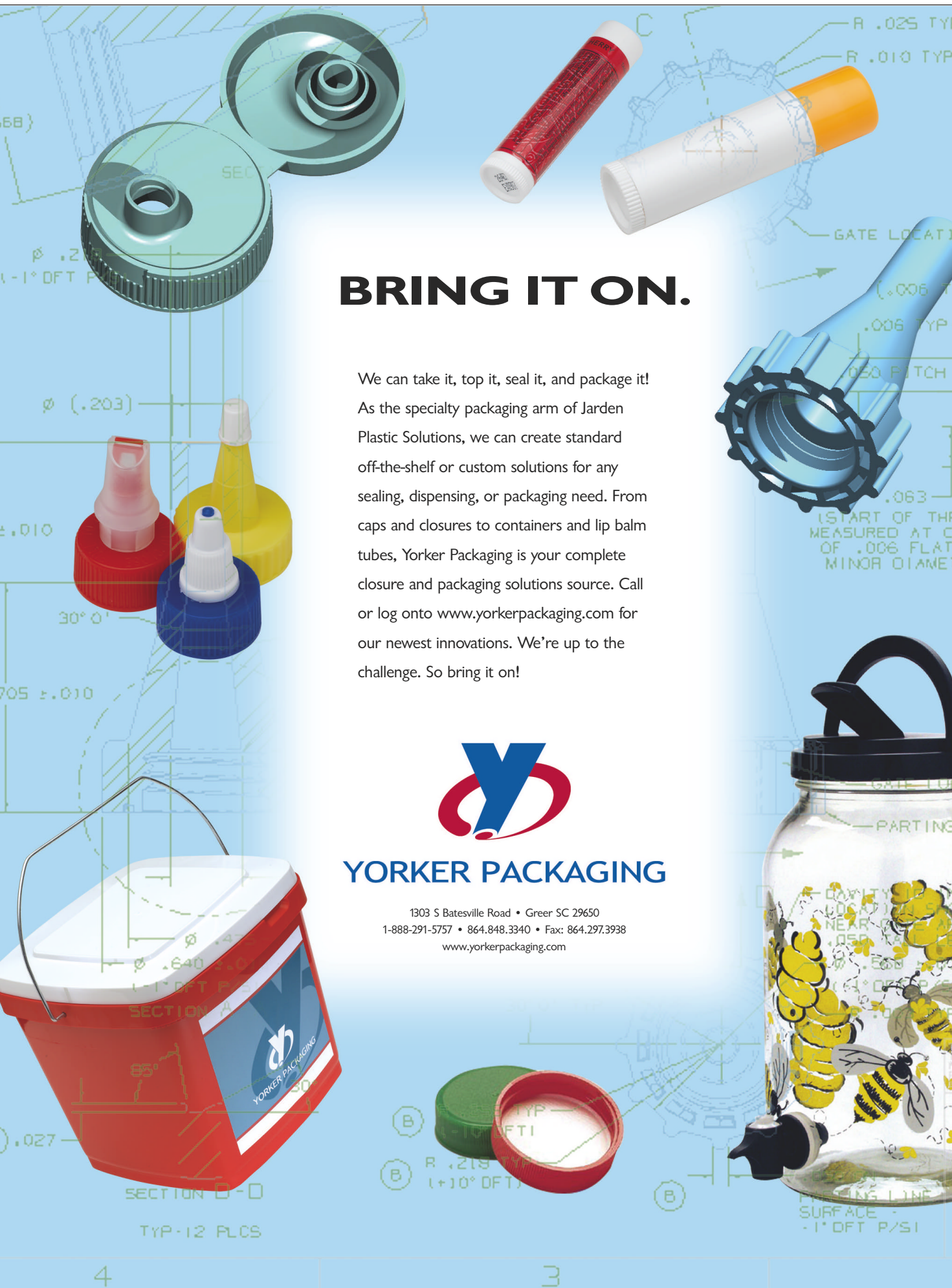
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Home Run Inn," states Joe Perrino, president, chief executive and son of one of the original owners. "We require premium packaging."

In his search for a solution, Bures surfed the Internet for a food-approved shrink film and discovered Reynolon, designed for optical clarity and exceptional shrink and puncture-resistance. A low-temperature shrink film that machines well, the biaxial Reynolon 2044 specifically targets high-speed automatic wrapping equipment that requires a fairly rigid structure with high slip. The film slips easily around products prior to being heat-shrunk around them for a snug fit. The 2004

grade was selected because it is approved for direct-food contact and has enough rigidity to hold up to high production speeds. It also offers good shrink for a round product, according to Alcoa.

As discussions about the film issues continued, Home Run Inn decided to test the film with the small, 6-in.-round, frozen pizzas and asked Alcoa's technical service representative, Ed Connor, to bring the film to the 44,000-sq-ft facility in Woodridge.

A few modifications were made to the plant's Doboy (www.doboy.com) Microtronic horizontal flowrapper with a CTC Parker Automation (www.ctcusa.com) human/machine interface and a Sargeant® AH-II shrink tunnel from PAC Machinery Group's Audion Automation (www.pacmachinery.com), and the 6-in. pizzas were successfully wrapped. The company then began trials with the remaining product sizes. Reynolon's lower sealing temperature requirements allowed Home Run Inn to lower the temperature on both the flowrapper's sealing bars and on the shrink tunnel.

Pleased with the initial results, Home Run Inn ordered rolls of film for a production startup. To enhance the machining of the film, Alcoa actually helped to rebuild the wrapper's film drive and tracking assembly to run in top shape and added new crimp-seal bars. Alcoa also recommended that the film be pre-perforated in product-specific perforation patterns, which would allow oxygen to escape and reduce the chance of broken seals. "The system evacuates enough air [in the package] during the shrinking process to eliminate stress from the seals," explains Connor.

"The film has the best shrink characteristics for a round product in a square bag such as these pizzas," he says.

The film also ended Home Run Inn's dog-ear headaches during production runs. Depending on machine speed and the specific pizza size being wrapped, the operating sealing parameters range from 245 to 290 deg F in different areas of the machine's sealing section.

"The Reynolon film has been very good for us," notes Bures. "We're happy with it. We no longer have to rewrap the pizzas, and there are no wasted cartons or additional labor charges. The lower [wrapping] temperatures will also increase the life of our machinery."

In production, the frozen pizzas single-file into the Doboy system and are wrapped in 75-ga, single-wound PVC film that unwinds from a roll mounted directly above the incoming pizzas. As the products emerge neatly wrapped, they drop onto a conveyor leading into the heat tunnel, which shrinks the film to conform to the pizza's shape. The "corners" of square-cut film are minimized around the round, frozen pizza. Next, the pizzas are cartoned on

an indexing machine from PMI Cartoning (www.pmicartoning.com) that erects the brightly printed, glossy paperboard cartons from blanks stacked in a magazine. Both General Converting, Inc. [GCI] (www.generalconverting.com) and Knight Paper Box supply the SBS cartons. While warm, the Reynolon film's softness allows the entire pizza to be cartoned without issue. Line operators pack the cartons into 12-count corrugated cases that are taped

closed on a 3M-Matic machine from 3M Industrial Adhesives & Tapes Div. (www.3M.com/packaging). The cases are palletized and wrapped for shipment.

Reynolon 2044 allows the frozen pizzas to run at greater efficiencies, concludes Bures. "That's good news for us as we begin to expand our facility again and double production capacity. The film was the right choice."

More information is available:

Alcoa Flexible Packaging, 804/281-2262. www.alcoapack.com.

CTC Parker Automation, 513/831-2340. www.ctcusa.com. Doboy, Inc., a Bosch Packaging Technology co., 715/246-6511. www.doboy.com.

General Converting, Inc., 630/378-9800. www.generalconverting.com.

Knight Paper Box Co., 773/585-2035.

Audion Automation, PAC Machinery Group, 888/418-8470. www.pacmachinery.com.

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Bottle and closure designs tackle tough issues

As consumer demand for convenience and portability continues to grow, it's no wonder that innovative new bottle and closure technology abounds. The following is just a sampling of the companies and products that will be on display at PACK EXPO International (www.packexpo.com) this fall.

More and more, the trend in plastic bottles is toward brand differentiation," states Ross Bushnell, senior vp of sales and marketing for **Silgan Plastics Corp.** (www.silgan.com). "Our customers are asking us to develop bottles that will help them distinguish their products from those on the shelf around them."

The need for differentiation is certainly not new, says Bushnell, but the increasing presence of competing store brands has heightened the need for brand distinction. Silgan has a development center in Norcross, GA, that is dedicated to helping its customers achieve that level of differentiation, and the

last 18 months have seen a significant increase in its use and in the value placed on it by customers.

"Two specific areas of differentiation where we have seen growth are dual-chamber bottles, where two products mix as they are dispensed, and shrink-sleeve labeling of bottles to achieve outstanding decoration," remarks Bushnell. "We have seen a dramatic increase in the use of sleeves just since last fall."

The use of in-mold labeling is also on the rise. Once common only in the laundry detergent aisle, the technique is now popping up on other household product-category packages and even on food containers and personal care products. Other methods that enhance shelf presence include screen-printed graphics and soft-touch surface effects—achieved both

in molding and after molding with spray-on surface applications—that give bottles an added tactile appeal that magnifies their visual appearance.

"Experience has shown our customers that once consumers pick up a package and are pleased by its feel as well as by its look, they are more likely to purchase it," comments Bushnell.

Alcoa Closure Systems Intl. (www.alcoa.com/packaging) takes a proactive approach to consumer research and closure development. Rather than

Continued on page 34



Silgan Plastics' HDPE extrusion/blow-molded bottle features an in-mold label and a side window stripe for product-level viewing.



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developing specific product configurations related to a particular customer, Alcoa measures consumer-need gaps associated with existing packages in the marketplace, uncovering opportunities for new product ideas to take to current and prospective customers.

"Companies are extremely impressed when you can show them consumer data that supports new packaging concepts," says Tony Smith, global marketing director for Alcoa CSI.

Alcoa has also developed closure products to meet broad industry needs.

Its Double-Lok XT plastic closure for carbonated beverage bottles, for instance, was developed to maximize carbonation retention performance during temperature fluctuations that can occur throughout the distribution process. Beverages can be exposed to temperatures ranging from 40 deg F during filling and at vending, to as much as 135 deg F in a closed truck or warehouse in the southwestern U.S. The innovative XT closure liner maximizes seal integrity and product freshness using a plug-side-seal design, ensuring product freshness over a longer packaged life.

In terms of innovation, Alcoa CSI's unique Vino-Seal™ glass wine closure has won numerous wine industry awards. In the U.S., the Vino-Seal was chosen as the sealing system for Whitehall Lane Winery's premium 2003 Reserve Cabernet. The Vino-Seal was designed by engineers at Alcoa as an alternative to cork that is more stylish and graceful than a screw cap.

The new closure looks like a



Alcoa Closure Systems' glass wine stopper offers an elegant finish as well as a secure seal.

decorative glass decanter

stopper, offering an elegant look to top off an upscale wine bottle. Fitted with flexible o-rings, the stopper provides a sterile side seal, preventing contamination or oxidation. Made of a completely inert material, it also poses no flavor-contamination problem to the wine. A traditional neck sleeve ensures mechanical protection and tamper-evidence. The result is an easy-to-open, easy-to-reseal closure that eliminates the familiar struggle with a corkscrew. The closure is also available in the same configuration in acrylic and has potential with other food and beverage applications as a major advance over traditional closure systems.

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The year 2006 marks the twentieth anniversary of the first hot-fill products in polyethylene terephthalate using a plastic vacuum-holding closure: the Quaker Oats Gatorade isotonic drink and Ocean Spray's cranberry drinks. The 43-mm closure was produced in the White Cap [now Silgan Closures, (www.silganclosures.com)] plant in Champaign, IL. In 2006, Silgan's Bill Thomas still sees the trend continuing, with bottlers switching from metal closures on glass containers to plastic closures on plastic containers.

"Up until a few years ago," says Thomas, "the changeover resulted from companies converting large-sized containers from glass to plastic. Today, the big news is the explosion in the single-serve market [primarily twenty-ounce or smaller containers] as it goes from glass to PET and occasionally polypropylene, and the resulting popularity of the smaller thirty-eight-millimeter closure."

Although hot-fill beverages began the transition from glass to plastic in 1986, it wasn't until 1998, Thomas remembers, that hot-fill food products like apple sauce and salsa began the change from traditional glass bottles with metal caps to PET bottles



Silgan Closures designed Ocean Spray's cranberry-juice closure specifically for the target senior audience.

with all-plastic caps.

Some brand owners didn't want to give up the designs they were accustomed to having embossed or printed in detail on their metal caps, so Silgan developed the compromise composite cap—similar to the lid on Mom's canning jar—with a plastic fitment holding a metal panel that seals with a plastisol gasket.

"Another interesting trend in beverage closures," continues Thomas, "is the appearance of nonround closures."

The 43-mm closure on the Ocean Spray 64-oz multiserve container was designed jointly by Ocean Spray and Silgan Closures at Silgan's Innovation Center in Downers Grove, IL, to accommodate the seniors who typically purchase this product. The closure interior seals and unscrews like any other, but the exterior is shaped to make removal easier for hands with restricted strength due to age or arthritis.

"We're proud to be associated with such a forward-looking company," says Thomas. "We helped Ocean Spray be one of the first to use a plastic closure for a hot-fill product in 1986, and now to be the first to offer an ergonomically shaped hot-fill plastic closure."

Ball Corp. (www.ball.com), a leading producer of plastic bottles, reports that innovative packaging is playing an increasingly important role in the growing wine category, driven by consumers seeking greater convenience, variety or an easy way to try something new. Building on this demand, Ball has developed both a line of stock PET wine bottles and a unique, custom-bottle

savings on freight. These benefits—which Ball says can be achieved without sacrificing either product protection or brand *panache*—support the use of plastic bottles with brand owners while other practical considerations have appealed to consumers.

