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April 2007

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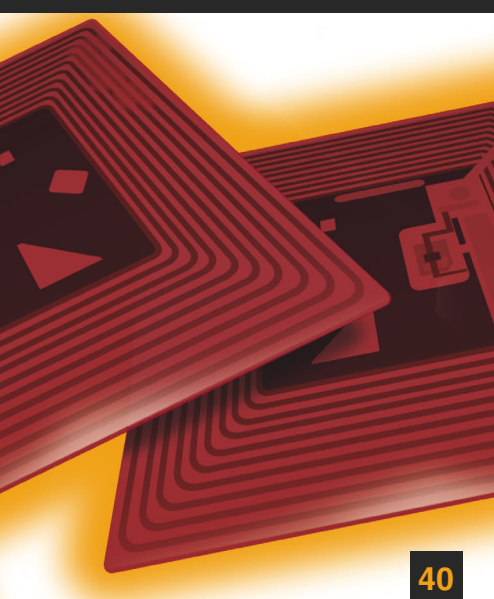
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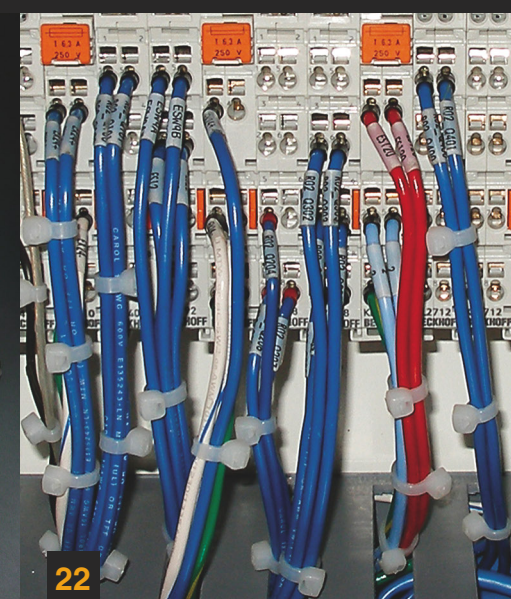
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### 40 RFID technology Keeping tabs on asset management

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## web exclusives

### Wal-Mart holds a sustainable packaging expo

Read about Wal-Mart's recent second-annual Sustainable Packaging Exposition, which hosted 135 suppliers of packaging equipment and materials, at [www.packagingdigest.com/info/walmart07](http://www.packagingdigest.com/info/walmart07)

### Carrier is no 'Lite-weight'

AIMCAL's top prize for 2007 goes to a dazzling beer six-pack from Graphic Packaging Intl. Visit [www.packagingdigest.com/info/aimcal07](http://www.packagingdigest.com/info/aimcal07)

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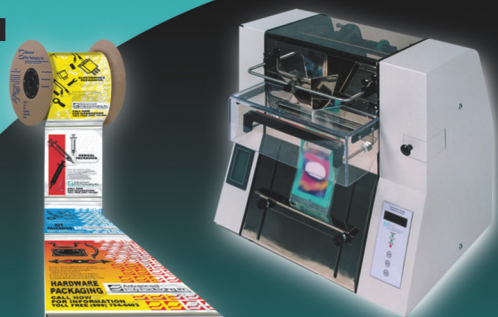
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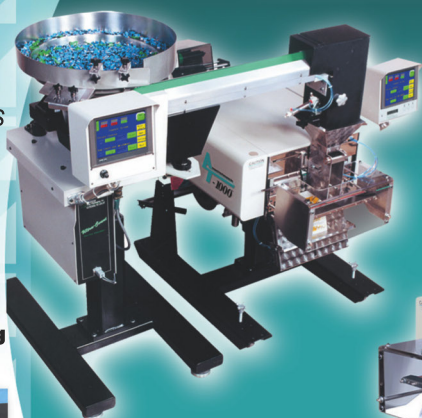
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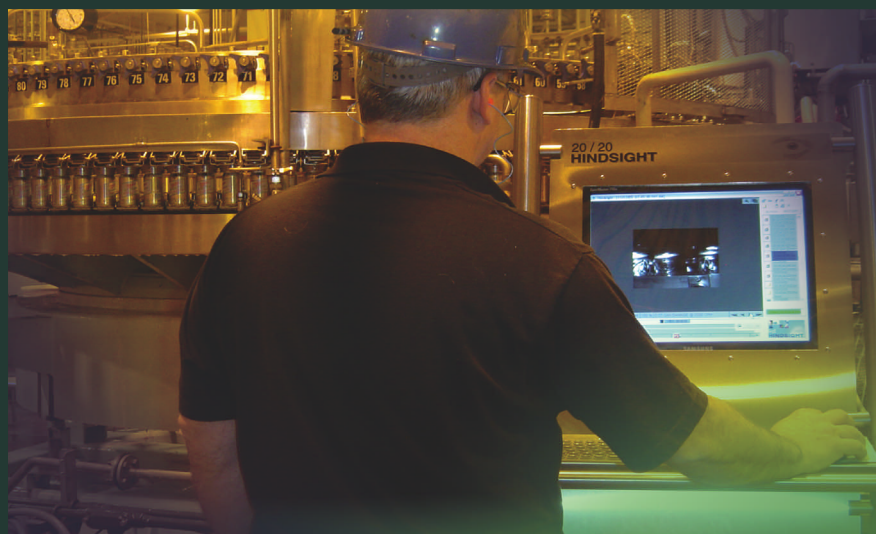
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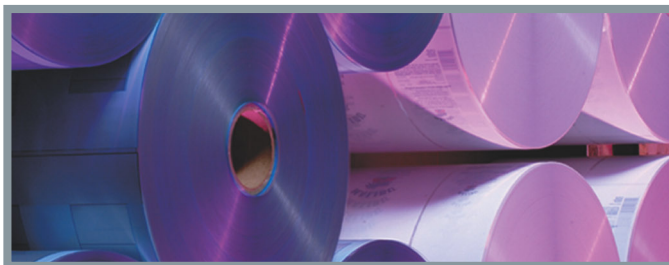
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# design trends

## Jewel tones perk up Folgers



Procter & Gamble's new line of Folgers Coffeehouse premium coffees capitalizes on the huge popularity of the existing Folgers red and green AromaSeal™ plastic canisters with their own upscale identity. Applying color and effects used mostly with high-end personal-care products, the packaging team at **Clariant Masterbatches** ([www.clariant.com](http://www.clariant.com)) helped to develop a prestigious look for the Coffeehouse line on-shelf that meshes with the Folgers brand and helps keep color costs in check. The folks at Folgers knew that darker colors and metallic and jewel-like finishes with subdued label graphics could give the coffees a sophisticated look, so they chose a deep red/burgundy color scheme with a pearlescent effect. But producing the effect using existing manufacturing practices proved to be a considerable challenge. Initial samples of the canisters lacked the right type of luster and reflectivity that had been envisioned, according to the company.

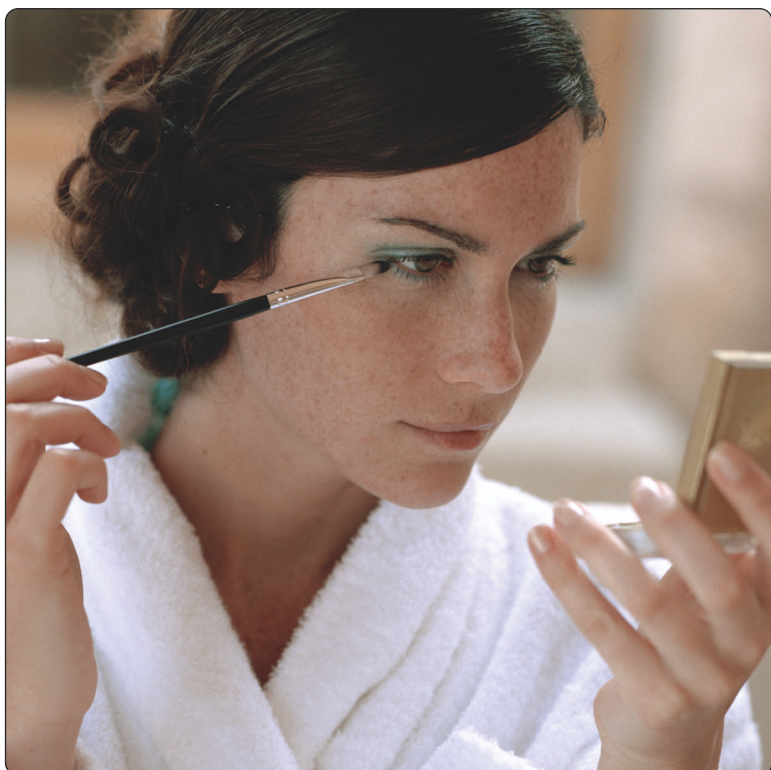
Inspired by personal-care packaging, Clariant then set out to apply color and effects using its global ColorWorks initiative. Recalls Len Kulka, Clariant ColorWorks director of creative development/packaging, adding more color and pearlescent additives helped, but made the new canisters somewhat cost-prohibitive. The ColorWorks experts were able to achieve the desired effect for Folgers using an advanced technique and color systems for individual container layers. The result defines and achieves the opacity, the depth, the reflectivity and the color hue independently, and the final layered, pearlescent effect is visually striking. The results were also said to be less costly to produce than the original red and green canisters.

## Curvy bottle revs up tea

Trina Sprit, a new, sugar-free, cold tea for summer sipping from Schweppes' Teas of Trina in Spain, comes in lemon, melon, peach and apple. Bottled in a tapered, rounded, contemporary glass container that wears clear-film pressure-sensitive labels from **Spear** ([www.spearsystem.com](http://www.spearsystem.com)), the teas are considered one of Spain's high-quality soft drinks. Targeting young people, the package and its labels differentiate the brand while complementing Trina's heritage. For a no-label look, Spear chose a transparent, polypropylene filmstock that it prints using combination rotary screen/flexography in four colors plus shiny foil hot stamping. The graphics in warm reds and oranges include a lower-case "t!" logo for Trina. The 25-cL bottle is amply sized for ready-to-drink teas and is 5-cL larger than the conventional 20-cL size for tea. It has a twist-off cap and a wide mouth for easy access to the tea. Produced in Europe, the shapely glass bottle is supplied by **Ricardo Gallo** of Portugal, a subsidiary of Spain's **Vidrala S.A.** ([www.vidrala.com](http://www.vidrala.com)).