"Sales of single-serve, 187-milliliter wine bottles grew nearly twenty percent last year," says Jerry Rosenow, national wine category manager for Ball. "The size is just right for today's growing number of smaller households and individual consumers for whom a 750-milliliter bottle is just too much for the occasion."

For example, Ball has designed a custom, 187-mL PET wine bottle for Sutter Home Winery that preserves the look of the existing Sutter Home glass container. The winery launched four varieties in the bottles last fall and continues to expand distribution. Ball designed the Sutter Home bottles to run on the winery's existing glass lines to minimize the need for changeovers and simplify filling. "The transition into PET has been very smooth throughout the development, testing and production process," reports Wendy Nyberg, senior director of marketing for Sutter Home.

More information is available:

Alcoa Closure Systems Intl., 317/390-5082.

www.alcoa.com/packaging. Booth S-2460.

Ball Corp., 800/428-7145.

www.ball.com. Booth E-6910.

PACK EXPO International 2006,

703/243-8555. www.packexpo.com

Silgan Closures, 800/515-1565.

www.silganclosures.com.

Booth N-3426.

Silgan Plastics Corp., 203/975-7110.

www.silgan.com. Booth N-3426.



Ball's PET bottles let consumers take their wine where glass is prohibited.

capability that will be displayed at **PACK EXPO International 2006** (www.packexpo.com).

Designed using input from consumers, wineries, distributors and venue operators, Ball's PET wine bottles unite the premium look and feel of glass with the modern convenience of plastic. They offer an ideal package for occasions where glass may be prohibited, such as in public parks or at sporting events, or when consumers are traveling. Plastic bottles also weigh less than glass bottles, and offer packagers distribution cost



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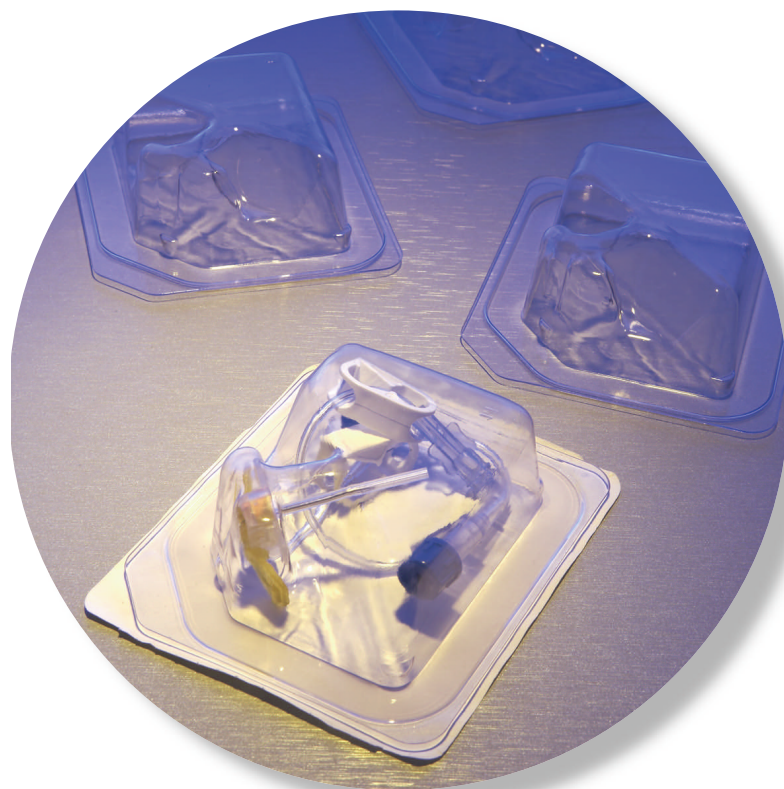
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Specialized Health Products, Inc. gets to the heart of the matter: clinician safety and patient comfort.



"Huber" is the generic name for the needle used to administer chemotherapy drugs and other such intravenous fluids to cancer and chronic hematology patients. A Huber needle is inserted into a surgically implanted, subcutaneous port. This port allows access to chemotherapy drugs, for example, on a repeated basis, over an extended period. Configured at a right angle, the needle might be in a patient's implanted port anywhere from three hours to seven days. When a clinician removes the needle from a port, there is always a danger of what is referred to as a "rebound effect," where the port's retentive forces "hold" onto the needle. Then, when the needle releases, it can rebound and result in the clinician receiving a needlestick injury. Because it is a hollow-bore needle, it could be filled with the patient's blood or fluids, leading to the spread of blood-borne diseases such as HIV/AIDS or hepatitis B or C, should an accidental needlestick occur. Approximately 47 percent of accidental needlestick injuries arising from the use of Huber needles are attributed to this rebound effect.

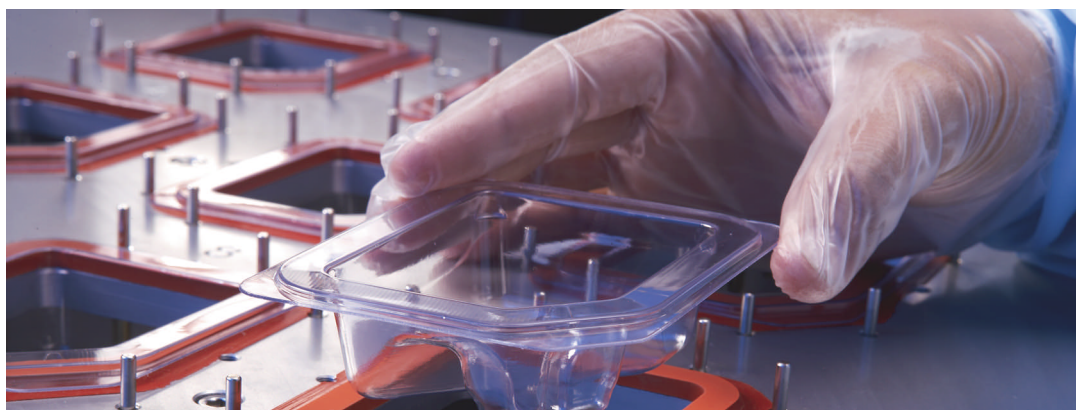
It's estimated that U.S. healthcare workers suffer 800,000 injuries from accidental needlesticks and other sharps annually. This leads to an estimated \$750 million to \$1 billion spent each year in the testing and treatment of needlestick injuries, to which the U.S. Congress responded by enacting the Needlestick Safety and Prevention Act, effective in April 2001.

This is where Specialized Health Products, Inc. (SHPI), Bountiful, UT, comes in as a leading developer and manufacturer of safety medical needle products. Its mission is to minimize the risk of accidental needlesticks. Founded in 1993, the company's first entry into the safety Huber needle market was the high-selling LiftLoc® safety infusion set. MiniLoc™ is its newest technology in the rapidly growing, \$60-

million U.S. safety Huber needle market. "We've designed our MiniLoc safety infusion set with the comfort of the patient and the convenience of the oncology nurses in mind," says Dr. Don Solomon, chief operations officer and chief technology officer for SHPI.

Continued on page 38

A packaging challenge, the thermoformed tray, above and below, has a narrow cavity to accept the right-angle needle and 8 in. of tubing in its infusion set.



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Anser Coding, Inc., an international company with US headquarters in Lake Elsinore, Calif., has for years been a supplier

of basic high-quality, low-cost industrial carton coding systems.

The company is known for its current product line of 600 and 900 series printers. These single-cartridge, stand-alone printers incorporate Hewlett-Packard thermal inkjet technology and print 3-4 lines of alphanumeric date codes and validated bar codes in 1/2 in. areas on primary and secondary porous and non-porous substrates.

This year, while building on—and maintaining—its established business in stand-alone inkjet printers, the company is implementing a strategic plan to expand beyond that market.

At Pack Expo 2006 in Chicago, October 29 - November 2, Anser Coding will celebrate its 20th anniversary by entering into what it calls the 'high line' carton coding market. A new printer, the Anser Techmaster 1000TM, will be introduced at the show to serve this up-scale market.

"Like our 600 and 900 series printers, the new Anser Techmaster 1000TM also incorporates HP technology because it is accepted in the market place, it is clean, and it makes our printers easy for customers to use," said Jerry Delisle, CEO at Anser Coding, Inc.

Developed using the Anser Coding's expanded engineering capabilities for software design and systems integration, the Anser Techmaster 1000TM product line provides the capability to interface fully

and easily with other software and PLCs at customer packaging operations.

The Anser Techmaster 1000TM system is not limited to a single cartridge. It has been designed to allow printing of up to one-inch letters by 'stitching' together two 1/2 in. cartridges or to print multiple lines in various resolutions, sizes and type fonts by stacking several cartridges.

"We have built our reputation as a high quality house offering 'plug and play' products," said Delisle. "We consider ourselves the price leader in HP carton coding technology."

Each Anser Techmaster 1000TM system will consist of a sophisticated input device capable of running up to 32 print head modules. With each module consisting of up to four print cartridges, a potential total of up to 128 HP cartridges or 'pens' can be controlled.

The new system maintains the standards set by Anser Coding's stand-alone printers.

"We have built our reputation as a high quality house offering 'plug and play' products," said

Delisle. "We consider ourselves the price leader in HP carton coding technology."

Anser Coding's business model is a good fit with Hewlett-Packard's inkjet technology. At up to 600 dpi, print quality from the HP cartridges is crisp and clean, the cartridges snap-in and out, and low cost of ownership results from the maintenance-free HP cartridges with their integral ink nozzles.

"Our dedication is to the end user, to keep him running at all costs," said Delisle.

With this objective in mind, Anser Coding and its distributors put a premium on keeping customers' packaging lines in uninterrupted operation.

One element of Anser Coding's dedication to customer support is fast service. Any order for equipment or consumables that arrives in California before 1:00 PM ships the same day. A paperless system speeds shipment and invoicing.

Also important in keeping the end-users running is the design of the HP cartridges used in Anser Coding's printers. With virtually no moving parts to wear out, the cartridges offer a high level of reliability with minimal downtime and bulk ink systems permit long non-stop runs.

Anser Coding, Inc., serves the carton coding needs of the baking, beverage, chemical, food, pharmaceutical and other industries from distribution centers in the US, Taiwan and China.

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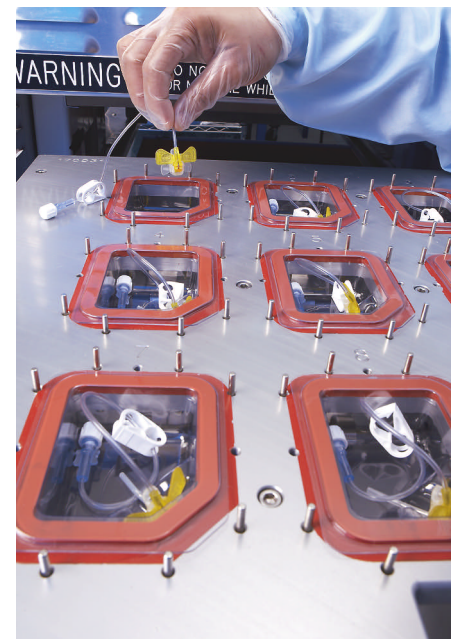
"We've spoken to numerous oncology nurses and other clinicians since launching LiftLoc®," says Dr. Solomon, "and they are looking for a safety needle even more like the conventional nonsafety needles they used before the law came into effect." With that in mind, SHPI has designed and developed the next-generation MiniLoc. It has a smaller footprint, a lower height with a smooth, comfortable base that's designed for patient comfort, and a safety mechanism that's easy to use and does not impact the clinician's technique. In

addition, SHPI has added a proprietary lubricant to the needle to reduce needle-penetration force.

As for the clinician's technique, the MiniLoc's proprietary design provides familiar wings that meet to provide an extremely stable grip during the insertion procedure (and deaccess procedure) due to the tab insert on the wings. The smaller design (or footprint) allows the clinician to dress the device with a transparent medical dressing and have the MiniLoc lay flat to the skin. The proprietary safety mechanism

enables controlled, easy engagement of the safety mechanism.

The MiniLoc's small footprint and right-angle needle presented a significant packaging challenge. This fell to SHPI's packaging engineer, Shawn Horner, and by extension to Flexpak Corp. (www.flexpakcorp.com), which manufactures the product's thermoformed tray. The primary challenge was the narrow cavity necessary to accommodate the needle's right angle. In addition, it was necessary to consider the positioning of the eight inches of



The tubing coils neatly, with no kinks, in a recess. More important, the needle can be removed the same way, each and every time.

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tubing connected to the infusion set.

Says Horner, "We wanted the tubing to coil neatly in a recess with no kinks. But more important, we wanted to design a package that allowed the wings to retain their shape so that they wouldn't become 'set' in the wrong position."

This thinking, according to Solomon, goes back to clinicians' convenience. "We want them to be able to take the needle out of the package in the same way each and every time," he says. "That means the wings must be secured in the same position in the package."

So the people at SHPI and Flexpak went to work. With the narrow, right-angle cavity, Flexpak needed to ensure consistent material distribution along the bottom of the thermoformed tray to prevent thin spots—not acceptable in medical packaging due to the threat of contamination from possible punctures.

For that reason, the rigid, vinyl film used for the thermoform trays was sourced from Klöckner Pentaplast of America, Inc. (www.kpfilms.com).

States Ed Berger of Flexpak, "We use them for most medical packaging because they're top-notch. For this project, we proposed two different types of their film to SHPI: Pentamed® rigid vinyl and polyethylene terephthalate glycol films. SHPI chose the rigid, vinyl film. For what they needed, Klöckner Pentaplast film offered excellent performance at a cost-effective price. We were glad to be able to offer such an economical choice."

Klöckner Pentaplast business manager for Medical Device Films Richard Ryder says, "We manufacture a full range of specially formulated films for a wide variety of medical packaging applications. The vinyl film that SHPI specified is ETO-[ethylene oxide] sterilizable in compliance with FDA [U.S. Food & Drug Administration] regulations, does the job and doesn't break the bank."

At SHPI, Horner admits that the



The narrow thermoforming cavity maintains material distribution to the bottom with a 'rib' along one wall that supports the product.

precision he was looking for was not typical of a standard retail tray, and he praises Flexpak's ingenuity. "I believe in letting vendors work for you," he says, "and Flexpak came through after only a couple of design interactions. They managed to ensure even material distribution into the cavity while maintaining material thickness at the sealing flange. The Klöckner Pentaplast film that Flexpak used had a lot to do with the quality of their work."

That wasn't the half of it, admits Berger. "The geometry used to hold the product's wings was somewhat difficult because of the change in angles along the vertical wall of the part," he says. "It had the potential to produce thin spots in the material that could negatively impact the sterilization process. That's why we always turn to Klöckner Pentaplast. Their film is consistently high-quality."

What Flexpak devised to secure the wings with a proper fit was a "brace." Explains Berger, "The thermoformed cavity for the needle is narrow and deep. In order to maintain sufficient material distribution to the bottom of the cavity, we could not make it any narrower. The solution was the addition of a 'rib' feature along an adjacent wall that provides sufficient product support." The rib innovation actually eliminates an extra part otherwise necessary to hold the wings in place, thus reducing material usage.

In the end, the entire footprint measures 3.34 in. wide by 3.9 in. long and 1.16 in. high, and is thermoformed at Flexpak on a Sencorp (www.sencorp-inc.com) 2500 machine. "It has been a great relationship" says Solomon of Flexpak. The same footprint is used for all 29 MiniLoc stockkeeping units in a variety of lengths and product configurations, and in 19, 20 or 22 needle gauges.

But SHPI thought even further than the thermoform tray in terms of clinicians' convenience. They considered the limited shelf space in a hospital supply closet. SHPI decided to develop an innovative new shelf box for MiniLoc, and the novel idea to store MiniLoc sets in a "fridge pack" was

born. At least a fridge pack is what most people would recognize as the shelf box that RD Packaging developed under SHPI's direction. The shelf box—or dispenser box—makes it easy for a clinician to reach in and grab a MiniLoc set. Because it sits on the shelf sideways, the whole box takes up less space, and the four-sided graphics are easily visible as to what is contained therein and how to use the needle.

Along with the other raw materials, the shelf boxes are shipped to Integra Biotechnical (www.integrabio.com) in

Tijuana, Mexico. Raw materials also include: needles, injected-molded plastic needle parts (safety mechanism, base and wings), thermoform trays, Tyvek® lidding, label ribbon and corrugated cases. The MiniLoc safety infusion set thus assembled is then placed in the thermoform tray. The tray and lidding are then ready to enter the medical heat sealer, a Standard BM 2020 from Belco Packaging Systems (www.belcopackaging.com). In the final tally, there are 20 MiniLoc sets in an

Continued on page 40

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end-loaded shelf case. And there are eight boxes in a corrugated case, making a total of 160 units or needles. The cases are then shrink-wrapped on large pallets



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and sent to California to be ETO-sterilized. From there, they are sent to the warehouse for distribution.

Hard to believe, but it took only two

months, approximately, for the packaging design to come together. The project landed on Horner's desk March 1, 2005, and he had the finished

prototype packaging in hand by the end of April. That doesn't include the nine months that MiniLoc

was in project development. Then came two to three months of biocompatibility testing to reach the high standards set for implantable devices such as Huber

needles. To meet FDA standards, 500 activations were performed in a simulated use study in which the MiniLoc could not fail even once. It didn't, and it ultimately received FDA's 510(k) clearance. And in September 2005, the first MiniLoc safety infusion set hit the shelves.

According to Solomon, "Clinicians are clamoring for our MiniLoc." SHPI is focused on the design, development and manufacture of innovative safety medical devices. SHPI manufactures certain



The geometry holding the product's wings changes angles along the vertical wall of the part. The vinyl compensates for changes.

products under its own label. Other products are supplied to large corporate customers, such as Bard Access Systems, on a private-label, OEM basis. In those cases where the product will be manufactured in the hundreds of million of units, SHPI licenses products to leading manufacturers in the global disposable medical product industry, receiving royalty payments. Examples of other disposable medical products based upon SHPI's technologies are safety epidural and spinal needles, bone biopsy needles and blood-collection devices. SHPI has more than 125 issued or pending patents for safety needle technologies that apply to virtually all medical needles used today.

The SHPI sales team will work with distributors to oncology departments at hospitals and clinics across the country to present MiniLoc to clinicians. In the future, SHPI plans to market to economically developed countries in Europe, Asia and Japan where safety is more of a concern. It shouldn't be a difficult sales pitch. With the MiniLoc safety needle, SHPI has created a friendly safety needle with a low activation force that does not interfere with the clinician's technique. The MiniLoc safety infusion set locks out so clinicians cannot accidentally stick themselves, thereby avoiding exposure to blood-borne pathogens.

Sums up Solomon, "We appreciate the development help, responsiveness and sensitivity to cost that we received from Flexpak. They met the challenge in providing a cost-effective solution using Klöckner Pentaplast vinyl film."

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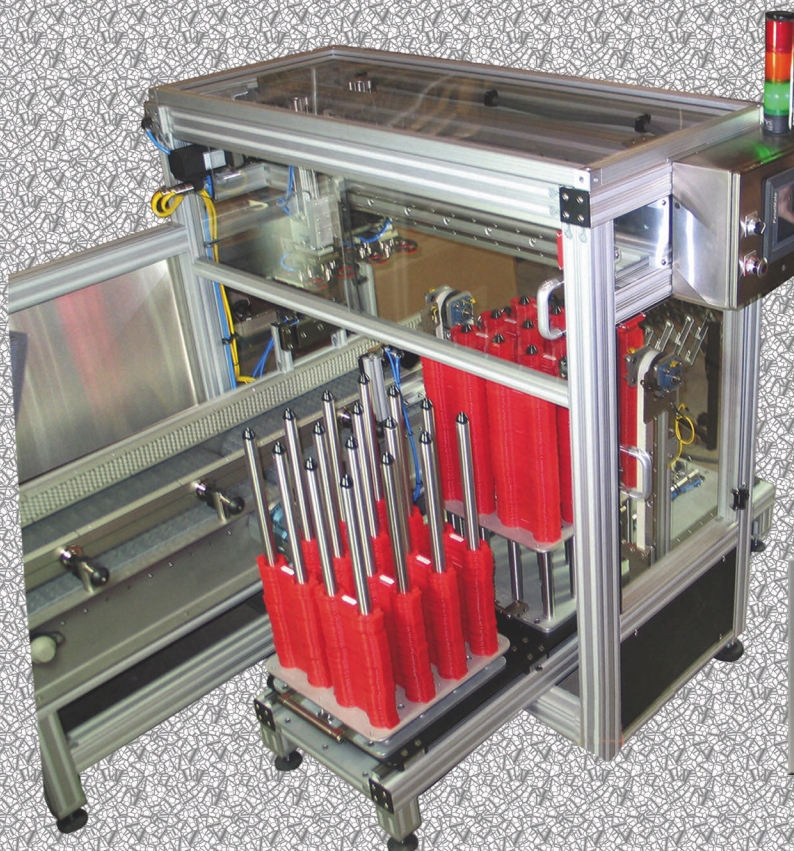
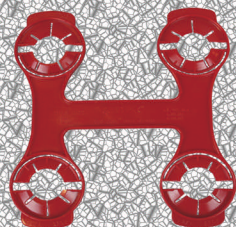
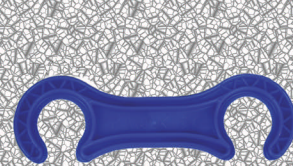
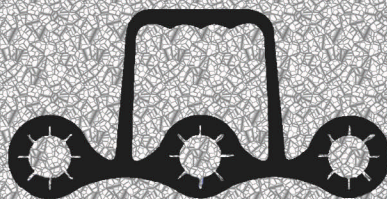
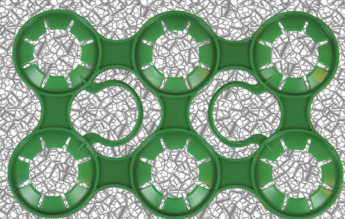
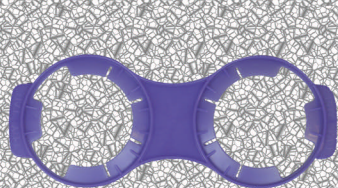
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Servo control offers multiple benefits

Cartoner has four servo axes controlled by servo drives with integrated safety technology, thus providing efficient bottle cartoning and built-in safety.

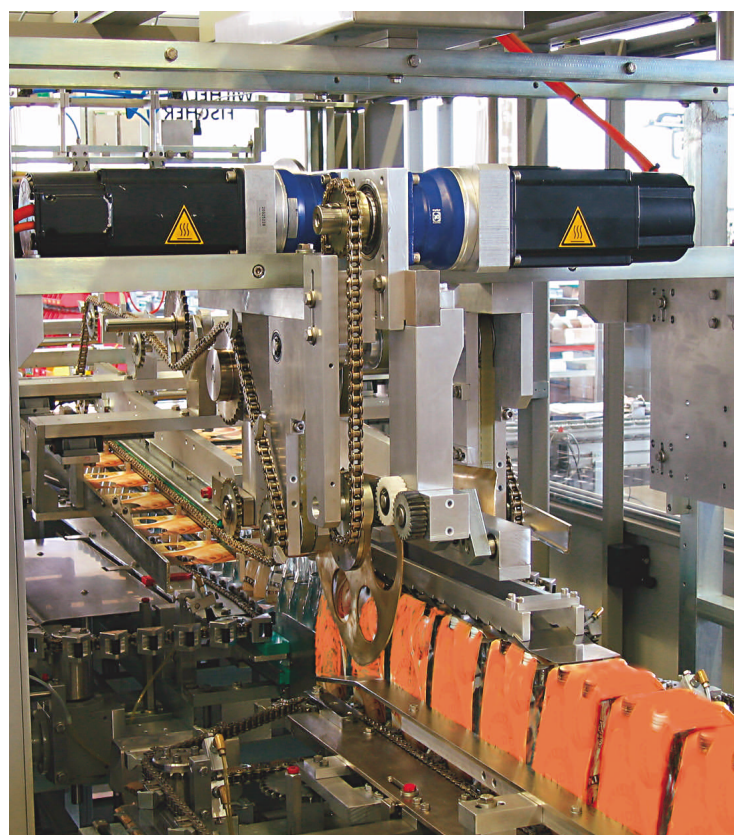
Today, most beer, lemonade, cola, water and mixed drinks are filled in glass or plastic bottles, such as polyethylene terephthalate and polypropylene. Many of these beverages come in multipacks made from carton board. For a milk-based beverage, Van Genechten Nicolaus GmbH (www.vangenechten.com), Turnhout, Belgium, has developed a complete packaging solution for a carton-board multipack. An important part of this concept is the Cambopak multipack machine designed and built by Wilhelm Fischer Spezialmaschinenbau GmbH (www.wilhelm-fischer.de) in close cooperation with a food and packaging team from automation supplier Bosch Rexroth Corp. (www.boschrexroth-us.com). Cambopak has been enhanced and improved with innovative electric drive and control technology from Rexroth.



After they have been filled, closed and sleeved, the bottles are fed into the Cambopak by a transport chain, which accumulates them as required. Single-row (one by one or one by three) or double-row (two by two or two by three) bottle combinations are then formed in the machine, according to the pack configuration that is being produced.

Rexroth IndraDrive servo drives and IndraDyn AC servo motors synchronize the following operations on the machine: the rotary-infeed system with its large-capacity magazine, the forming of the carton-board blank around the bottle combination in synchronization with the product, the tensioning and gluing of the pack and the end-folding operations, which give the multipack greater stability. Size changes are easier with the help of the new servo-control technology.

The Cambopak has four servo axes controlled by Rexroth's GenNext™
Continued on page 44



Bottles are fed into the cartoner by a transport chain, which accumulates them as required. Bottle combinations are then formed in the machine, according to the required pack configuration.

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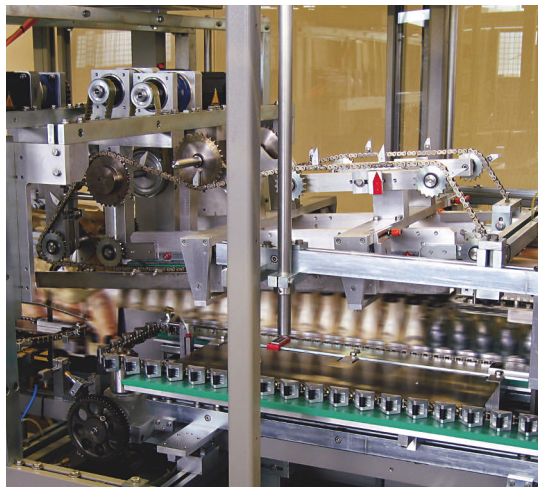
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IndraDrive C servo drives with integrated safety technology. Integrated safety is relatively new to the food and packaging industry, says Rexroth, and putting safety features directly in the drive has many advantages over conventional approaches. Due to the independent monitoring in the drive, short response times are achieved when faults occur. This helps to effectively protect operating personnel when using the highly dynamic servo drives if a jam needs to be cleared behind the machine guard. The Rexroth IndraDrives perform all of the important safety functions on a decentralized basis at the drives and motors without any additional hardware or detours through the control system. In comparison to conventional safety concepts, this means that power contactors are not needed in motor-supply



Simple, scalable architecture is guaranteed with the use of open standards, like the SERCOS interface.

Making safety smarter, easier and less expensive

Manufacturing-engineering organizations are becoming aware of the strategic value of safety, recognizing that the use of intelligent safety systems can increase machine uptime and limit liability exposure. As a result, many have come to view an intelligent safety strategy as a competitive advantage rather than as a cost burden.

Conventional safeguarding systems emphasize operator safety at the expense of productivity. However, operators may override these safety systems, because they need access into the machine working area, and an accident results.