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# design trends household items



## Package redesign places treatment 'on the fence'

The effectiveness of a new 5-L jug for Cuprinol Sprayable Fence Treatment, a product for painting and protecting fences with a sprayer device, has been underscored by the fact that the product is one of Cuprinol's most successful launches. Designed by **RPC Containers Ltd.'s** ([www.rpc-raunds.co.uk](http://www.rpc-raunds.co.uk)) department at Raunds in consultation with Cuprinol, the deep green container

features an easy-pour spout and a sturdy and durable construction developed for outdoor use. The jug involves the respective blow-molding and injection-molding expertise of RPC's Raunds plant and its Market Rasen operations in the U.K. Blow-molded of high-density polyethylene, the rectangular jug has a wide, centered, 63-mm neck finish and a shoulder design that together ensure glug-free pouring. Smooth pouring is further aided by a separate, injection-molded polypropylene handle retained by a snap-on neck ring. The handle pivots during pouring for controlled dispensing.

## Cleanser clogging is curtailed with new bottle and cap



Thirty years after its introduction, Soft Scrub® cleanser from The Dial Corp. is cleaning up its act, with fresh, new packaging that not only eliminates the product clogging and buildup experienced with the brand's previous packaging, but also brightens the household cleaner aisle, with vibrant, full-body shrink labels. "After buying the brand from Clorox in November 2004, we saw great opportunities to grow the brand," says Wendy Warus, director of marketing, Household Cleaners & Insecticides at Dial. "The first step was to modernize the brand image, which led to the inverted bottle and updated graphics."

One of Dial's chief goals with the redesign, Warus adds, was to develop packaging that could dispense the viscous cleanser without clogging or causing buildup around the orifice—a complaint often voiced with Soft Scrub's 1976-inspired bottle. The new package, a custom, 24-oz, high-density polyethylene bottle developed in conjunction with **Silgan Plastics** ([www.silganplastics.com](http://www.silganplastics.com)), uses an

inverted format along with a 33-mm SimpliSqueeze® valve closure from **Seaquist Closures** ([www.seaquistclosures.com](http://www.seaquistclosures.com)) to ease product dispensing and to reduce buildup.

According to Mark Wanderlich, packaging development engineer for Silgan, the greatest challenge in designing the bottle was to ensure that it would return to its original shape after dispensing. "The product is extremely viscous, causing vacuum problems, or panel suckback," he relates. "We had to perfect several aspects of the package, including design geometry, material and wall thickness, and we had to incorporate some unique panel-support features for the bottle to return to its original state after being squeezed."

Created to enhance the product's image at point-of-purchase are bright, full-body oriented polystyrene shrink labels gravure-printed in eight colors by **Fort Dearborn** ([www.fortdearborn.com](http://www.fortdearborn.com)). "By moving to the full-body shrink label, we doubled the billboard effect of the package," notes Warus. Graphics, designed by **MLR Design** ([www.mlrdesign.com](http://www.mlrdesign.com)), use bright colors to distinguish between the line's four varieties.

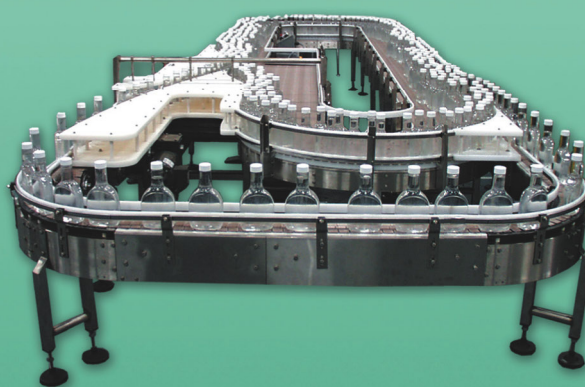
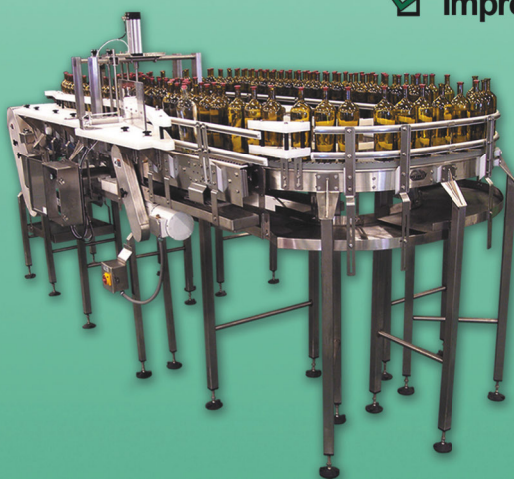


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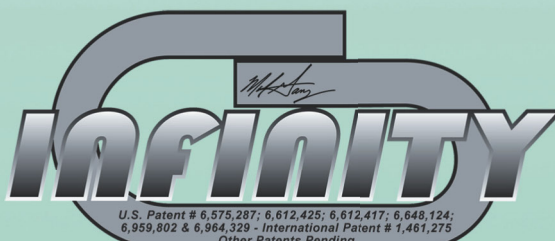
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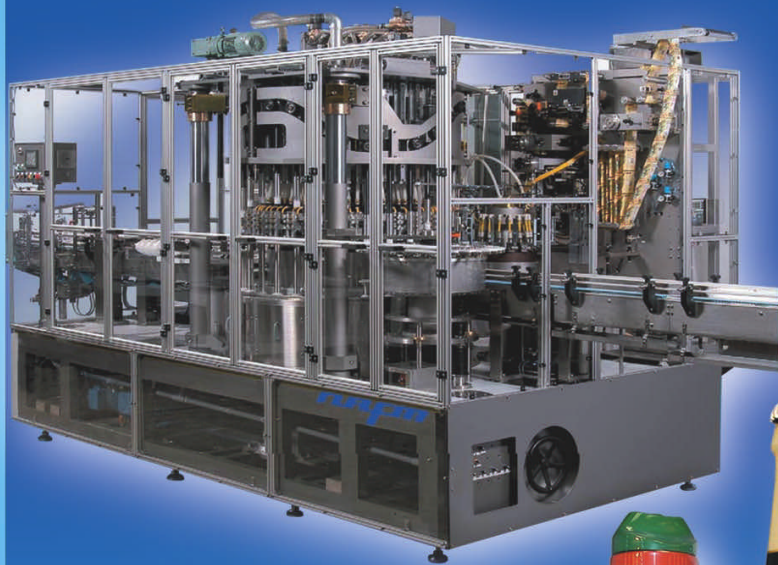


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# design trends



## £5,000 jar sparkles for marmalade containing gold leaf

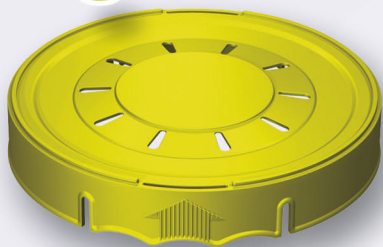
Jam and marmalade maker F. Duerr & Sons, Ltd. marked its 125th birthday by creating a very special jar of marmalade costing more than £5,000 (\$8,900). The marmalade is packed with amazing ingredients, including gold leaf, vintage champagne and some of the world's most expensive whiskey, as well as the finest oranges from Seville. The commemorative 1-kg jar contains

£3,450 (\$6,160) worth of Dalmore 62 whiskey, £348 (\$621) worth of vintage champagne and £120 (\$214) of edible gold leaf, all encased in a specially designed, hand-crafted jar, itself valued at £1,100 (\$1,964). Spread evenly, the product costs about £76 (\$136) per slice of toast, with each mouthful priced at an eye-watering £11 (\$20). The rare Dalmore 62-year-old malt whiskey used in the marmalade sells at a whopping £32,000 (\$57,000) a bottle.

The exclusive vintage champagne by Pol Roger, is a Cuvée Winston Churchill 1996, supplied by Vineyards of France. James Sherry of Vineyards of France says, "The choice of champagne is fitting because Churchill enjoyed a full English breakfast with toast and marmalade, and his favorite first tippie of the day was a glass of Pol Roger champagne, which he famously justified by saying: 'In victory, deserve it. In defeat, need it.'" **Rockware Glass, Ltd.** ([www.rockware.company.uk](http://www.rockware.company.uk)), West Yorkshire, England, produces the jar. Its innovations and NPD manager, Chris Todd, created an elegant crystal glass decanter. Richard Duerr at Duerr's says, "We've been creating marmalade for 125 years. We believe we have the most expensive jar of marmalade."

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## Tuna, salmon dive into single-serve peel-and-eat cups

More than ever, consumers are looking for healthy, convenient foods at a value, according to AC Nielsen, and Chicken of the Sea Intl., San Diego, a top provider of shelf-stable seafood products, including tuna, salmon, crab, shrimp, oysters and more, says its new tuna and salmon, in 2.8-oz "peel-and-eat cups," will feed these growing needs. Shelf-stable for 18 months, the single-portion cups are sleeve-packed in pairs. Recently, *Seafood.com* reported that analysts and marketers predict that in 2007, supermarkets will offer even more convenience with a greater variety in portion sizes. "Trends indicate that people are looking for healthy products that meet their busy lifestyles and can be consumed on-the-go," notes John Sawyer, senior vp of sales and marketing at Chicken of the Sea. "With the obesity crisis, there is also an increased focus on portion control—our new tuna and salmon cups are perfect for addressing both issues." The proprietary, plastic cups are easy to open and are topped with a proprietary, peelable membrane. The product is available in chunk white tuna, chunk light tuna and pink salmon varieties in the convenient two-packs. The suggested retail price is \$1.79 to \$2.79, depending on the product variety.

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# comment

Mary Ann Falkman, Editor



## Events 'sustain' packagers' interests

Natural is not necessarily environmentally friendly," and "Fact: Packaging protects far more resources than it uses." These provocative statements—and many more—characterized a March gathering on packaging sustainability in Orlando.

More than 150 packaging professionals spent two days listening intently to 26 speakers outline various aspects of packaging sustainability at the inaugural Sustainability in Packaging conference. The conference was organized by Intertech-Pira and sponsored by *Packaging Digest* and *Converting* magazines.

A fairly evenly mixed audience of brand owners and packaging suppliers came to learn about the year's hottest topic in packaging. During two jam-packed days, the attendees heard several themes emerge.

Sustainability must become a part of every corporation's culture, from top management down. It must dominate all corporate decisions, from what kind of copier paper is purchased (recycled, of course) to how products are designed and made and then to how they are transported to the customer.

Life-cycle analysis is critical to measuring the sustainability success of any packaging. However, there are not yet any common metrics by which to make this assessment. Wal-Mart, of course, has offered its scorecard as a guideline. The speakers at the conference spent much time explaining their directives, but each had slightly differing emphases.

Sustainability will never succeed without consumer education. How this information will be disseminated—and by whom—remained undetermined, other than that the education process will probably have to be shared by packaging machinery manufacturers, packaging materials suppliers and the consumer goods brand owners, not necessarily in that order of priority. Associations will also play a pivotal role, as will the media. Sustainability is, for now, an evolutionary journey that requires much more research. A trial-and-error period is only now beginning for most corporations. While many of the larger materials companies have had sustainability directives for as long as a decade, most consumer goods manufacturers are only now embarking on this journey.

### Wal-Mart stages second sustainability expo

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. saw a 30-percent increase in exhibitor participation in its second annual Sustainable Packaging Exposition, which hosted 135 suppliers of packaging equipment and materials for sustainability near its Bentonville, AR, headquarters in mid-March. Representing the only trade magazine invited to the event, *Packaging Digest* learned from Amy Zettlemoyer, director of packaging for Sam's Club, that the two-day event was designed to give packaging suppliers and Wal-Mart and Sam's Club buyers and product suppliers the unique opportunity to interact with one another, while exploring the many innovations in packaging designed around sustainability.

For a complete overview of the expo, as well as on Wal-Mart's update on the results of its Packaging Scorecard, visit [www.packagingdigest.com/info/walmart07](http://www.packagingdigest.com/info/walmart07).

*Mary Ann Falkman*

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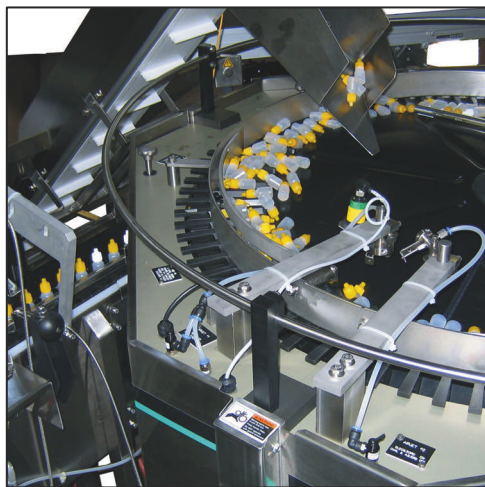
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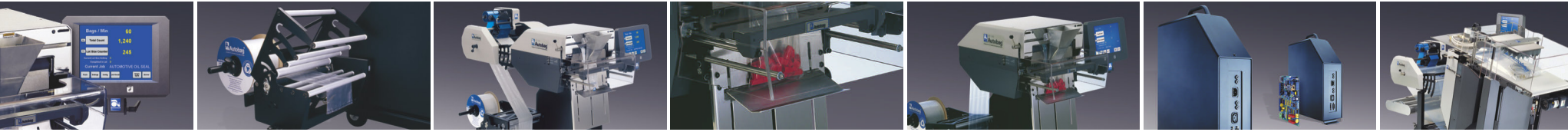
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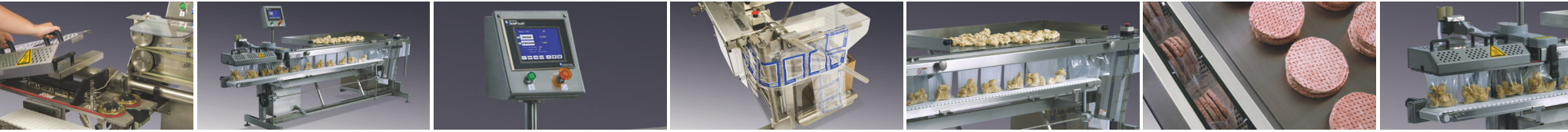
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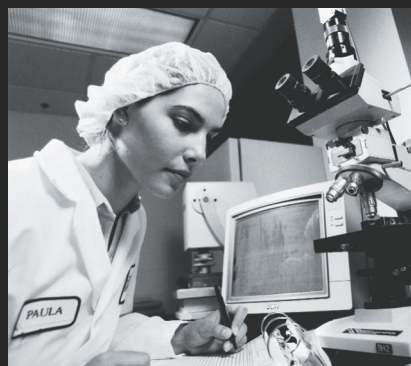


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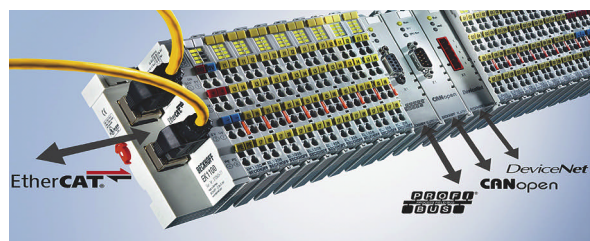
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## new products spotlight

### Controls & Inspection

**Vision sensor** The new entry-level DVT® 535C color vision sensor is said to be the lowest-cost model in the DVT color vision sensor family. Like the other models in the line, the DVT 535C operates with Intellect™ software that facilitates setup, integration and maintenance and is backward-compatible with FrameWork. The latest Intellect software release, 1.4, offers a new Flexible Flaw Detection (FFD) tool that can provide reliable inspection results despite random process variations, the co. says. FFD is also said to reduce inspection errors when the appearance of the part is not consistent, due to registration errors, lens and perspective distortions, and normal part-to-part variations.

**Cognex Corp.**, 877/264-6391.  
**www.cognex.com**



**EtherCAT terminals** New EL67xx EtherCAT master and slave terminals provide a direct interface to EtherCAT I/O nodes for all Profibus (EL6731), DeviceNet (EL6752) and CANopen (EL6751) devices. The terminals channel each fieldbus signal type through the EtherCAT protocol with full availability of the respective network's features and functions. Due to the EtherCAT connection, fieldbus PCI cards in PCs are not required.

**Beckhoff Automation LLC**, 952/890-0000.  
**www.beckhoffautomation.com**

**Palletizing robot** Designed for precise, high-speed and heavy-payload case and bag palletizing and depalletizing, layer handling, press tending, machine load/unloading and part transfer is the new intelligent M-410iB palletizing robot. The M-410iB is a four-axis, modular-construction, electric servo-driven robot with an integrated mechanical and control unit that is said to maximize the robot's performance and make it suitable for limited floor space. The robot can handle cases or bags weighing 100 kg at rates of 20 cycles/min for cases and 28/min for bags, and—with a maximum reach of 10.3 ft—the robot can service multiple lanes at once. Products include the M-410iB/160 (160-kg payload), the M-410iB/300 (300-kg) and the M-410iB/450 (450-kg).

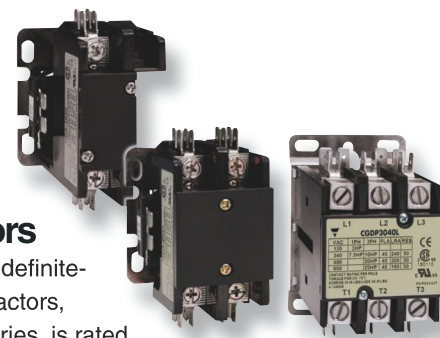
**FANUC Robotics America, Inc.**, 248/377-7000.  
**www.fanucrobotics.com**



### Contactors

A new line of definite-purpose contactors, the CGDP Series, is rated for up to 50 amps for resistive loads and is available in one-pole, one-pole plus shunt, two-pole and three-pole configurations. The contactors are UL- and CSA-recognized, meet ARI 780 ratings and are RoHS-compliant. Standard features include 24, 120, 208/240, 277, 480 and 575 VAC 50/60Hz coils. Switching of 20, 25, 30, 40 amp FLA (30, 35, 40, 50 amp resistive) loads is possible at up to 600 VAC. Connection to the contactors is achieved via multiple 0.25-in. fast-on terminals, which are standard on control and load terminals. Optional single and dual auxiliary contacts are available for the three-pole contactors.

**Carlo Gavazzi**, 847/465-6100.  
**www.GavazziOnline.com**



**Power supplies** The PS5R-SB Series is the newest addition to the co.'s family of Slim Line power supplies. Available in three output voltages: 5V in 10W; and 12V and 24V in 15W. The power supplies are said to be half the size of standard DIN rail power supplies and have the best efficiency for 22.5

mm wide, the co. says. All PS5R-SB Slim Line Series are UL508-listed, allowing for 100-percent full-load operation and eliminating the need for the user to oversize or derate the power supply. According to the co., the power supplies are fast and easy to install.

**IDEC**, 800/262-4332.  
**www.idec.com/usa**



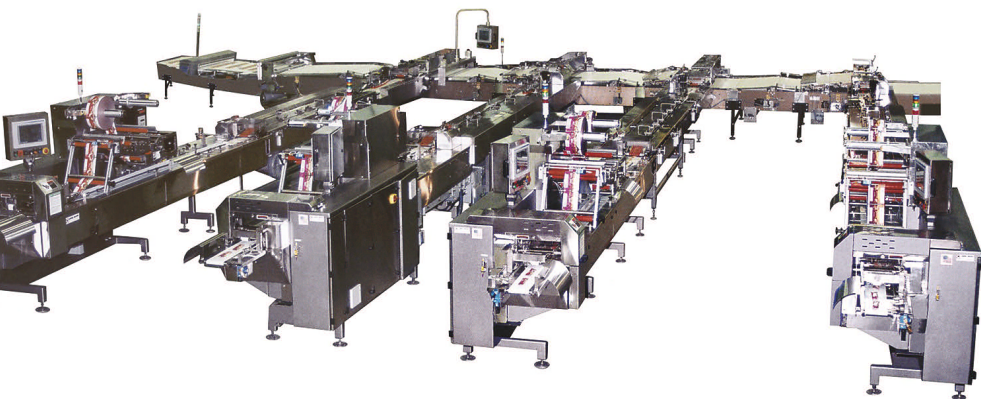
### Safety switches

The co. introduces two new universal, tongue-operated safety interlock switches. The T2008, at 0.98×3.23 in., is designed to provide a minimum of 1 million actuations in severely space-restricted applications and can be installed on 1-in.-sq tubing. 1 N/O and 1 N/C, or 2 N/C contact configurations are available to satisfy Dual Channel Safety Monitoring requirements. The new T2011 is just slightly longer at 0.98×3.44 in., but includes 2 N/C and 1 N/O, or 3 N/C contact configurations to support dual channel safety monitoring and status monitoring. The T2011 is said to be extremely versatile and provides a minimum of 2 million actuations.