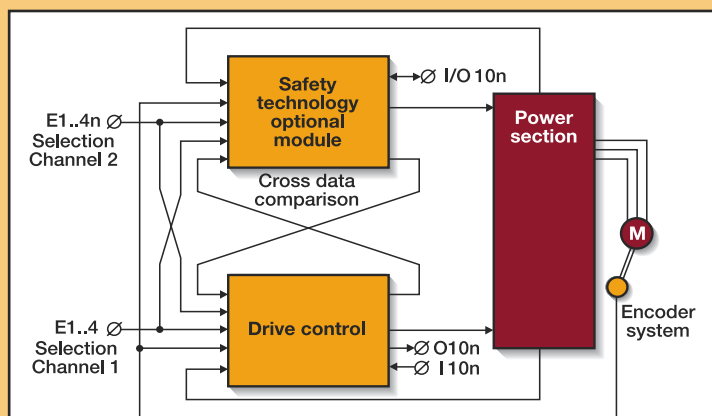
A more modern, effective safeguarding strategy evaluates how the operator interacts with the machinery. Modern, intelligent safety solutions are usually associated with safety programmable-logic controllers that replace conventional hard-wired safety relays. However, it is far more important to avoid unintended axis movement and create safe motion that reduces the risk of operator injury by allowing continued, but limited, axis movement. In addition, the use of freely programmable safety logic greatly increases the flexibility of a safety system.

The BoschRexroth IndraDrive's Safety-on-Board feature

offers a reliable safety solution that incorporates the most advanced, integrated safety functions and complies with the latest international standards for safe stopping and safe motion, according to the company. These capabilities are

available on a common platform that functions as a servo drive or a frequency converter, thus lowering the overall cost of integration and deployment for the machine builder, while providing the latest safe-motion technology to the end user.

The IndraDrive also has reaction times that are 400 times faster than conventional solutions that use contactors to produce a safe stop.



Because of redundant soft and hardware modules in the drive unit, the non-contact monitoring of all parameterized limit values permits extremely short response times of under 2 ms. Immediately after error detection, all drives are stopped automatically, subject to the selected stop category (0 or 1).

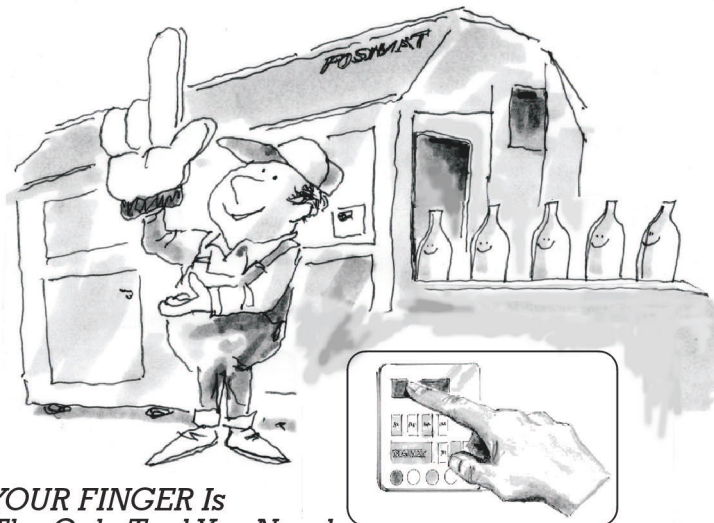
Because IndraDrive's Safety-On-Board safe-motion technology is integrated directly into the drive, motion controllers, regardless of manufacturer, are able to leverage safe-motion technology. The IndraDrive has enough input/output for the safeguarding logic needed to interface to safety gates, panel switches and interlock switches. Thus, machine builders only need to learn one safety solution.

To obtain an ARC white paper evaluating available safe-motion solutions, go to

www.boschrexroth-us.com/SafetyOnBoard.

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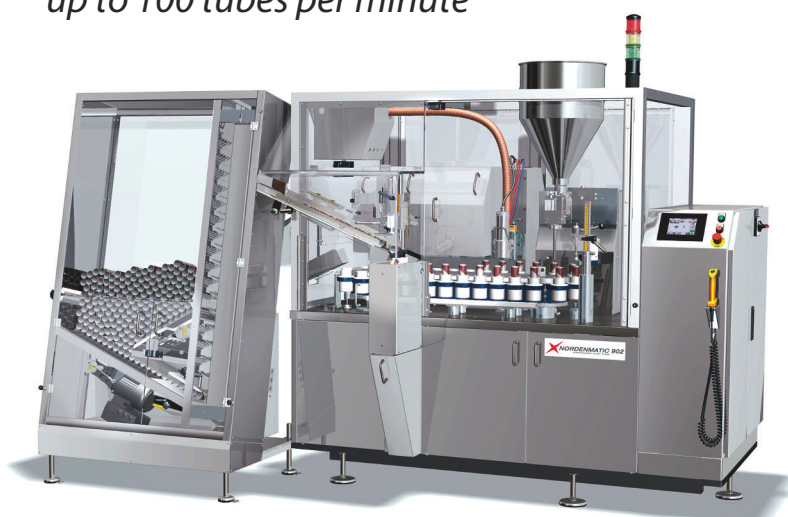
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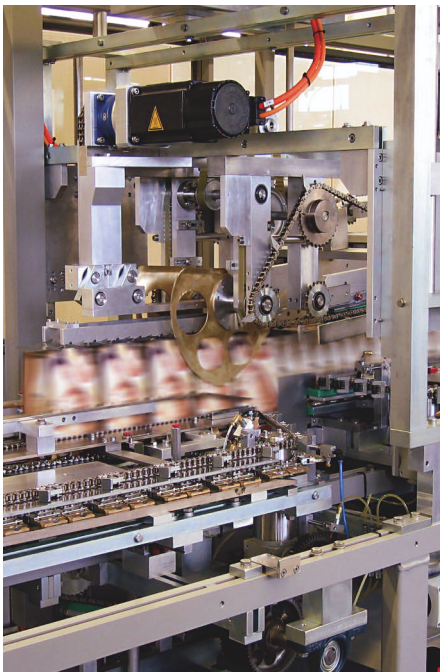
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In addition to providing a safe working environment for the machine operator, the drive also minimizes downtime with a safely-reduced-velocity function.

lines, and the amount of cabling in the control cabinet is reduced.

In addition to providing a safe working environment for the machine operator, the drive also minimizes downtime with the safely-reduced-velocity function. In the event of a jam, this function allows safe access inside the machine while it is online, instead of powering it down completely and then spending time resetting it. The drive-integrated safety technology is a main component for increasing machine output.

Overall, the heart of the system is the Rexroth PPC-R22 integrated motion and logic controller. The machine's central motion and sequence of operation are coordinated in the logic portion of the PPC, while the motion portion coordinates motor synchronization. Rexroth's VisualMotion 10 software is used to program the system. Recipe or product-changeover parameters are made directly through a human/machine interface.

Simple, scalable architecture is guaranteed with the use of open standards like the SERCOS interface, which is the only



SERVO-GANTRY PALLETIZERS utilize a combination of Bosch Rexroth's PPC-R motion control, a PLCpackage and VisualMotion 10 software to simplify and facilitate pallet-building control and programming. Read about it at www.packagingdigest.com/info/palletizing

standardized digital-drive interface capable of the high-speed, multi-axis synchronization required in the Cambopak machine. Core technological functionalities, such as electronic cam profiles, which can be manipulated online, are integrated in the control system. In addition, OPC servers that enable extensive communication of production-management data are available to connect with the HMI

system and to a central plant-floor information system. The open architecture of this system makes it simple to incorporate industry-standard fieldbus systems by using an optional plug-in interface card via Ethernet IP, Profibus-DP, DeviceNet, Interbus-S or ControlNet for communication with a downstream programmable-logic controller.

The end result is a multipack cartoner capable of faster changeovers, reduced downtime, increased

throughput with tighter synchronization of motion and logic and built-in safety features to protect the machine operator.

Van Genechten Packaging is one of the largest manufacturers of folding cartons in Europe, with 12 production locations. It holds a leading position in several markets, particularly multipacks for beverages and dairy products, and supplies comprehensive solutions, such as packaging material and the necessary packaging technology. The de Somer family that owns Van Genechten has been running the company since 1834,

and the sixth generation is now responsible for corporate management.

More information is available:

Bosch Rexroth Corp., 847/645-4073.
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Thermoformers speed custom clamshell creation



Two new thermoforming lines at custom clamshell food-packaging producer Duni Corp. provide higher productivity, while enabling greater product flexibility and enhanced container quality.

What type of packaging do consumers look for with a prepackaged meal? Are they satisfied with a white, foam container that hides the meal, or do they prefer a container with a colored base and a clear top that displays the food? Do they look for containers that provide dining directly to the table, or would they rather have dishes to wash at the end of the day?

Packaging has a tremendous effect on a consumer's take-out or prepared-meal dining experience. Not only does it influence their purchasing decision, but it can also enhance their enjoyment of the meal. A professional packaging presentation showcases the product, while providing the brand with a high-quality appearance.

Duni AB (www.duni.com), a global company based in Sweden, offers food-packaging solutions for the restaurant and foodservice industry, as well as for retail applications, including prepackaged convenience foods, carry-out and to-go containers,

and home meal replacement (HMR) solutions. In addition, it supplies a range of paper products, such as napkins, table coverings and beverage cups, for catering and foodservice customers. In North America, Duni operates two divisions—in Atlanta and Thomaston, GA—under the Duni Corp. name. Recently, Duni Corp.'s Thomaston facility



A two-piece thermoform with multiple compartments produced on equipment from Brown Machine holds all the fixings for a carry-out dinner from **CHEVY'S FRESH MEX** Mexican restaurants. Read more at www.packagingdigest.com/info/chevy's

installed two new thermoforming lines from **Brown Machine LLC** (www.brown-machine.com) to increase production capabilities for its custom-designed clamshell food packaging.

In the highly competitive plastics market, Duni has found that the new equipment allows for faster tooling changeovers and provides major improvements in machine uptime and high-quality molding performance.

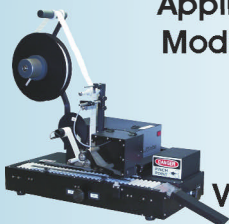
As Randy Ballinger, maintenance manager for Duni's Thomaston facility, explains, the main products manufactured at the plant are polystyrene clamshell food containers, many of which are custom-designed and include embossed logos, per the customers' request. "Product design starts with the customer," he says. "New tooling designs are tested in our facility to make sure they will be successful. Some of our tooling is quite complicated. For example, we produce a lot of different configurations with one to four compartments, so tool changes are challenging.

"We can offer the retail customer a clear lid and a solid, black base. We also offer the option of our patented, tear-away lid." Another option is microwavability, with some containers able to handle temperatures up to 225 deg F.

Duni operates several in-house extrusion lines to produce all of the PS rollstock used on its thermoforming machines. According to Ballinger, what sets Duni apart is its ability to produce a triple-stream sheet, with black in the center and clear plastic on each side to form clear lids. "As far as I know, we



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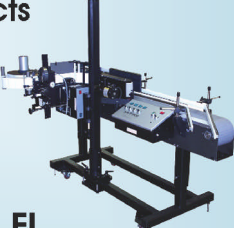
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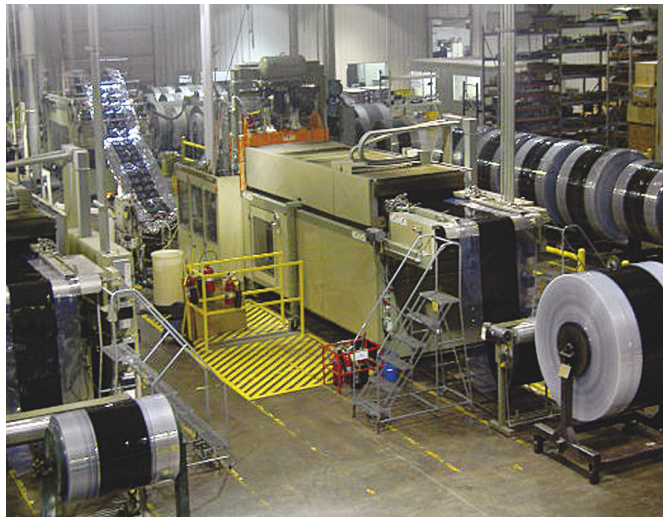
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Roll-fed PS feeds two in-line thermoforming systems, above, that can handle molds up to 50×50 in., and up to a 7-in.-deep product. After thermoforming, the finished clamshells are counted by an operator at Duni, right.



are one of only a few companies in the world that can merge the black and clear together in a seamless fashion," he says. "Both materials are polystyrene, but the black has a higher rubber content, which makes it more pliable."

Duni thermoforming engineer Colin Lee adds that the containers' one-piece construction is another benefit for packaging specifiers. "With the one-piece unit, they don't have to buy containers with lids; it all comes in one convenient package," he says.

About 18 months ago, Duni added two new thermoforming lines from Brown to its existing collection of nine machines. Each new line includes a Brown roll-fed in-line Model CS-5500SP thermoformer with independent plug motion and a horizontal trim press with a Servo Flex feed system. Both thermoformers also incorporate a host of other features, including advanced, quick-change capabilities and a user-friendly, open-architecture control system.

During operation of the new lines, material is unwound from the roll stand and indexed via servo-controlled material conveyance rails through the multiple-stop, temperature-controlled oven. The material is then carried into a precision-guided, servo-actuated form station with servo-controlled vacuum bleed/main vacuum, air-eject and pressure capabilities. The formed web is then moved into a match-metal horizontal trim press with linear guiding for a precise feed-and-trim process.

The new thermoformers can handle molds up to 50×50 in. and up to a 7-in.-deep container. Observes Ballinger, "Output on the two fifty-inch machines is equal to four or five of our other thermoforming machines, depending on which jobs are running. But, while most of our older machines are assigned primarily to short-run operations, we do all larger-volume runs on the Brown machines."