**Omron Scientific Technologies, Inc.**, 800/479-3658.  
**www.sti.com**



# new products equipment



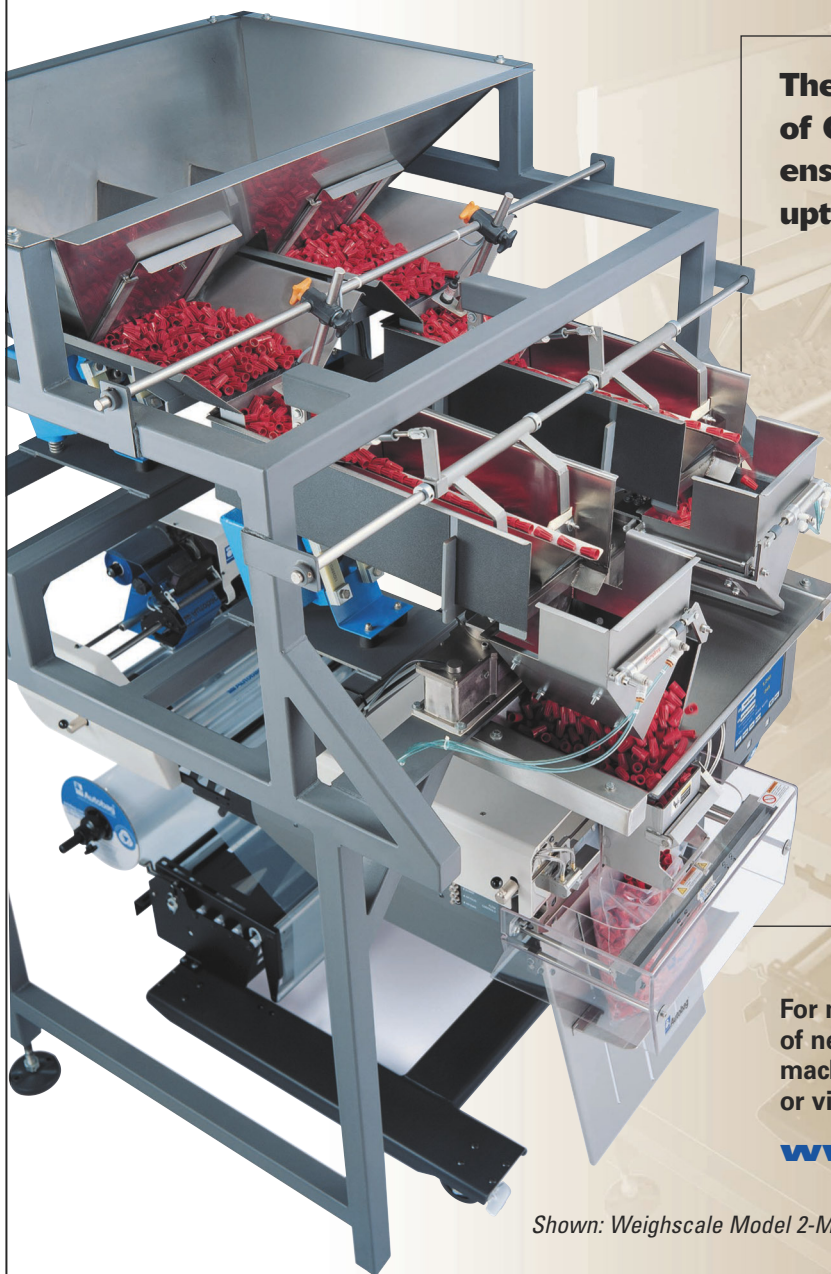
**Bar distribution systems** The co.'s bar distribution systems automatically distribute products to a series of individual wrapping machines and now include row-management conveyors designed with tool-less belt removal for ease of cleanup and maintenance and gentle handling of products such as granola bars, nutrition bars, soft cakes, etc. Lift, staging and transfer conveyors distribute rows of product to each module of the system. Each wrapper module can include product turning, automatic feeders and flowrappers capable of running at 600 packages/min. The system uses Allen-Bradley servo motors and drive controllers combined with the ControlLogix 5000 Series PLC.

**Campbell Wrapper Corp.**, 920/983-7100.  
[www.campbellwrapper.com](http://www.campbellwrapper.com)

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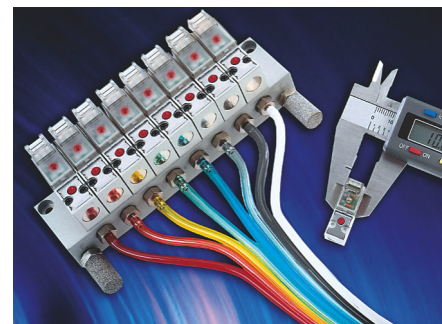
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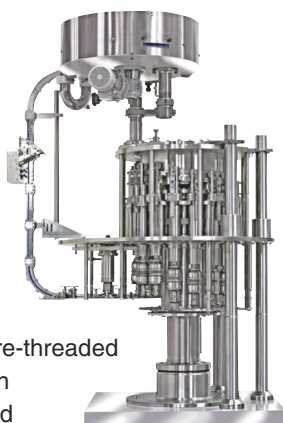


**Solenoid valves** A new series of 10- and 15-mm direct-acting valves offer many features for design flexibility, the co. says, especially in applications with limited space. Available in two-way or three-way configurations, as Normally-Open or Normally-Closed, the valves provide flow rates from 0.5 to 3.0 scfm, depending on the orifice size. Other features include a highly visible LED indicator light and manual override, a quick response time and multiple mounting and voltage options. Five connector styles are available for easy installation and versatility, the co. notes.

**Clippard Instrument Laboratory, Inc.**, 877/245-6247.  
[www.clippard.com](http://www.clippard.com)

### Rotary capper

The co.'s AROL S.p.A. Division has unveiled the NEXT Ultraclean rotary capper for applying pre-threaded plastic caps on glass, PET and HDPE bottles.



Available in both a free-standing and a turret configuration, the capper has from 15 to 36 heads for production speeds from 500 to 1,200 bottles/min. The capper has been designed to be completely washable—from the upper part of the piston-holding cam to the closure-processing plane. All metal parts are stainless steel, while all plastic parts are said to comply with the FDA's food-contact requirements. The capper applies caps from 1 to 3 plus threads.

**Angelus Sanitary Can Machine Co.**, 323/583-2171.  
[www.angelusmachine.com](http://www.angelusmachine.com)

**Packaging analysis** A provider of highly detailed economic analysis for the global packaging industry, the co. has combined a content knowledge base with a suite of software to create the SavvyPack™ system. The system, used by the co. and available to clients via a subscription, is said to help clients develop new packaging options more economically and efficiently; generate revenue through informed investment decisions; understand the economics associated with investment projects; understand their packaging supply chain; and more. **Allied Development Corp.**, 952/898-2000. [www.allied-dev.com](http://www.allied-dev.com)

**Carton sealer** Available for use with the co.'s uniform, water-activated-tape case sealers, the BP E-Z Pull Tab® system incorporates a tearstrip directly onto the packaging tape as it is dispensed. Once the case sealer applies the tape to the carton, the recipient grips a pull tab and pulls the tearstrip to quickly and easily "unzip" the carton open, the co. says. The system has been designed to reduce excessive product damage resulting from the sharp implements used to open packages; to create an easy, safe method for customers to open parcels; to protect workers from being cut while opening boxes with box cutters; and to improve the brand image by producing a positive end-user experience. **Better Packages, Inc.**, 800/237-9151. [www.betterpackages.com](http://www.betterpackages.com)



**L-sealer** Said to offer expanded capacity and improved standard features over its predecessor (the 6700MM), the new 6700EX automatic L-sealer provides a 20×26×6-in. seal area and a throughput of 25 packs/min. Standard features include a constant-heat solid-seal knife-sealing system with independent, digital temperature controls for sealing knives, an upper film cradle with a film splitter using center-folded film up to 21 in. wide and a film-advance system with standard pinch rollers for film control and economy. The system also offers Mitsubishi PLC control, self-aligning lower seal pads, fixed-speed conveyors with product staging capability, vertical and horizontal product sensors and other features. **Clamco Corp.**, 800/299-1655. [www.clamcocorp.com](http://www.clamcocorp.com)



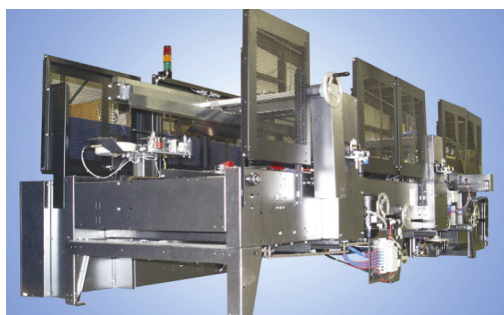
### Print/apply labelers

The M-Series is a new range of print-and-apply technologies that includes thermal-transfer and direct-thermal label printers, available in left- and right-handed versions that combine with a range of blow, tamp, and wipe-on label applicators. Models include: the M100 direct-thermal label printer; the M200 thermal-transfer label printer; the M300, with RFID programming and reading capabilities; the M400 OEM variant, which includes third-party print engines; and the M600 pallet applicator. According to the co., any of the printer variants can be combined with any of the range of applicators to create the required solution.

**Domino Amjet, Inc.**, 847/244-2501. [www.dominoamjet.com](http://www.dominoamjet.com)

**Stacker** The co. has been awarded a patent for its Velocity™ high-speed servo stacker technology, which is said to gently form stacked product pack patterns without interruption, providing continuous product flow at speeds to 600 products/min. Intelligent programming is said to accurately count products and adjust the product flow rate to prevent jams due to product spacing inconsistency. Features of the Velocity include servo controls for quick and repeatable, tool-free changeovers, flexibility for running numerous product sizes and pack patterns and a compact design for an efficient use of floor space. The Velocity is used on the co.'s product lines including its Axiom® case and tray packers and cartoners.