When Duni decided to expand its production operation two years ago, Ballinger and Lee put together a set of specifications for what was needed. When they contacted a few of the leading machine builders, they discovered that some unique and important features were being offered that

they hadn't even known were available. Eventually, they finalized the overall scope of the work they wanted to perform and narrowed their search down to machine builders that could meet their requirements in terms of cost, value, quality, service and reputation/longevity of the company.

Next, they visited various machine manufacturers to determine which company could best meet their objectives. They looked at different features of the machinery and obtained quotes for a variety of thermoforming equipment.

Says Ballinger, "After looking at different machine makers, I really felt like I was supported best by Brown. I have to look at service capability, because when a machine is down, everyone looks to my department. All they want to know is when the machine will be back in production. As a maintenance manager, I have always said that the vendors you chose to do business with are a direct reflection on your job performance. I had to stake my reputation on the machines, so I had to look at the longevity of the company."

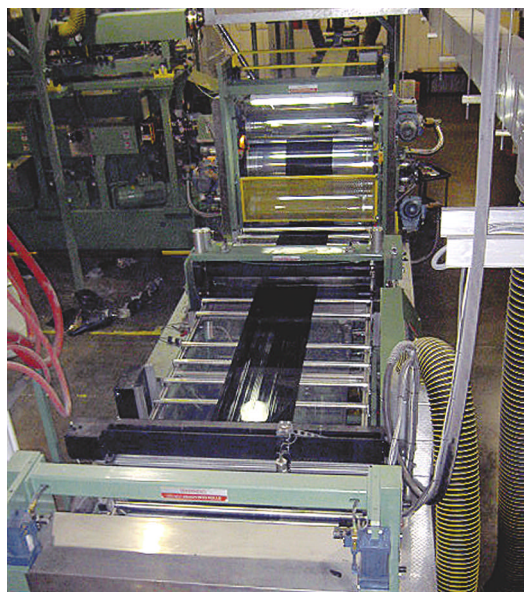
"What I like about Brown's service department is that it has so many dimensions. If I need a retrofit kit, I call the service manager, and he connects me with a guy who works specifically with retrofit kits. If I have a process problem, direct and specialized help is available. We have modems in the machine controls so that service

personnel can dial in, look at a machine and see what it is doing—as if they were standing in our facility. Brown technicians have helped us either by coming to our facility or by discussing issues over the phone. Those kinds of features and that kind of service certainly have gone a long way to enable us to bring these machines up to their present performance."

Ballinger was also sold on the features of Brown's T-350L trim presses. The presses' stationary platen is designed for quick change of the trim dies using a separate mounting plate that allows the die assembly to be removed from

the exit end of the trim press. In addition, the machine has the capability of side-loading the tooling.

According to Ballinger, the Servo Flex feed from Brown provides extreme accuracy and virtually infinite product placement flexibility. The servo-designed pusher system allows maximum acceleration, deceleration and



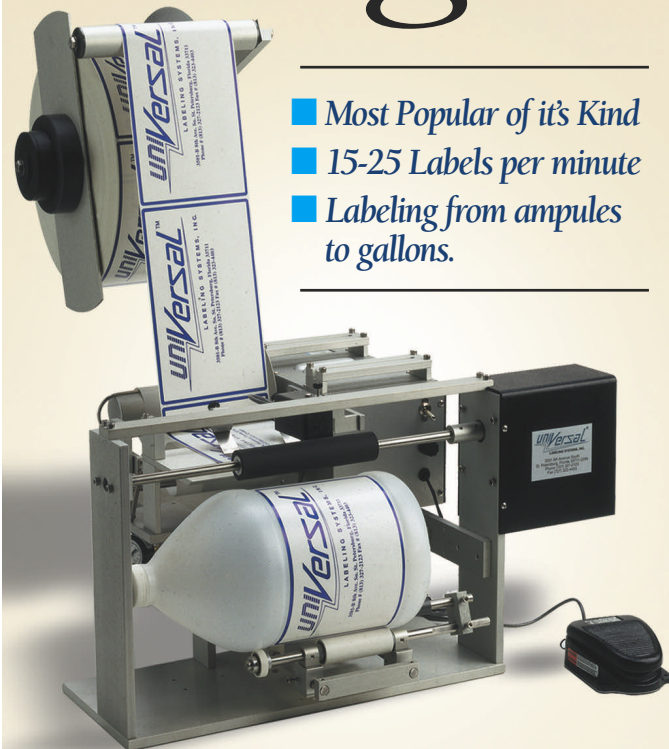
Duni's extrusion line produces a triple-stream PS sheet, used to create custom clamshell packages.

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length of travel, providing precise repeatability of product placement. All parameters are easily changed at the operator interface.

"We do as many as forty changeovers in a week across our eleven thermoformers," Ballinger says. "Any feature that will save time is going to help make us more efficient. This has been a big issue in the plastics industry. We have seen huge resin price increases, but we can't pass them all on to the customer. Instead, we have to look for ways to become more efficient so that we can absorb these costs to maintain our prices

and remain competitive in the market. Some of the features on the new Brown machines have allowed us to do that.

"One key example is when we go from a one-component to a three-component product. There is a lot of difference in the material heating requirements. Because we specified a flexible oven with multiple zones and advanced oven controls, we can save recipes for each product; we don't waste time troubleshooting to get that line up and running first. Having those heat properties stored is important to us, especially when considering the amount

of jobs and changeovers we perform here.

"A lot of our production is what we call 'logoed' products, with the customer's logo formed into the clamshell's cover. We might run 100,000 units with the logo, then switch to a run of 50,000 units without the logo for a neutral product. In a job-shop environment like ours, we need to be able to change tooling quickly. We are set up so that we can make a logo change on any of our machines in a half hour or so, versus taking up to two hours to change out logos, as we did before. We can change a complete set of tooling in four hours or less."



Molded clamshell food containers leave the thermoformer and travel to the trim press for final sizing, top. The one-piece containers are used for a variety of take-out and prepackaged meals, such as sushi, above.

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For the future, flexibility is key. "One of the biggest future benefits I see with the Brown equipment is the third-motion feature we put on the machines when we ordered them," says Lee. "In the past, we've had machinery that only allowed us to do shallow-depth products. With the third motion, we can handle deeper products—up to seven inches. It allows us to get better material distribution down the sidewall of the container, helping tremendously with quality."

Explains Ballinger, "The reason we got all the bells and whistles on these machines is because that is what is dictated by the market's future demands. Quick-change on tooling is no longer a feature; it is a standard. Pin-chain rails on the forming station that are automated for faster changeovers are now standard. The market expects us to be efficient on both logo and complete-tool changeovers.

"We made a major investment in time-saving features because we knew it would pay us back each time we do a changeover. That is why purchasing the Brown machines, with their host of features, has proven to be a good investment for our future."

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show preview

Packaging is prevalent at the plastics exposition

Exhibits, educational programs and a three-day preshow symposium mark this year's largest international plastics show, June 19 to 23, at Chicago's McCormick Place.

The largest international plastics exposition in 2006, NPE will occupy nearly 1 million square feet at Chicago's McCormick Place. About 2,000 exhibitors, one-third of them from outside the U.S., and visitors from 100 countries will comprise this year's show. Packaging will be clearly evident. Some of the packaging-related new equipment, materials, software and services include:

Primary processing systems, such as high-speed injection-molding presses for thin-wall containers; extrusion lines for blown film, cast film, sheet and coating; thermoforming systems for lids, cups, trays and foam items; and blow molders for virtually every type of bottle manufactured.

Web-converting systems and materials, such as corona treaters, metallizers, web-gauging instruments, slitter-rewinders and coating dies, plus resins for extrusion coating and laminating.

Complete package production systems, including form/fill/seal, bagmaking, bottle-manufacturing and other integrated lines, plus related systems like flexo printers, and automation components like feeders and takeaway equipment.

Raw materials, including a vast range of application-specific formulations designed for lightweighting and source reduction, gas barriers, wide heat-sealing windows, long shelf life, product protection in shipping and handling, and other benefits for package producers and users.

Additives, such as colorants that produce new, special decorative effects to enhance consumer appeal.

Tooling, including such specialties as injection molds for polyethylene terephthalate bottle preforms, threaded closures and CD jewel boxes; blow molds; dies for film, sheet, coating and laminating; and dies for trimming and stamping.

Printing and decorating systems of all types, for applications ranging from sequential product marking to full-color, high-resolution graphics.

Recycling products and services, including equipment ranging from shredders and granulators to complete systems that include size reduction, cleaning and

Continued on page 51

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PROCESA, the food and beverage processing machinery and equipment show for Mexican end-users, will be co-located with EXPO PACK México 2006, along with INTERPHEX, the premier show for the pharmaceutical industry, to broaden the scope of the show and draw more attendees from the pharmaceutical market segment. The co-located shows will support the entire production line.

At the 2005 four-day show, more than 30,000 qualified attendees and exhibitor personnel were in attendance. More than 35 percent of the attendees were CEOs and key decision-makers. Attendees represented buyers from Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, Venezuela and the U.S.

EXPO PACK México 2006 attendees



represent a wide range of industries: food, beverage, pharmaceutical, personal care, graphic arts, medical, chemical, automotive, tools, electric and electronics, among others. Their main interests are packaging machinery, materials and containers, and other related goods and services.

PROCESA will feature the newest developments in processing machinery and technology. Exhibitors will display state-of-the-art equipment in the fruit and vegetable, beverage, dairy, meat/poultry/seafood and frozen and preserved foods industries.

A conference program accompanies the show. For information on those sessions, visit www.expopack.com.mx. For more information on the show, contact the show's organizers and producers, the

Packaging Machinery Manufacturers Institute
(www.pmmi.org), at 703/243-8555.

The following exhibitors have a marketing message in this issue:

A-B-C Packaging Machine Corp.—1420: Page 22.

Automated Packaging Systems—2002: Page 65.

Cognex Corp.—413: Page 26.

Fogg Filler Co.—823: Page 4.

Hytrol Conveyor—1212: Page 60.

ID Technology—2116: Page 27.

Klößner Pentaplast of America—1019: Page 14-15.

Markem Corp.—1911: Page 8.

National Starch & Chemical—518: Page C-4.

Packaging Machinery Manufacturers Institute—

1700, 1800: Page 33.

Posimat—1021: Page 44.

Quadrel Labeling Systems—1516: Page 13.

Smurfit-Stone Container Corp.—2918: Page 1.

Universal Labeling Systems—2003: Page 47.



Continued from page 49



reprocessing;
custom
compounding
services for
reclaimed plastics;
and reprocessed
compounds for sale on
the merchant market.

Preceding the show will be a symposium on degradable plastics, June 14 to 17.

In the New Technology Pavilion, exhibitors will showcase materials, equipment, machinery and other products that will have a tremendous effect on plastics manufacturing in the next decade. Here, attendees can:

- Find out how nanotechnology can expand the performance range of plastics in packaging applications.
- Discover how to expand options for biodegradability by using bioplastics.
- Evaluate the energy-efficiency innovations that promise large reductions in energy consumption.
- See how to make recycling a top priority while adding value to process scrap and post-consumer waste.

The NPE 2006 show also features a complete lineup of educational seminars and conferences. For a listing of all sessions, visit www.npe.org/education.

The show is organized by the **Society of the Plastics Industry** (www.plasticsindustry.org). For more information, phone 800/SPI-0015 or e-mail npe@npe.org. Domestic registration is \$60 until June 15; \$90 on-site. International registration is free until June 15; \$90 on-site. Student registration is free with a student ID.

The following exhibitors have a marketing message in this issue:
AISA Automation Industrielle—9229: Page 55.

Cognex Corp.—4065: Page 26.

Corotec Corp.—10104: Page 12.

DAK Americas—4276: Page 49.

Enercon Industries Corp.—1344: Page 12.

Eriez Magnetics—1396, 11205: Page 28.

Pilz Automation Safety—10131: Page 51.

SAS Automation—976: Page 46.



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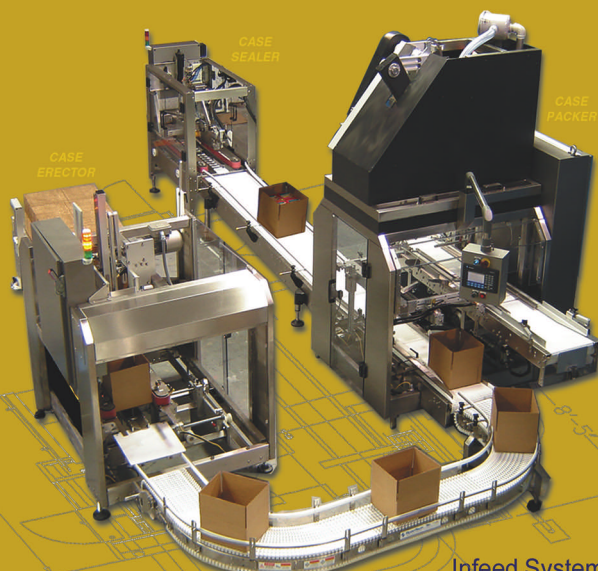
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Case packing/Tray packing
Point of sale display packing
Allen Bradley PLC controlled

Infeed Systems
Documented
Risk Assessment
Modular components
RFID Options

NEW The 700 SERIES

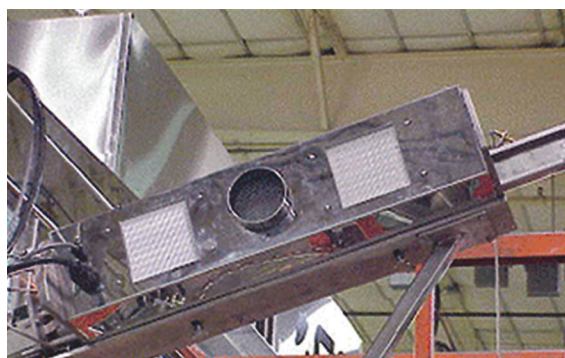
*Developed in 2005 to compliment our
existing 400 Series. The 700 Series
concentrates on automatic forming of
many styles of corrugated cases and
trays and the application of lids for
Point of Sales Displays*

TF-700 - Tray former
CE-700 - Case Erector
LD-700 - Lidder



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new products equipment

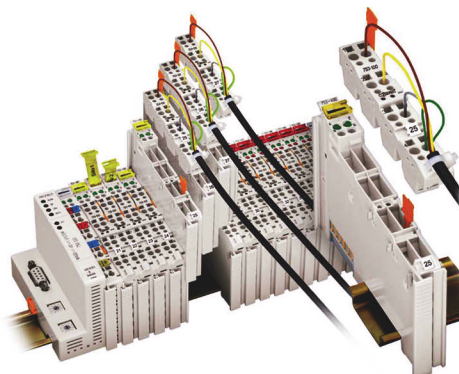


Sanitizer For bottles and closures, the Microb-Blaster is designed to sanitize in a dry, residue-free environment. The co. cites as its motive the increasing need for greater sanitation and says that with the new approach, high-speed, 2- to 6-log reductions of microorganisms can be achieved. The co. believes that this equipment will eliminate the need for a chemical-supply system and chemical disposal. For closures, the sanitizer is located in the track transporting caps from the feeder/elevator to the capper, using escapements with sensors to ensure that the amount of exposure time is controlled in a failsafe manner. The system, rated to 1,200 caps/min, is PLC-controlled.