**Douglas Machine, Inc.**, 320/763-6587. [www.douglas-machine.com](http://www.douglas-machine.com)



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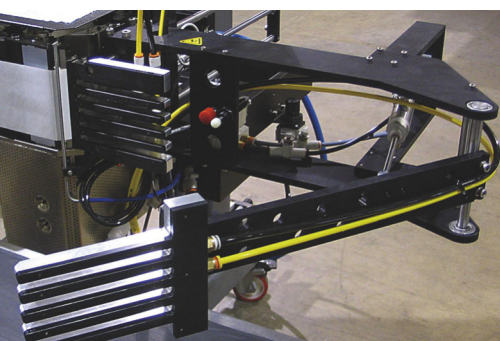
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# new products equipment



**Label applicator** Designed for the co.'s 250 Series printer/applicator is a new Split Tamp module for use with production lines requiring the application of multiple labels to boxes or pallets at the same point in the production line. The two-piece tamp is designed to separate as it applies a label to each panel and fit together and appear as a single tamp pad in the home position. When activated, the leading panel label is applied using the swing-arm portion, and the side-label application is applied using a straight tamp cylinder. To ensure label-placement accuracy, a dual fire trigger control box is part of the new configuration.

**ID Technology**, 888/438-3242.

[www.idtechnology.com](http://www.idtechnology.com)



**Checkweigher** The co. has upgraded its CM9400 Canweigh™ checkweigher with updated displays, controls and electronics that are said to make operators more productive and production lines more efficient. The CM9400's new XS Control 15-in. dashboard-style touchscreen display provides intuitive, menu-driven access to checkweigher functions, with displays readable up to 20 ft. The displays are the front end for a new electronics package for the CM9400, an industrial-strength PC-based system using the Open Modular Architecture Controls for easy integration into product lines. The new system also allows the checkweigher to be set up as an OLE for Process and Control (OPC) server to store production data and present it on the Internet.

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

[www.hispeedcheckweigher.com](http://www.hispeedcheckweigher.com)

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**Air compressor** The co.'s Air Technology Group has introduced its SRL oil-free air compressor technology. Features of this portfolio include a 100-percent oil-less design to conserve natural resources and eliminate environmental emissions; the patented Scroll Wrap with Alumite™ surface treatment and labyrinth seal for high performance and reliability; multi-stage cooling that provides stability of discharge air temperature; integrated air receivers; and more.

**Hitachi America, Ltd.**, 914/332-5800.  
[www.hitachi.us](http://www.hitachi.us)

# new products materials

## Paper & Paperboard

### Returnable containers Chillpac™

returnable containers provide a way to reduce costs and increase productivity in food handling and distribution, the co. notes. Returnable ChillPacs feature a 24×20-in. footprint in 7-, 10- and 13-in. heights. The food containers can go from processors to distributors to retailers, efficiently chilling and cooling poultry, meat, seafood, produce and prepared foods. ChillPacs are suitable for case-ready distribution applications. The different container sizes stack and nest together, maximizing cube efficiency on 48×40-in. pallets. They offer flexibility to meet the requirements of users throughout the food supply chain, the co. says. Pivoting steel bails swing in for stacking and out for nesting storage. The open-weave side and bottom design maximizes air flow to minimize cooling time and optimize heat dissipation for uniform coolness, the co. adds. The molded-in handles and uniform design facilitate use with automated handling systems. The containers are molded from FDA/USDA-approved materials. They also resist impact, moisture and temperature extremes of -20 deg F to +120 deg F. Pallets and dollies are available to facilitate handling and distribution.

**Buckhorn**, 800/543-4454.  
[www.buckhorninc.com](http://www.buckhorninc.com)



### Case-marking tape DataLase® CaseMark

tape serves as a label replacement for the outside of secondary packaging. The tape produces a color change from white to black upon exposure to a low-power, co.-approved CO<sub>2</sub> laser. The laser life is more than 30,000 hr and requires little maintenance

and no printhead replacement due to wear and tear, the co. reports. The tape has no backing paper and needs no inks, ribbons or other consumables, and the label replacement's

"apply-and-print" technique allows information to be "printed" on the tape after it has been applied to a case. It also provides brand protection features. The co.'s chemistry is integrated into the tape material and uses the low-power CO<sub>2</sub> laser to laser-mark through the PP tape surface without affecting it, encasing an image within the tape. It's nearly impossible to remove the image, the co. says. The tape can be removed from a case after imaging has occurred. The image is automatically transferred to the container, leaving a permanent image or mark.

**DataLase, Inc.**, 770/817-4810.  
[www.datalase.com](http://www.datalase.com)



### Recyclable coating for corrugated

The co. says that its Spectra-kote coating and WAM™ medium for corrugated boxes has been certified by the Fibre Box Assn. protocol standards for recyclability. As one of the first alternative coatings to be certified, Spectra-kote is a moisture barrier that holds out water and vapor while maintaining its ability to be recycled with regular corrugated containers, the co. says. The coating provides an alternative to nonrecyclable wax though a special technology. Although corrugated has one of the highest recycling rates of all materials, some of it (about 5 percent, according to the co.) isn't recyclable. It represents about 3 billion lb of corrugated that the co. says eventually gets landfilled every year. The coatings and the WAM medium are said to prevent water absorption by the paper and with the recent certification for recyclability, that recycling rate can climb even higher, the co. reports.

**Spectra-kote Corp.**, 717/334-3177.  
[www.spectra-kote.com](http://www.spectra-kote.com)

### Grease-resistant paper ECOGR™

the co.'s first fluorochemical-free, oil- and grease-resistant flexible packaging paper, is said to meet FDA standards for food packaging. The paper is suitable for uses including sandwich, hamburger and taco wraps, French fry and hash brown bags, takeout bags and pizza-box liners. ECOGR is printed, converted and supplied with the same functionality as traditionally treated paper, the co. says, but is made with naturally occurring, renewable resources.

**Boise Paper, a div. of Boise Cascade, LLC**, 877/366-3161.  
[www.boiseecoogr.com](http://www.boiseecoogr.com)

### Recyclable wine packaging

New Winepacks are described as 100-percent-recyclable, molded-fiber bottle holder/shippers. Wineries, store operators, wine collectors, retailers and others can buy directly from the co.'s website. The shippers are manufactured at and distributed from one location and shipped directly to the end user, circumventing often costly distribution channels, the co. states.

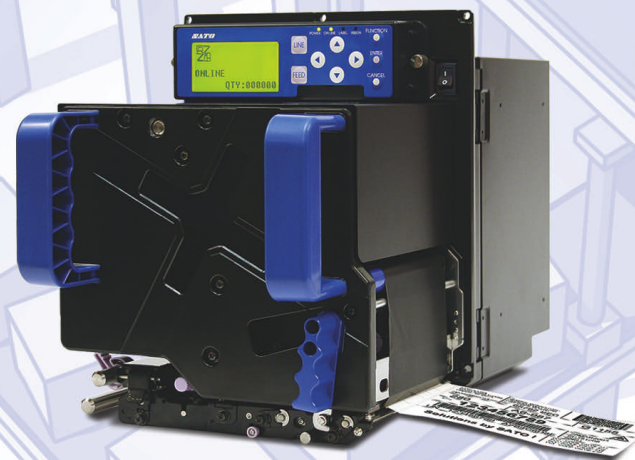
They can be purchased as a kit consisting of 10 Winepacks, 10 box inserts and one shipping container

and can be accessorized with tissue paper. With a universal part that serves as the top, bottom and middle insert (for 6-bottle configurations), the Winepacks are ISTA 3A-certified for use in shipping by UPS and FedEx, says the co. Available in 1-, 2-, 3, 4-, 6- and 12-stackable bottle configurations, they're made from 100-percent-recycled newsprint and require no tooling investment. They offer easy packout as a molded part and have minimal warehousing requirements, as they're nestable.

**Winepacks.com**, 800/372-3126.  
[www.winepacks.com](http://www.winepacks.com)



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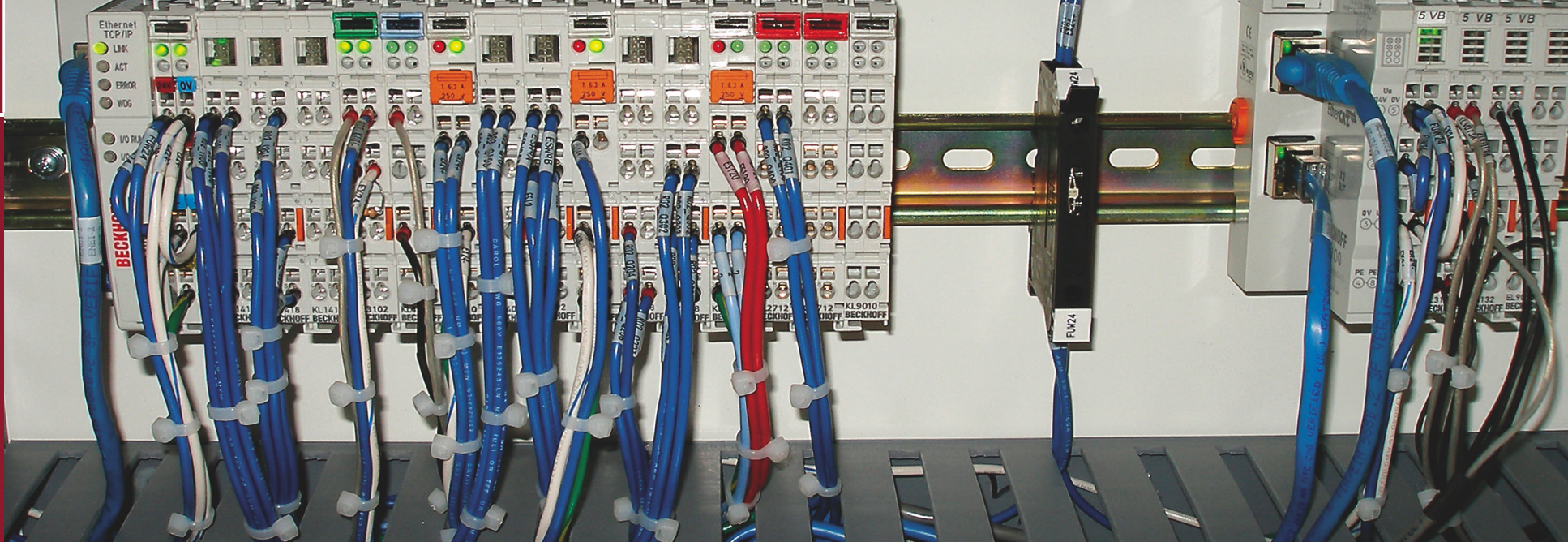
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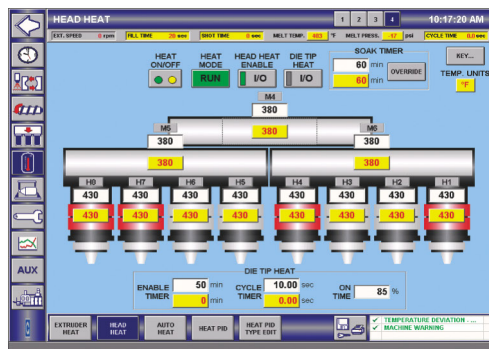




Industrial Ethernet I/O technology provides high-speed control of the parison programmers on the blow-molding machines, thus assuring higher-quality bottles.

# New control system improves blow-molding machines

Industrial PCs boost processing power, production output, reliability, cost efficiency and safety for customers.



New industrial computers communicate with the human-machine interface without an OPC server.

**G**raham Engineering Corp. (GEC [www.grahamengineering.com]), York, PA., specializes in high-end blow-molding machinery and equipment for the nonpolyethylene terephthalate segment of the fluid bottling and packaging market. Its machines are widely used at plants that manufacture bottles to be immediately filled with automotive fluids, household detergents and cleansers, and beverages that are marketed in nontransparent bottles. A large number of GEC's customers also make empty bottles for resale in the same automotive, household and beverage industries.

The Graham Wheel product, which was GEC's first major product entry into the blow-molding machine market, has been made for more than 30 years, with installations worldwide. They now represent a

dominant technology in the production of high-output blow-molding systems. The main component of the Wheel spins around a horizontally mounted axis. Up to six extruders feed plastic into a component known as a flow head to quickly form bottles in virtually any type of thermoplastic to the perfect shape and with the highest quality available.

While many machine manufacturers still fear rocking the customer's boat and rely on big-name PLCs as an excessively safe controls-specification position, GEC uses its automation and controls expertise to help its customers surpass the competition in production output, reliability, cost efficiency and safety. True to its company motto, "Innovation Taking Shape," GEC machines are under a perpetual state of improvement to ensure that its customers' machines will be world class, yet integrate seamlessly

Continued on page 24

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with existing line components. While being one of the first to adopt the latest technologies, GEC is still highly confident in its products, offering machine warranties that are among the best in the industry.

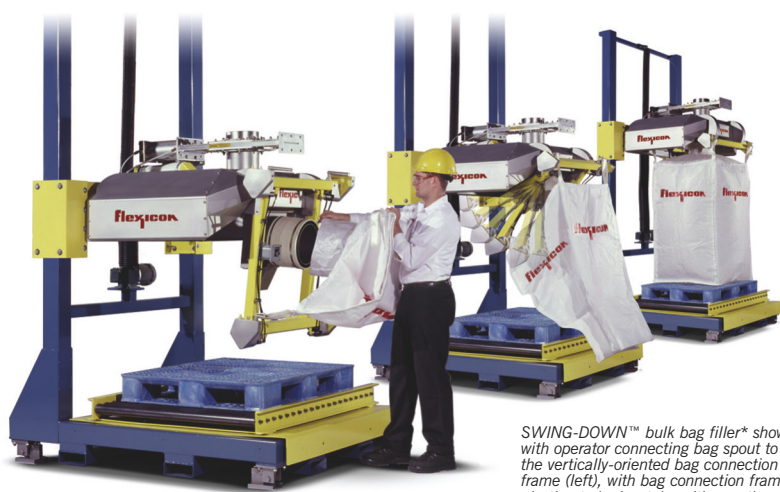
**G**EC has heavily adopted personal computer (PC)-based controls, which have been its main controls platform for over five years. "In 2003, GEC had determined that our existing PC-hardware platform wasn't

going to keep up with our machine design migration, so we needed to find a successor," says Dave Fiorani, engineering manager, GEC. When the durability and processing power limitations of their PC-hardware vendor became apparent, GEC completed an exhaustive evaluation of industrial PCs from five major vendors. More than 20 critical performance criteria were evaluated in each vendor's product offering. "We found that only **Beckhoff Automation LLC** [www.beckhoffautomation.com] was able

to meet every single item on our list," Fiorani says. "Beckhoff was the sole vendor checked in seven of these critical evaluation criteria." These items included:

- The ability to buy commercial, off-the-shelf components from any PC store to replace failed components, while adhering to advanced-technology-extended (ATX) open standards;
- Software to map the input/output (I/O) that is capable of running on any personal computer;
- Integrated, uninterruptible power-

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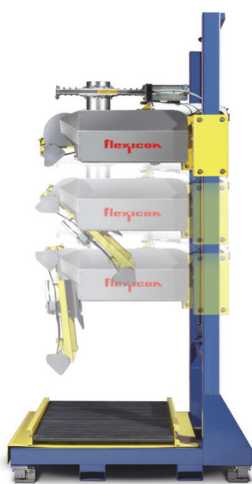
It means your operator can connect empty bags quickly, safely and easily while standing securely on the floor. Out of harm's way.

Completing the filling cycle is even easier: Pressing one button on a remote panel simultaneously pivots the bag connection frame back to horizontal and raises the fill head to "bag-fill" height, inflates the bag to remove creases, weigh-fills the bag, densifies the material to stabilize the bag, deflates the spout seal, releases the loop latches, raises the fill head to disconnect the spout, and sends the bag out of the filler on the roller conveyor. Automatically. Ready for another "bag-load" cycle.

Bulk bag filling just doesn't get more efficient than this.

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SWING-DOWN™ bulk bag filler\* shown with operator connecting bag spout to the vertically-oriented bag connection frame (left), with bag connection frame pivoting to horizontal position as the entire fill head rises (center), and with bag connection frame in horizontal position, fill head raised to "bag fill" position, and bag inflated to remove creases (right).



The fill head lowers on demand, pivoting the bag connection frame into a vertical position, within one arm's reach of an operator standing at floor level.

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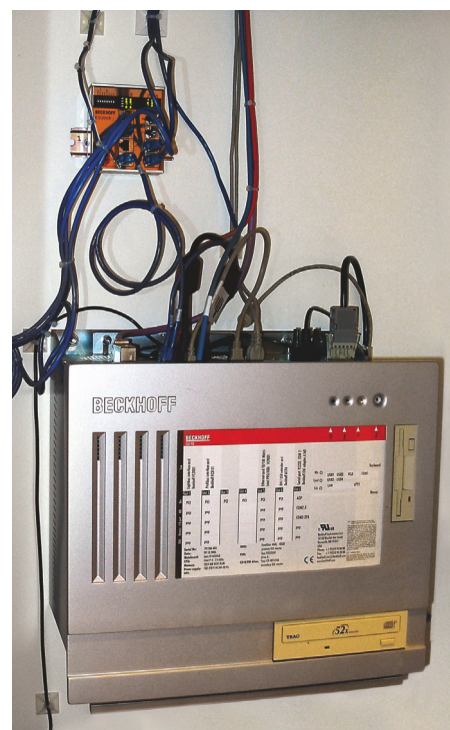
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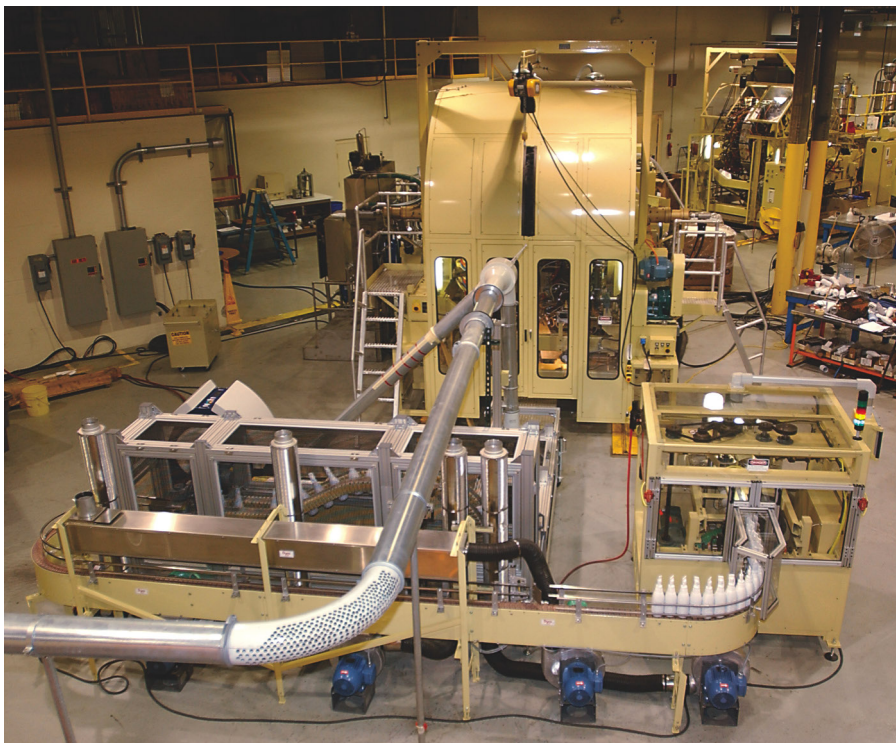
Industrial computers with 2.4-GHz Pentium 4 processors running automation software, top photo, are the control centerpiece for the blow-molding machines.

interfaces without requiring an OPC server;

- The ability to offer an operator station with fully integrated pushbuttons;
- Highest-speed processors currently available on the industrial PC market;
- and Software updates available to download from the Internet and available at no charge after the initial license purchase.

GEC chose Beckhoff C6140 industrial computers (IPCs) with 2.4-GHz Pentium® 4 processors running Twin-CAT software as the control centerpiece for the Graham Wheel machines. "Most of our machines can be controlled using the TwinCAT PLC, but for a few specialized machine types, we need numerical control [NC] functionality, so we use the TwinCAT NC across the board as a standard software package," says Justin Kilgore, senior electrical engineer, GEC. "We use many languages provided in TwinCAT's IEC 61131-3-compliant programming environment, including LADDER, function blocks, function-block diagrams, structured text and sequential function charts."

**B**eckhoff remote I/O also replaced expensive peripheral-component-interconnect (PCI) I/O cards supplied by its prior PC vendor. GEC now uses special-



PC-based controls have been the main controls for these blow molders for several years.

function I/O terminals for its machines' emergency-stop functions and temperature measurement. Kilgore chose to utilize a Beckhoff KL2692 cycle-monitoring (watchdog) I/O terminal. "The KL2692 eliminated the chance of any possible errors in terms of machine and heater control," he says. "You can set your timing based on your application, but we chose to see the PC pulse every 100 milliseconds. If the system detects an error in the control system, the E-stop is automatically engaged on the machine."