Fogg Co., 616/786-3644.
www.foggfiller.com

Vacuum conveyors The co. introduces the IC Series of completely enclosed, compact vacuum conveyors. Featuring the co.'s COAX® multistage ejector technology, the energy-efficient conveyors are constructed of high-grade steel with a unique filter design to trap particles and prevent dust and contamination. Applications include flakes, pellets and powders. The series is offered in three diameters and is rated up to 2 tons/hr.

PIAB USA, Inc., 800/321-7422.
www.piab.com



I/O system The co. expands its I/O system to offer pluggable connectors for I/O module wiring. The new 753 Series is said to help customers simplify installation and reduce wiring errors in the field. Users can now premanufacture wiring harnesses using the 753 Series connectors and simply plug them into the 753 Series I/O modules (analog, digital and special-function modules are available). The I/O module and corresponding connector combined measure 12×64×100 mm.

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

Inspection kit A new metal detection and x-ray inspection information kit is available. The kit includes a white paper, "Contaminant Detection: Making the Right Choice," which reviews the state of the art in product-inspection technology, and the major differences between metal detectors and x-ray equipment. It also holds literature on the co.'s equipment and services and a free product test offer for comparative testing with both inspection technologies.

Mettler-Toledo Safeline, Inc., 800/447-4439.
www.safelineus.com



Tape sealer The Model 136 tape sealer, at 6 ft long, features reliable, 25-case/min output at a small price, the co. says. Features include a powered side-belt drive and contoured, cast-aluminum outer flap folders, ensuring square cases, on a solid, stainless-steel construction, welded and bolted for maximal strength. Sealed bearings keep maintenance time short. Case-size adjustment is done by three hand cranks in a range that goes from a minimal 8×6×5¼ in. to a maximal 24×16×17 in.

A-B-C Packaging Machine Corp., 800/237-5975.
www.abcpackaging.com

Metal detector The Phantom E-Type metal-detection system features slim dimensions for easy mounting to an online checkweigher. Highly reliable, the Phantom E-Type is suited for the end of an online inspection of packaged products, the co. says. It also has fast, powerful digital-system programming. User-friendly and easy to

set up and operate, the unit can detect and reject ferrous and nonferrous tramp metals, including stainless steel, as small as 2 mm. User-stable, the

Phantom E-Type metal detection system is extremely versatile. In addition to custom-sized apertures, the system features modular electronics, automatic setup and operation, automatic self testing and diagnostics, multiple product memory for fast changeovers and compensation for product effect.

Fortress Technology, Inc., 888/220-8737.
www.fortress.com



new products equipment



Glass-marking system The VALIDATE™ nonablating, high-contrast marking system for glass vials and syringes uses a laser and proprietary consumables from tesa to permanently mark fixed and variable information including text, logos, lines and 2D bar codes into the glass. In fact, the nonerasable, high-contrast nature of the mark provides the first layer of protection against counterfeiting. Due to the system's ability to mark 2D or 1D bar codes, as well as text, onto the glass, track-and-trace system functionality can be incorporated with the mark as well, guaranteeing the end user without a bar-code reader that the vial or syringe originated in the intended pharmaceutical supplier's factory.

ATS Automation Tooling Systems, Inc., 519/653-6500.
www.atsautomation.com

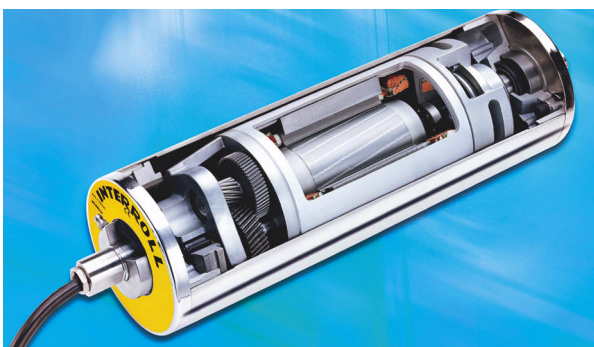
AC Drive The AC890 modular drive system is introduced to eliminate the need for line reactors, circuit breakers, contactors, fusing and other components. The co. says the use of modular elements, such as a common front-end supply, easily common-bussed to individual AC inverter output sections, eliminates these components, along with costs for engineering, mounting and wiring. The AC890 provides V/f, sensorless vector, closed-loop flux vector and servo position control, from a simple AC motor-control section to more demanding sections. A range of sizes and ratings and input and output types are available, including standalone, common bus (CB) drives and common bus supply (CS), with a unique, easy-to-install DC bus bar system.

Parker SSD Drives, 704/588-3246.
www.ssddrives.com/usa



Filler/depositor A new, single-piston filler/depositor, the SP-16 accurately portions food, bakery and personal care products at an economical price, the co. says. The machine is equipped with an adjustable frame, a 14-gal stainless-steel hopper and an integral work table. It also provides an adjustable deposit volume up to 16 oz.

Hinds-Bock Corp., 877/292-5715.
www.hinds-bock.com

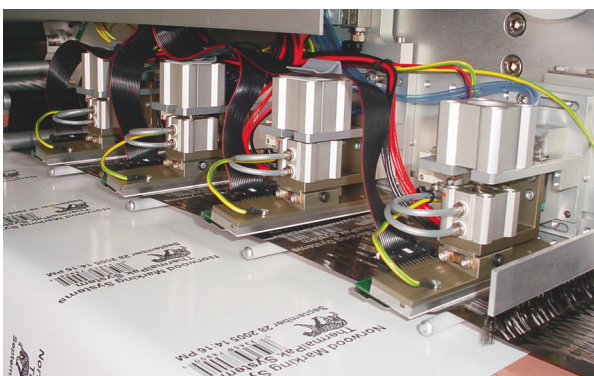


Belt drive The co. reports a reduced leadtime for its powerful 4½-in.-dia belt drive for U.S. and Canadian customers with the addition of a manufacturing site. Designated the 113E Series, the heavy-duty belt drive includes steel, helical gears with a re-engineered motor unit that is available in single- and three-phase for higher efficiency and performance. It is also available in a stainless-steel version, protected to IP66/67 standards for food processing and washdown applications, the co. says.

Interroll Belt Drives, 800/830-9680.
www.interroll.us

Valve island Now available is the VM10 valve island with Ethernet capabilities. With a flow rate of 4,301/min, the 10-mm-wide system valve, the co. says, is developed with a fully integrated Ethernet node capable of communicating with Ethernet/IP and Modbus TCP/IP. It reportedly features an integral web server that enables the user to access real-time data and monitor-valve performance while in the plant or in a remote site.

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



Printer Said to be the industry's only multihead thermal-transfer printer designed to match the high throughput of a variety of multilane packaging machines, the ThermalPak™ Model TP-4000 is introduced. It is available standard with three to six printheads, with each head printing fixed and/or variable data on numerous flexible packaging materials, the co. notes. With a print area up to 4.17×7.87 in. per head and minimum printhead center distance of 3.35 in., the machine prints text and graphics in 300 dpi both horizontally and vertically with a 5.5-in. throughput rate per head, the co. says.

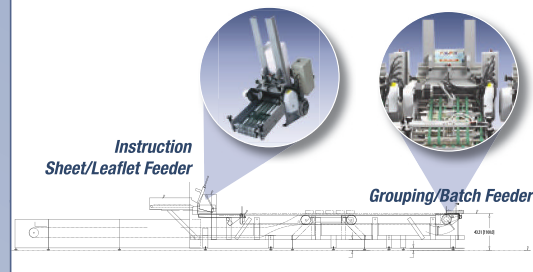
Norwood Marking Systems, 800/626-3464.
www.itw-norwood.com

Longford

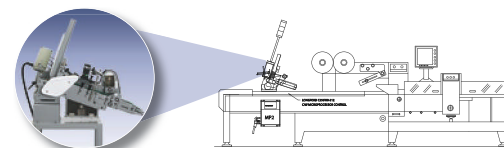
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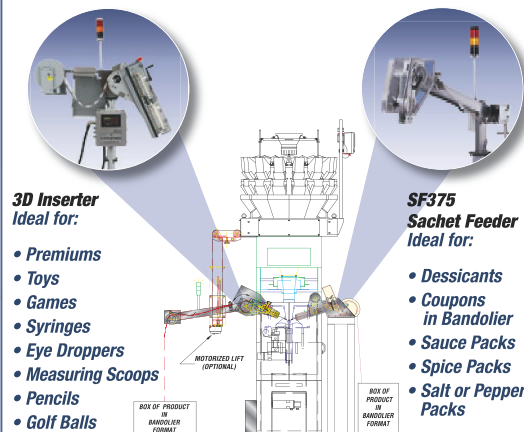


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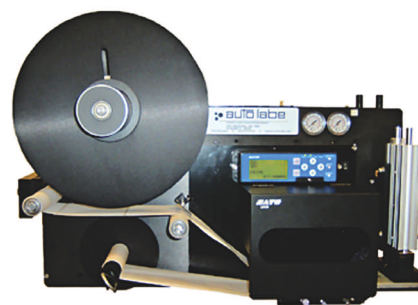
new products equipment

Electronic-control antenna technology A new, patent-pending, electronic-control antenna technology embedded in UHF-band RFID readers will soon be available (late Q4) that the co. says can improve RFID tag-reading performance. UHF tags, which offer a significantly greater communications range than other frequency bands, have become extremely popular for full traceability. But UHF tags are subject to multipath interference, which makes an RFID tag unreadable, even if it's within the reader's range. The co.'s new antenna technology is designed to electronically control the electromagnetic field emitted from the reader. By adopting this technology, the co. says it has found a way to reduce reflections, thus minimizing the degradation of system performance due to multipath interference.

Omron Corp., 847-843-7900.
www.omron.com

Print/apply The co. introduces an economical, entry-level print/apply applicator designed for light- to moderate-duty printing applications. The applying method options include tamp, blow, air-tamp or smart-tamp labeling. The Model 151e print engine offers up to a 4.5-in. media width, a 203-dpi print resolution and up to a 6-in./sec print speed.

Auto Labe, 800/634-5376.
www.autolabe.com



RFID: You need a **SMART** plan to succeed.

2006 is the year for RFID. Costs have come down, Gen 2 tag standards are a reality and mandate compliance is inevitable. To help turn RFID mystery into mastery, Lowry suggests these four basic steps.

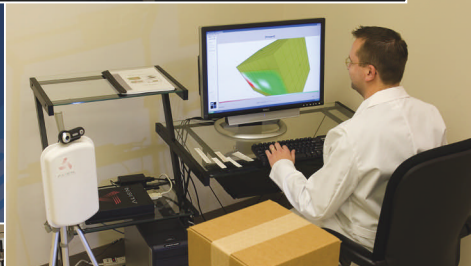
STEP 1: DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Get RFID certification training from an experienced education provider. Lowry offers the most comprehensive, industry-recognized RFID training and certification program in the market today at its state-of-the-art RFID Center.



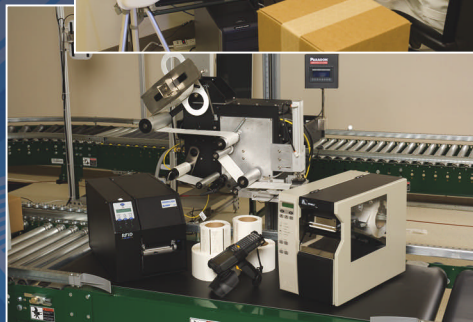
STEP 2: GET HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

Overcome potential RFID challenges by relying on Lowry's highly trained and experienced professional services team. Lowry's RFID Center offers services from RFID tag selection, testing and placement, to RFID hardware selection, configuration and installation.



STEP 3: BUY THE RIGHT STUFF

Count on Lowry for the right media and equipment for your RFID application. Lowry provides 100% tested Smart Trac™ labels, RFID automated labeling systems, RFID encoders/printers, mobile or fixed readers, turnkey portal systems, as well as a mobile RFID cart solution.



STEP 4: INSTALL WITH CONFIDENCE

Join the thousands of customers who rely on Lowry's 30 years of experience, full service and full market RFID solutions. RFID technology enables accurate and rapid dissemination of data throughout your organization's supply chain.



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RFID system The new SIMATIC® RF300 RFID system is said to enhance high-speed identification in production applications, including assembly and production lines and conveyor systems. The 13.56-mHz RF system includes a new reader and two new tags, and is recommended for both simple and demanding applications with high price/performance ratio demands. The reader, the SIMATIC RF310R, is designed with an integrated antenna and can be operated with ASM 452, 456, 473 and 475 communication modules for the company's SIMATIC S7300 controllers and Profibus communications network. According to the co., data-transfer rates faster than 3,000 bytes/sec are possible between the reader and the tag, resulting in very short cycle times. New SIMATIC RF300 tags offer IP67 and IP68 degrees of protection and have 8- and 32-kb data-storage capacities. Work-piece tag information is protected from being overwritten, and all tags have a unique, unchangeable serial number and the capacity of writing up to 20 bytes at once. The tags also feature an integrated diagnostic function to simplify commissioning and maintenance.
Siemens Energy & Automation, Inc., 800/964-4114.
www.sea.siemens.com

Accumulating Developed to save labor in product accumulating are the new DG-100 and DG-400 drop-gate systems. Their functions consist of count and accumulate, buffer zone, automatic product loading into open-top cartons or flights (article buckets) and retiming of single, random products. The systems are recommended for use with syringes, hot cocoa mix, instant oatmeal, microwave popcorn, pouch cereals, coffee, card-stock, blister-packs, tubes or "any product that can be conveyed," claims the co.