The KL2692 monitors a bit that is toggled by the controller during each cycle. If the toggle signal fails, the controller switches off two relays that are integrated in the emergency-stop circuit in order to prevent damage to the machine. An FM3332 thermocouple module is used over Profibus to monitor 32 thermocouple zones in one Pos-E-Kon™-style hood. Variable-frequency AC drives on the machine are also networked via Profibus. A KL3352 strain-gauge isolator is used to bring in various pressure transducers. Before, GEC needed additional hardware to perform the same function.

"In addition, addressing I/O via TwinCAT's automation-device specification is highly automated and very simple," Kilgore says. "With our previous PC vendor's software, an engineer had to address all of the I/O at the bit level, often with hard-coded I/O points and following printed guide sheets. This process was time consuming and laborious. We now save eight to sixteen hours of I/O addressing time on each machine using TwinCAT."

In order to test and apply the new controls and major machine components, GEC has a lab Wheel. GEC tests several different bottle types, mold sets and head configurations so the lab Wheel needs extremely high flexibility for changes. Prior to testing Beckhoff hardware, the lab Wheel was fitted with a PLC platform from a wholesale discount-PLC vendor. "With the lab Wheel's PLC system, we lacked changeover flexibility, which became a source of headaches, when testing newly designed machine

components," Rolf Weingardt, R&D manager, GEC, says. "We've had a Beckhoff PC running on the lab Wheel for over a year and a half now, with none of the flexibility concerns we experienced in the past."

With the Beckhoff PC running TwinCAT in a separate control cabinet, GEC replaced the PLCs rack-for-rack with Beckhoff bus-terminal I/O. "We didn't

have to do any internal wiring changes on the lab Wheel, and we were able to use all of our existing wires," Paul Klinedinst, senior development engineer, GEC, says. "We saved more than 100 hours of I/O wiring time because of the bus-terminal I/O flexibility."

The process also led to minimal downtime for us to complete the platform conversion."

Graham Wheels feature parison programmers—devices that precisely control the wall thickness at various sections of each bottle. For the parison programmer, high-speed, analog I/O was required to very quickly control the motion of this molding process within a few thousandths of an inch. GEC selected EtherCAT, next-generation Ethernet I/O from Beckhoff, to network the parison programmer. "EtherCAT is the fastest Ethernet-based remote I/O available today and is as easily implemented as standard bus-terminal I/O," Kilgore says.

GEC was able to eliminate the parison programmer's previous controller, which was a custom, high-speed I/O circuit board, after implementing EtherCAT. "The fastest we were able to close the loop on the parison programmers used on our previous machines was one millisecond," Klinedinst says. "With EtherCAT, we can close the loop on the lab Wheel as fast as 150 micro second. We're getting better performance with more control over the parison programmer now than with any of our previous systems. The bottles-per-minute rate on our machines is basically fixed due to the cooling stage of the bottles; however we are capable of making higher-quality bottles today because we've adopted EtherCAT technology."

Since GEC now uses EtherCAT on its machines, Continued on page 26

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it can cut additional cost by using the most cost-effective, single-channel, standard Ethernet cards from Beckhoff on the PC wherever possible and Profibus and Lightbus cards where non-Ethernet fieldbuses are still required.

**G**EC quickly fitted all new machines undergoing assembly with Beckhoff C6140 PCs, and it is now able to more easily close the loop on machines that have up to 10 parison programmers. "Once we upgraded our industrial PCs



Read how **IMAJE USA** developed a secure, PC-based printing system designed especially for the emerging promotions package-printing market using PC controls from Beckhoff Automation, LLC at [www.packagingdigest.com/technology/imaie](http://www.packagingdigest.com/technology/imaie)

with Beckhoff hardware, our control reliability immediately increased," Dave Yenor, vp of global business development, GEC, says. "Also, because of Beckhoff's remote I/O flexibility,

any required retrofits in the field have become much faster and easier."

Technical support from Beckhoff became another critical element to upgrading the GEC controls architecture, according to Jere Landis, service manager at GEC. Explains Kilgore, "When we were evaluating Beckhoff products, support was readily available and solid throughout the process. We received more support from Beckhoff in our first year of using its industrial PCs than we got in all five years of working with the previous

vendor. I thought that, after we made our final decision to design our controls around Beckhoff technology that this support enthusiasm would wane. However, today we have the same high level of commitment from Beckhoff technical support that we had from day one."

Today, GEC has standardized on Beckhoff PC-based controls across all product lines. "With the occasional exception of determined customer specifications for traditional PLCs, all machines that leave GEC's assembly facility will now have Beckhoff controls on them," Fiorani says. "Of course, to provide the best technical consultation possible, GEC highly recommends that all customers use our standard controls platform to take full advantage of the open technology and advanced features GEC has developed."

Says Yenor, "Because of Beckhoff's smartly designed PCs, special function I/O and automated E-stop features, GEC machines are safer and more reliable than ever. Our standard controller for all product lines leaving our assembly facility today, and for the foreseeable future, will have Beckhoff PC-based control systems. As a result of the technology GEC has utilized, we're seeing many of our end-user customers eliminating hard specs for big-name PLCs and actively retrofitting their older machines with similar Beckhoff control systems."

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### Did you know?

The first patent for the processing of extruded polymer into a parison for blow molding was issued on Feb. 1, 1881 to Celluloid Novelty Co. and Celluloid

Manufacturing Co., New York. The first applications for blow molders were for cellulose nitrate and, in the 1930s, for cellulose acetate. Blow molding remained a relatively small part of the plastics manufacturing scene until the introduction of low-density polyethylene in the 1940s. The production of LDPE squeeze bottles by Monsanto caused a rapid expansion of the industry. The mass production of high-density polyethylene and polypropylene in the 1950s led to a further increase in blow-molding demand. *Source: Wikipedia*

### Setting a new Industrial PC standard

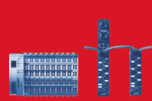
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# system integration

## What end-users want from their integrators

February's column introduced the Control System Integrator Association (CSIA) and its audit process for certifying members as bona fide businesses. Not

surprisingly, two of the three System Integrators of the Year reported here last month are CSIA-certified.

Passing the CSIA's audit helps members learn better business practices that translate into several benefits for their clients. A 2006 survey of end-users revealed the following advantages of working with CSIA-certified integrators in the

order of importance reported by their clients:

**1.) Technical competence.** Although the CSIA audit addresses the topics of general management, human resources, project management, quality management, financial management, business development and technical management, CSIA-certified integrators also tend to be knowledgeable and experienced with automation and control technology. They're solution-oriented and innovative, and end-users value these attributes above all others.

**2.) Trust and reputation.** CSIA-certified integrators must demonstrate that they can deliver

what they've promised without frivolous extra charges. Anecdotal evidence suggests that end-users who have found integrators they can trust will spend more for the privilege of continuing their successful working relationships rather than switch to cheaper sources.

**3.) Professionalism.** Service and capability are desirable traits for any contract engineering firm, but end-users who hire CSIA-certified integrators also appreciate their ethics, commitment and empathy.

**4.) Success.** Like any successful service provider, a CSIA-certified integrator must have solid references and a positive track record. A separate survey conducted by *Control Engineering* magazine has shown that 7 percent of all system integration businesses disappear every year, though not a single CSIA-certified integrator has ever gone out of business (though one did switch to another line of work).

**5.) Disciplined programming methodology.** End-users have realized that computer code must be structured for continuity in order to make future results more predictable. Structured programming techniques are a must for CSIA-certified integrators.

**6.) Stable, healthy business.** The CSIA certification audit is designed primarily to determine

whether an integrator is managed well enough and has the technical and financial resources necessary to stay in business long term. Ironically, these attributes appear more than half way down the end-users' value list.

**7.) Employee continuity and proficiency.** A stable and healthy business also requires a stable and well-trained workforce that understands their clients' standards and culture.

**8.) Project management.** CSIA-certified integrators must demonstrate that they have the skills and experience required to complete projects on time, on target and on budget.

**9.) Added value.** CSIA-certified integrators must be able to do all of the above for a reasonable price. It is worth noting that price ranks ninth out of the 10 attributes valued most by the end-users who participated in this survey.

**10.) Risk avoidance.** More interesting is that risk avoidance was rated last. Perhaps end-users simply assume that CSIA-certified integrators will be able to reduce the risk inherent in any automation project. After all, these integrators are expected to make safe decisions and provide proven solutions using the CSIA's Bench Practices and Benchmarks as a guide.

*Consulting Editor Vance J. VanDoren, Ph.D., P.E., contributes articles on process control, advanced control and system integration. Dr. VanDoren also edits Control Engineering's and Packaging Digest's annual Automation Integrator Guide.*

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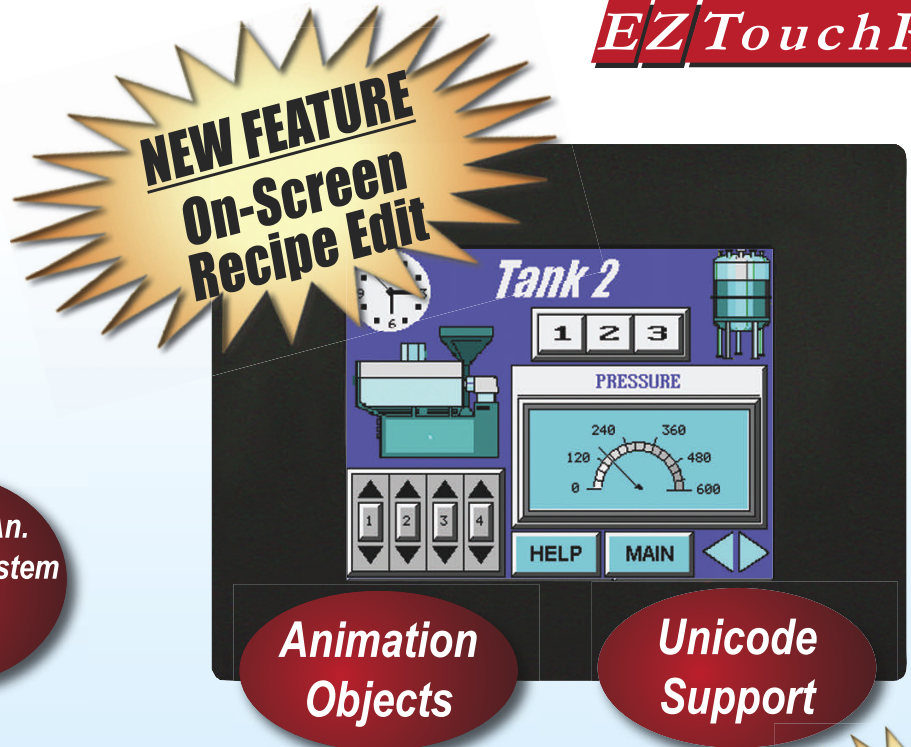
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# sustainability

## Cradle-to-cradle design

The first industrial revolution left the planet with a legacy of unexpected consequences. Global climate change (and the chain of reactions resulting from it), erosion of the ozone layer, loss of biodiversity and the bioaccumulation of toxic substances in our animals and children are only a few examples.