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



new products equipment



Thermometer Incorporating live video feed into its data-acquisition and sensor-programming software is the Marathon™ MM Series infrared thermometer. Said to be the first infrared sensor platform of its kind, the thermometer is designed to provide enhanced, continuous, remote temperature monitoring, video surveillance and documentation capabilities for a wide range of industrial process applications. Advanced electro-optical design, digital electronics and a user-friendly, pushbutton operator interface are included in either through-the-lens or laser-sighting methods for simplified, correct sensor operation.

Raytek Corp., 800/227-8074.
www.raytek.com

Hot-melt unit

A compact hot-melt supply unit aimed at packaging, converting and other uses, is named the Admiral 8L. The system features a noncirculating tank with a 14:1 double-action piston pump, a melt rate of 10 kg/hr, an 8-L hopper, temperature control precision of 1 deg F and an adhesive-viscosity range from 500 to 50,000 centipoise.

TechAdhesion, +86 755 27823580.
www.techadhesion.com



RFID reader system Two cos. are cooperating on an active RFID reader system designed to read bar codes and active RFID tags. Lightweight and highly functional, the system is said to enhance the ability of U.S. Dept. of Defense logistics personnel to identify and track in-transit military supplies marked with bar-code and RFID technologies. System components include a 700 Series computer, an SMR-650 mobile reader with EchoPoint™ technology and SmartChain® Mobile Manager software as well as omnidirectional read ranges of up to 200 ft.

Intermec Technologies Corp., 800/347-2636.
www.intermec.com
Savi Technology, 408/743-8866.
www.savi.com

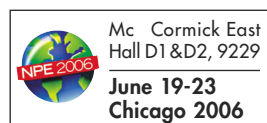
Parallel actuator Designed for linear raising/lowering of loads within conveyor systems and providing parallel, right-angle or directional load-transfer capabilities are two parallel actuators, the Model PHM-1 and Model PHM-A 20. Both, the co. says, may be installed horizontally to minimize needed assembly space. The compact design permits easy installation with existing equipment or specified for OEM applications. Operating on 90-psi air pressure and featuring mechanical linkages to translate horizontal cylinder force into vertical stroke, the units offer a cushioned cylinder stroke to assure smooth actuator operation.

mk Automation, Inc., 860/769-5500.
www.mkprofiles.com



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new products

Stacker Gentle product handling technology is reported for the Velocity™ high-speed servo stacker. It's designed to pack patterns without interruption, providing continuous product flow at speeds to 600/min. Intelligent programming counts and adjusts the product flow rate automatically to prevent jams related to spacing inconsistency. Servo controls permit quick, repeatable, tool-free changeovers and flexibility for running numerous sizes and patterns on one machine, without prestacking or priming.

Douglas Machine, Inc., 320/763-6587.
www.douglas-machine.com



Filler A new, smaller version of the EH-3S filling machine for 1/2-gal gabletop cartons for liquids offers the same extended long-life (ELL) features and forms a pyramid bottom for stable retail shelf placement. The newer machine is dedicated to "slim" cartons with smaller, 3.45×3.45-in. cross sections.

Evergreen Packaging Equipment,
319/399-3306.
www.evergreenpackaging.com



Palletizing A new logistics system is dubbed Palligistics™, a patent-pending method to create mixed, display, rainbow and repalletized pallets from homogeneous loads. The co. describes the "intelligent palletizing logistics" workcell concept as also allowing pick-to-order palletizing at the packaging plant or distribution warehouse. In cooperation with a system partner, the intelligent solution includes a software platform permitting direct order fulfillment. A unique, robotic gripper, the CFVC 200, works like human arms in separate but complementary patterns, setting mixed pack sizes into optimal loads with no changeover, the co. says.

Aidco Intl., 517/265-7165.

www.aidcointl.com

Kuka Robotics Corp., 586/569-2082.

www.kukarobotics.com

Voice-coil actuator Developed to provide precision bidirectional linearity over a maximum linear stroke of 0.59 in. is the new VM2436 voice-coil actuator. The co. says the long-stroke voice-coil motor develops a peak force of almost 11 oz in the small package size of 0.94 in. OD×1.49 in. long. The linear actuator is said to be ideally suited to individual equipment requiring a z-axis drive.

Gee Plus, Inc., 803/408-3009.



Pouch sealing A new, ultrasonic pouch-sealing machine at the co.'s headquarters is now available for application development. Welcomed is development work at its in-house lab for preformed pouches or pouchstock. The machine can seal pouches or rollstock with up to a 10 in. opening width and is equipped with adjustable forces for developing sealing parameters.

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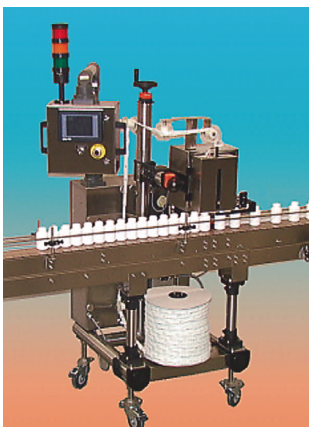
Desiccant feeder To handle the feeding and placement of pouch desiccants into pharmaceutical-type containers and

diagnostic kits, the In-Line Pouch Desiccant Feeder is introduced.

Available with the co.'s container unscramblers or as free-standing unit, the feeder is said to offer tool-less changeover with motorized vertical and horizontal dispensing-head adjustments. The co. rates the feeder at speeds from 25 to 300+ cpm, with performance and efficiency assured by a pouch verification and reject station.

Omega Design Corp., 610/363-6555.

www.omegadesign.com



Photoelectric sensors New Series 28 photoelectric sensors are made in DC and AC/DC models and feature a rugged,

IP67 housing and highly visible LEDs for visual status indication. The co. reports that the sensors offer advanced cross-talk protection, are immune to ambient light and are available with visible red, infrared and laser light source types, with optional timer and extreme low-temperature models also available.

Pepperl+Fuchs, Inc., 330/486-0001.

www.am.pepperl-fuchs.com



Camera Said to offer faster on-board image processing, more memory, real-time I/O and the speed of gigabit Ethernet communications is the new

IMPACT™ A-10 intelligent camera. Along with the co.'s bundled software suite, the A-10 reportedly delivers the power of advanced inspection capabilities in a vision sensor profile. The software's three modules, IMPACT KickStart™, Vision Program Manager™ and Control Panel Manager™, allow for quick setup, storage and viewing of images.

PPT Vision, Inc., 952/996-9500.

www.pptvision.com



Tester To help determine water-vapor transmission rates in pharmaceutical and medical device packaging, the co. introduces the Lyssy Water Vapor Permeability Tester. The co. describes Lyssy as a self-contained unit, providing continuous scanning within a controlled, enclosed temperature/moisture environment that offers speed, ease of use and accuracy that may be comparable to the USP method required for FDA approval for moisture permeability.

PBI Dansensor America, Inc., 201/251-6490.

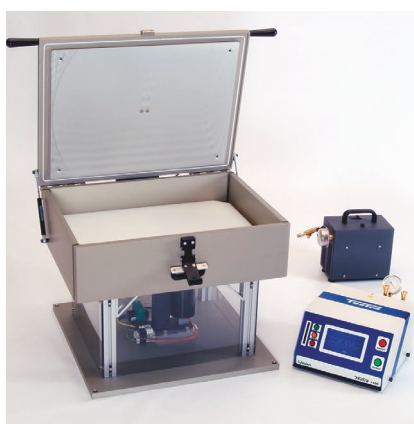
www.pbi-dansensor.com



Shrink bundlers Known as the Cha Cha Cha are a series of shrink bundlers claimed by the co. to be the only affordable multipacker capable of using print-registered film. Reportedly able to handle registrations to 40 in. long, the machines provide electro-mechanical functions and are controlled by three-phase motors and inverters or by servos, with no air or vacuum needed and no seal bar, the co. says. Rated to 60 bundles/min, the bundlers are also said to be easy to operate, with little maintenance.

Polypack, Inc., 727/578-5000.

www.polypack.com



Leak tester The large, flexible, repeatable, nondestructive Qualipak-B 752 leak tester is introduced. Designed to test a variety of bottles and canisters in the food, medical and pharmaceutical industries, the tester consists of a Model 1100 test instrument and a 6-in.-dia chamber, with infills used for volume reduction and to allow varying container sizes to be tested in the chamber. The test cycle time is said to be less than a minute, with a PCMCIA card slot for memory storage, touchscreen input and pressure-plot graphics.

Uson, 281/671-2000

www.uson.com

Bus The co. adds CAN bus to its SilverDust™ IGB servo-motion controller/driver for server control of NEMA 17- and 23-frame step motors.

Said to be written to the CANOpen standard, the CAN interface is fully isolated and supports up to 64 devices on the 1MB bus. The addition of a CAN bus is reported to enhance a motion controller's unique ability to servo-microstep motors by allowing one servo to modify the motion of another and/or use its I/O.

QuickSilver Controls, Inc., 888/660-3801.

www.quicksilvercontrols.com



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new products materials

Jars Two new jar configurations are produced for the nut and bite-size snackfood categories. Both are made in a 63/485 finish and are molded of 100-percent monolayer PET. One jar is a 17-oz pinched oval, while the other is a 28-oz, called the Rib Nut Round. The containers are additions to the co.'s line, which includes a variety of wide-mouth styles from 64- to 205-oz sizes.

GRAFCO PET Packaging Technologies,
410/850-4242.
www.grafcopet.com



Oxygen absorption The Ageless® oxygen absorber is an efficient way to preserve food naturally, without chemical preservatives, the co. says. Supplied as sachets, it's said to have the ability to keep the package atmosphere oxygen-free compared with vacuum or nitrogen flushing, since it functions continuously.

Mitsubishi Gas Chemical America, Inc., 212/687-9030.
www.mitsubishiageless.com

Sampler The co. re-engineers its small, SP543 pump and fits it to a 2-mL PP bottle specifically aimed as a lotion sampler for applications including lipcare, eye shadow, serum and anti-wrinkle cream. Named Sofistic's® for Cream, the sampler is produced as the pump is simply snapped onto the bottle after filling, substantially boosting production speed, with the unit having a preassembled overcap and decorated with a choice of options, including screening, hot stamping, color matching and flag labels the co. says.

Rexam Dispensing Systems, 914/251-8420.
www.rexam.com



Metallized biodegradable film NatureFlex NM cellulose-based film is claimed to be the first metallized biodegradable film suitable for both industrial and home composting. Noting that the film passes the strict protocols of En13432 and ASTM D6400, the co. says that the 0.02-percent metal content only delays degradation briefly. Modified coatings assure excellent metal laydown and adhesion, providing a MVTR of -10 tropical (30 deg C at 90 percent relative humidity), and the film is said to be static-free, and suitable for twist-wraps and bags in the confectionary market.

Innovia Films, +44 (0) 1900 828777.
www.innoviafilms.com

CR format A new child-resistant format that allegedly needs no tear-notch to open debuts. The feature is a print-registered tear-initiation point. The co. says it may be used as a standalone feature or combined with a "fold first" or "squeeze first" operation to meet specific CR needs, including location flexibility on pouches, sachets or tearsticks for various pharmaceuticals. The foil laminate can be printed in eight colors via gravure.

Amcort Flexibles, 847/362-9000.
www.amcor.com/flexibles-healthcare



PET bottles Following a precipitous rise in resin prices starting last year, the co. announces a new, proprietary blow-molding technology that allows it to make lighter-weight PET bottles. The co. says that the first bottle to emerge will be multiserve hot-fillable, blown in the same mold used for the earlier version of the same bottle, with the technology eventually rolled out to the entire family of PET hot-fillable bottles. The new bottle is said to have the same look, height, diameter and footprint as the older one, running no differently on the customer's filling line.

Graham Packaging Co., 717/849-8500.
www.grahampackaging.com

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Cryovac® Simple Steps™ is described as a time-saving, heat-and-serve package that simplifies entrée preparation. The consumer removes the tray from the outer package, microwave-heats it for a designated time, allows it to cool and pulls a tab to remove the film before serving. The co. says that there's no need to punch vent holes into the film, which tents up as the product reheats and then relaxes as it self-vents, with no steam escaping the tray as the film is peeled back. And the tray is a stylish serve-in.

Sealed Air Cryovac Food Packaging Systems, 800/845-3456.
www.cryovac.com



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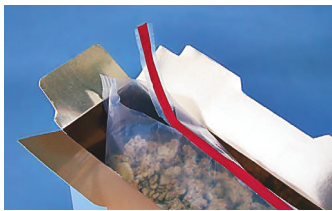
PET jars

Palermo PET jars feature an elegant, oval shape that stands out against traditional, round jars and also fits more conveniently in consumers' medicine cabinets. They are available in 6- and 8-oz sizes, both with 70/400 neck finishes. **Alpha Packaging**, 314/427-4300. www.alphapack.com



Tearstrip

The co. says that its new convenience feature for boxes of ready-to-eat cereals can be incorporated at minimal cost and equipment modifications. The tearstrip is reportedly formed during production of the film in-line; the bag is conventionally formed and filled and then turned while being inserted in the box. This allows the tearstrip to be positioned at the open end of the box. **Container Design**, 262/894-9792.



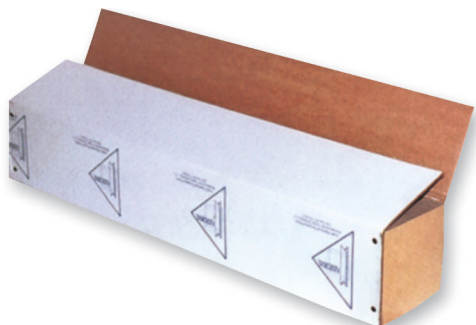
Fitment

The co. introduces the Disposable Universal Dispensing Coupler (DUDC) bag-in-box fitment to enhance the safety and reliability of liquid-dispensing systems. DUDC offers a nonspill feature to virtually eliminate spills and a foil seal providing a tamper-evident means of protecting product. More benefits are seen in the co.'s IdentiQuik™ DUDC model, which incorporates an RFID tag in the closure that automatically exchanges product data to prevent misconnections. A 38-mm fitment fits bags with standard, 38-mm fitment spouts. Fitment materials include PP, FDA buna rubber, EPDM, silicone seals and 316 stainless-steel springs. **Colder Products Co.**, 800/444-2474. www.colder.com



Shippers

Developed for metal tubing, bars and related products, Flexforms are five-panel shipping containers, sent knocked-down to the user, with a strength rating that rivals that of wood, the co. claims. Made from a laminated, virgin kraft recyclable paperboard combination, Flexforms are available in sheet sizes from 15 to 42 in. wide and up to 30 ft long. The co. claims the estimated savings on freight and storage to be 40 to 50 percent, plus a lower item cost. **Industrial Pack, L.L.C.**, 352/348-5128. industrialpack@aol.com



Liner

Any-Pak is the name of a new release liner, constructed by the co. of a 2-mil PP substrate with a release coating said to work well with both hot-melt and p-s adhesives. Printed with the message "remove to expose adhesive" on one side, the liner is produced in 12,000-ft-long rolls in 1-, 1 1/4-, 1 1/2- and 1 3/4-in. widths, plus custom orders. The co. promises that the product will be packaged and ready to ship within 24 hr from the time of purchase. **Rayven, Inc.**, 800/878-3776. www.rayven.com

Barrier film

A new barrier shrink-lidding film, Fresh Wrap™, is said to combine all of the critical characteristics required by the case-ready market, including excellent oxygen barriers, exceptional clarity and anti-fog qualities. Produced for beef, poultry and pork applications, the film also gives a tight, clean appearance through controlled shrink with superior sealability, also fulfilling all requirements of MAP applications, the co. says. **Vector Packaging**, 888/227-4647. www.vectorpackaging.com



MAP blister

The co.'s TEKNIFLEX® modified atmosphere blister is described as the first transparent, thermoformed PCTFE blister that takes the proven barrier properties of two-and three-layer PCTFE laminates beyond those of cold-formed foil. The new structure is said to incorporate one or more of CSP Technologies' Activ-Strips® PE desiccant strips into the rib design of the blister-card, linking every cavity with the desiccant. Thus, the co. says, the patented technology makes it possible to significantly reduce headspace moisture content to extend product shelf life. The co. adds that the desiccant doesn't come in contact with the product and is dust-free. **Tekni-Films**, 908/722-4800. www.tekni-films.com **CSP Technologies**, 334/887-8300. www.csptechnologies.com



Adhesives

A second-generation laminating adhesive for film, foil and paper applications is dubbed Robond™ L. The co. says that the family of water-based, dry-bond adhesives is specifically developed to meet general- and medium-performance applications for a range of packaging laminations, promising converters a bond strength and chemical-resistance typical of solvent adhesives. Also enduring pasteurization and aggressive filling goods, the adhesives are said to run on existing solvent-based equipment. The co. notes that beta-test customers found that lower coating rates and higher speeds didn't cause foaming or anilox roll clogging. **Rohm and Haas**, 215/592-3000. www.rohmhaas.com

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Corrosion inhibitors A series of anti-corrosion components, introduced under the VCI-2000™ name for Volatile Corrosion Inhibitors, results from a packaging partnership. The co. joins with Grofit Plastics to offer flexible packaging and emitters developed to protect exterior and less-accessible interior parts from corrosion. The structures' slow release of vapor action is said to offer long-term corrosion protection, with offerings including bags, sheeting, tubing and embossed films, backed up with emitters, powder packs, foams and wires.

Polyair, 888/765-9247.

www.polyair.com

Grofit Plastics, 847/400-0479.

www.grofitpl.com



Adhesive cartridges The co. sees its closed-end adhesive cartridges offering cost-effective dispensing. In 200-, 300-, 400- and 600-mL capacities, the cartridges feature a robust, unibody design, with a rugged connection between the cylinders, offering a generous lead-in for ease of piston insertion, the co. adds. Each incorporates a patented snap-off closure molded in PP or nylon, eliminating many assembly steps, with multiple piston designs offered for greater flexibility, it is needed.

TAH Industries, Inc., 609/259-9222.

www.tah.com



Trigger sprayers Using new designs based on consumer focus groups, the co. introduces the Shoreline™ series of PET trigger sprayer containers in 16-, 24-

and 32-oz sizes for household, automotive, industrial and chemical applications. All are stocked with an M28SP400 neck for immediate shipment and are also offered with a 28-mm ratchet neck, the co. says. The co. cites a two-stage injection/stretch process as eliminating setup time and tooling costs using concurrent molding and dedicated preforms, with the smaller, universal preforms increasing blow ratios, orientation of molecules and blown container's strength. The savings reportedly allow marketers to capitalize on PET's impact-resistance, stiffness and clarity in small to mid-size runs.

Novapak Corp., 800/975-2784.

www.pvcc.com



Edge protector The co.'s new HydroShield™ is a Vboard® edge protector said to be made with a water-resistant coating that helps the board maintain its protective integrity in environments where water and high humidity levels are present. Reportedly particularly effective in shipping and storing produce and other food perishables, HydroShield is made in multiple calipers and leg lengths using recycled and recyclable materials, and can be custom-produced for a specific application, the co. says.

Laminations, Great Northern Corp., 800/925.2626.

www.laminationsonline.com



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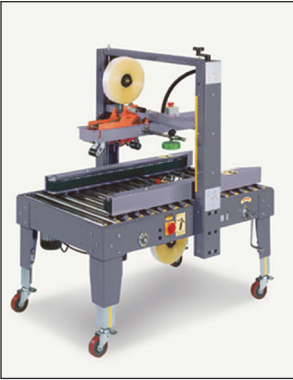
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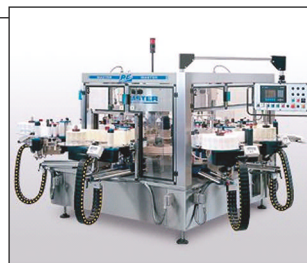
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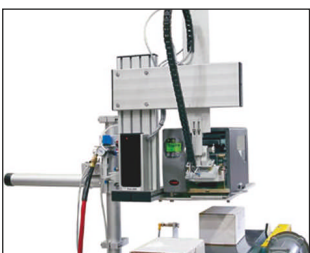
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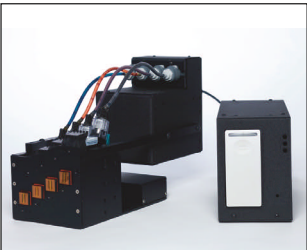
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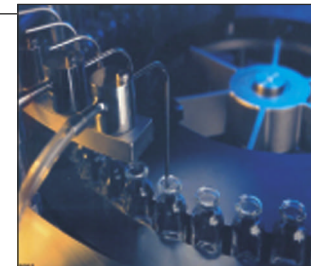
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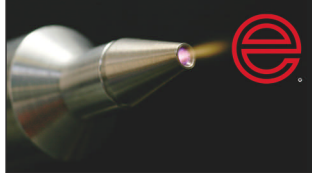
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www.universalpackage.msu.edu

June 27-30 ExpoPack Mexico 2006. Centro Banamex, Mexico City. 703/243-8555. www.expopack.com.mx

June 27-30 Interphex Mexico. Centro Banamex, Mexico City. 800/645-6532.

July 11-13 ProPak China. Shanghai, China. 44/20.7840.2111.

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July 12 Innovative Dairy Packaging Seminar. Shanghai, China. 0086 10 6642 2042-241. www.pdcmag.com

Sept. 11-14 Label Expo Americas. Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont, IL. 262/754-6931. www.labelexpo-americas.com

Sept. 12-13 Biodegradable Plastics in Packaging. Hotel Allegro, Chicago. 207/781-9628. www.pira.co.uk

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Oct. 3-6 Macropak. Jaarbeurs Utrecht, The Netherlands. 31 30 295 5911.
www.jaarbeursutrecht.com

Oct. 4 Flexible Packaging Assn. Fall Executive Conference. Drake Hotel, Chicago. 410/694-0800. www.flexpack.org.

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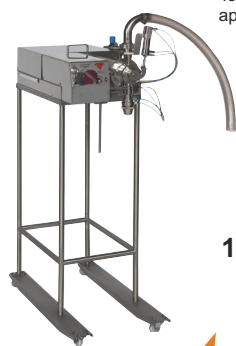
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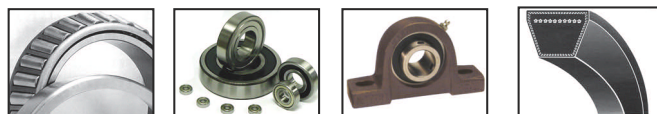
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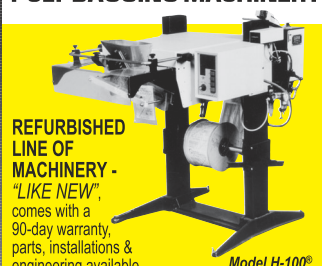
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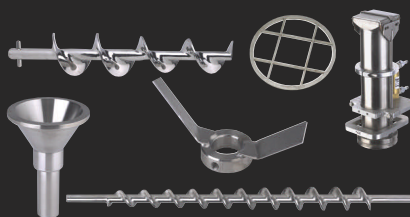
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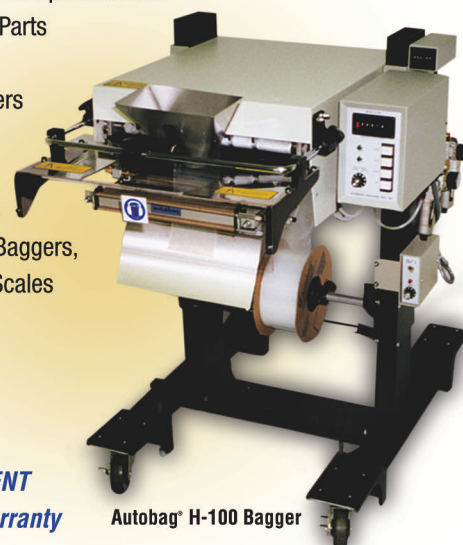
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LLC

appoints Stephan G. Braig head of North American operations as vice president and general manager. Rick Stachel joins

The Freeman Company as vice president of operations.

World Wide Packaging, Inc. names Colin Clasen vice president for Midwest sales.



Robert Brown,
Cortec Corp.

BUYING & SELLING

The **ID Technology div. of Pro Mach, Inc.** acquires The Glennon Group, Milwaukee, a provider of labeling, marking and packaging systems and services throughout the Midwest.

MeadWestvaco Corp. signs a definitive agreement with Compagnie de Saint-Gobain to acquire Grandview, MO-based Saint-Gobain Calmar, which manufactures plastic dispensing and spraying systems, for \$710 million in cash.

Barry-Wehmiller Cos., Inc. and Thiele Technologies agree to acquire the intellectual property and certain specified assets of Slidell, Inc., Owatonna, MN, a designer and manufacturer of automatic packaging equipment for handling free-flowing, granular and powder materials.

CLARIFICATION

The Gleukos package noted in an easylink box in PD's May 2006 article on p. 32 is actually made by Ampac Flexibles; and not Amcor, as was stated.

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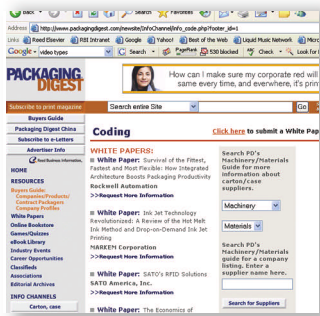
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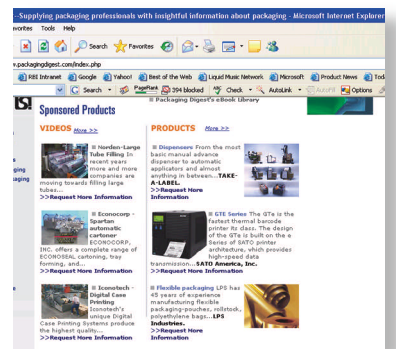
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Beverage distributors announce deal to stop most soda sales to schools

The nation's largest beverage distributors have agreed to halt nearly all sales of sodas to public schools—a step that will remove the sugary, caloric drinks from vending machines and cafeterias around the country.

Once-flat beer sales beginning to revive

Beer sales had gone flat, while wine was flying off the shelves. So beer makers decided to steal a page from wine's marketing manual and create new packaging, flavors and drinks. Now, beer is coming back.

Consumer packaged goods need performance management

The consumer packaged goods (CPG) industry has continued to expand globally without innovating in its use of information technology in finance and operations. But now, as consumers rapidly become savvy about demanding what they want, the power is moving to them and away from retailers.

Premium wines in boxes and screw-cap bottles fuel growth of U.S. wine sales

According to ACNielsen, sales of premium wines with screw-cap closures surged more than 51 percent since 2005, 3.5 times faster than the total 750-ml bottled wine category. The company's research reconfirmed the 3-L premium wine in a box as the fastest-growing premium wine category, with 70-percent growth compared with 2005 sales.

Organic sales continue to grow at a steady pace

Preliminary findings from the Organic Trade Association's 2006 Manufacturer Survey show that U.S. organic food sales totaled nearly \$14 billion in 2005, representing 2.5 percent of all retail sales of food.

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