These consequences, however, are foreboding signs on both a global and molecular scale—signs we can no longer ignore. While we have created incredible materials and technologies, we have yet to design and engineer systems and behaviors to steward them effectively. We must tap into the same expertise and intelligence that created our current systems and refocus on designing truly sustainable solutions.

In the book, “Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things,” authors William McDonough and Michael Braungart ask us to imagine industrial systems modeled on the beauty and the effectiveness of natural ecosystems. They identify three fundamental principles:

- Use current solar income. The biological productivity of the planet is fueled by solar energy—the only resource that comes from outside our planet.



Cradle-to-cradle design envisions a world powered by the sun where growth is good, waste is nutritious, and productive diversity enriches human and natural communities.

- Waste equals food. There is no waste in nature; waste from one organism provides nutrients for another.

- Celebrate diversity. Life thrives on diversity. Nature finds solutions by constantly adapting to fill niches.

Cradle-to-cradle design envisions a world powered by the sun where growth is good, waste is nutritious and productive diversity enriches human and natural communities. The industrial application of cradle-to-cradle design creates a cycle for industrial materials. Like the earth's nutrient cycles, the flow of materials eliminates the concept of waste (cradle-to-cradle, rather than cradle-to-grave). Each material in a product is designed to be safe and effective, as well as to provide quality resources for subsequent generations of products. In other words, materials are conceived as nutrients and designed to circulate safely and productively. Cradle-to-cradle processes include biological and technical cycles:

- A biological cycle includes materials that can be safely returned to the soil through a degradation process. Deemed to be ecologically safe, these materials are rapidly renewable and biodegradable.

- A technical cycle includes materials within industrial “metabolisms.” In other words, industry can be modeled on natural processes, and these industrial materials can be productively cycled. Valuable for their performance qualities and typically “nonrenewable,” technical nutrients are designed to circulate safely and perpetually through cradle-to-cradle product life cycles of manufacture, use, recovery and remanufacture. A higher degree of stewardship is required for technical materials that cannot biodegrade.

The implementation of cradle-to-cradle means redesign at a system-wide level. It requires the vision to creatively re-imagine industrial practices and to conceive a fully sustainable future. The primary task of the Sustainable Packaging Coalition is to define itself and its vision for the packaging industry and to make that vision a reality.

The material above has been excerpted from the “Design Guidelines for Sustainable Packaging,” a document conceived by the Sustainable Packaging Coalition as an online resource that can be readily updated and allows easy access to those portions of greatest interest to an individual designer or developer. The document is available online through PD at a discounted price of \$35. To purchase, go to [www.packagingdigest.com/info/greendesign](http://www.packagingdigest.com/info/greendesign)

Anne Johnson is the director of the Sustainable Packaging Coalition, a project of GreenBlue ([www.greenblue.org](http://www.greenblue.org)).

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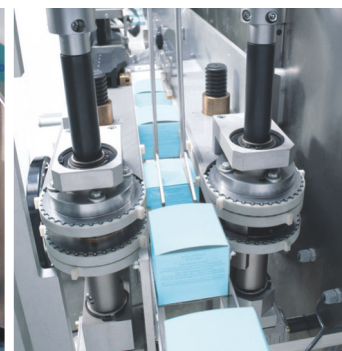
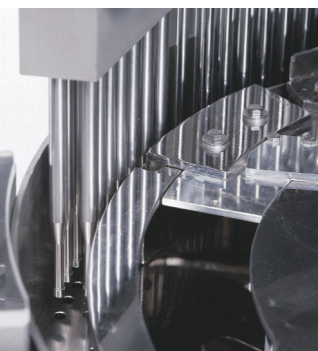
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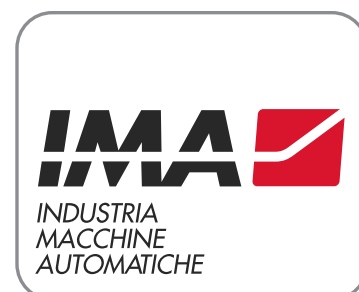
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# PLA rises to a starring role

Biopolymer polylactic acid will be among the sustainable materials on exhibit at PACK EXPO Las Vegas in October.



Gilbreth can print its iridescent-ink shrink sleeves on PLA.

**S**ustainability in packaging, which is on everyone's mind and on many people's lips, is an enormous topic. It encompasses not only the obvious challenge of how to dispose of used packaging, but also the many less overt but equally important questions about energy needs, costs, what qualities might be compromised to achieve sustainability, and whether the pressure to get to market with new materials might not leave adequate time to confirm how they will perform over the long term.

The following story is the first of a four-part series on sustainable packaging materials and equipment featuring products to be exhibited at PACK EXPO Las Vegas 2007, Oct. 15 to 17 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

Sponsored and produced by the **Packaging Machinery Manufacturers Institute (PMMI)** [[www.pmmi.org](http://www.pmmi.org)], the show has always been a forum for packaging professionals to learn about—and debate—the latest industry trends. This year will be no different.

There has been a great deal of talk about packaging produced from a corn-derived biopolymer called polylactic acid or polylactide (PLA), considered by some as a great step forward in the march toward environmental sustainability in packaging materials. Some packagers are already

Continued on page 34



To learn how **BLUE LAKE CITRUS PRODUCTS**, Winter Haven, FL, uses PLA for its Noble Organics juices, see [www.packagingdigest.com/info/noble07](http://www.packagingdigest.com/info/noble07)

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Ameri-Seal supplies PETG printed shrink sleeves for Swanky Girls' indoor tanning lotions.

using it in film or rigid forms. So, now that it has been out on the market for a while, what's the verdict?

PLA packaging material has its fans, not a few skeptics and a larger number of people standing on the sidelines before jumping in, waiting to see how it will perform in the face of challenges during this "shakedown" period. Early informal

assessments included reservations about manufacturer NatureWorks' ([www.natureworkslc.com](http://www.natureworkslc.com)) ability to produce the material in sufficient volume, PLA's ability to remain shelf stable over time, etc. Time has resolved some of those issues, but not all. The slow growth in commercial use of PLA, for instance, has meant a gradual growth of demand, and that seems to have alleviated the concern about supply. Stability is still being debated.

It is also important to remember that while reasonable people acknowledge

**When the issues with compatibility and contamination of the PET recycling stream are resolved, more conversions will occur.**

that there is no perfect product and no perfect solution to any challenge, when the rise or fall of manufacturers of packaging materials and the reputations of companies that use them are potentially at stake, scrutiny is bound to be hard.

**T**heresa Sykes, product development manager of Gilbreth Packaging Systems (Booth C-4724), is one of the fans of PLA. And her company is a regular user of PLA film in its shrink sleeves, many of which will be on display at PACK EXPO Las Vegas. The company promotes its use of PLA film on its website.

Sykes' enthusiasm stems from what she views as the material's multiple positive attributes. First of all, PLA is compostable, which means that it won't degrade in landfills. True, for efficient composting, it needs to go to commercial composting sites (of which there are currently about 4,500 in the U.S., according to *Modern Plastics Magazine*), but even in the compost pile behind your barn, it will decay, though it will take longer. It can also be safely incinerated.

Second, PLA film shrinks at a lower temperature (as much as 40 deg F lower), which reduces fuel requirements and therefore emissions, and raises sleeve productivity.

Third, there don't seem to be any "giveaways" to gain these benefits when using PLA films. It prints beautifully, though special inks are recommended (for compostability, not print quality). For instance, Gilbreth even can print its popular Rub 'N Smell and iridescent-ink shrink sleeves on PLA. It shrinks as well as films made from polyvinyl chloride, polyethylene terephthalate glycol and oriented polystyrene.

In a different application, Polypack, Inc. (Booth C-1135) has developed the Ecobundler, the world's first shrink wrapper built specifically for use with PLA film. The company worked closely

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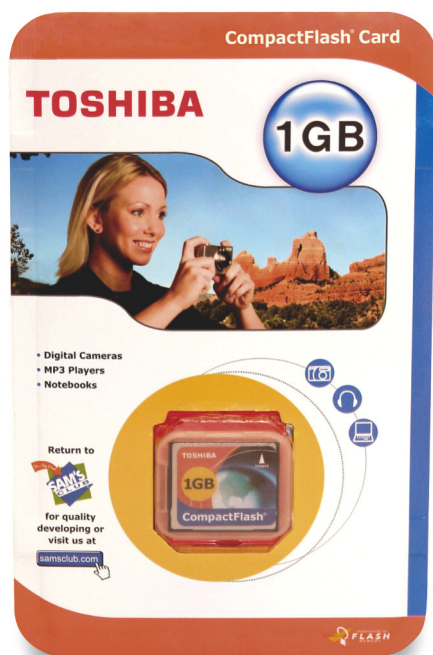


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Winterborne's EnviroShell offers a different approach to sustainable packaging by surrounding an RPET blister with corrugated.

in collaboration with the makers and distributors of PLA film to refine the biodegradable shrink film so that it would work smoothly with the new high-speed wrapper.

The Ecobundler is a high-speed system that provides registered print wraps for multipacking at speeds of up to 60 wraps/min (single lane) or 120 wraps/min (dual lanes) for any configuration of bottles, boxes and odd shapes. The automatic machine is also able to wrap using other materials, including polyethylene, polypropylene and PVC films.

**T**odd Wright of **Silgan Plastics Corp. (Booth S-5417)** sees both the positive and negative sides of the PLA evaluation. He is very positive about labels and shrink sleeves made of PLA film, but Silgan makes rigid plastic products—from bottles and jars to closures—and the company's evaluation of resins for this use have been less than positive.

The problems include the material's temperature sensitivity and long-term permeability for water-based products. "It has proved practical for making food-packaging clamshells that hold products that will be transported and held in a controlled cold-chain environment," Wright says. "It seems to work very well for salad ingredients and for packaged fruits and veggies."

"I definitely feel PLA is a step in the right direction. When the issues with compatibility and contamination of the PET recycling stream are resolved, more conversions will occur. We continue to evaluate the material and are always committed to more environmentally friendly practices/resins to serve our customers."

It also works well for Naturally Iowa's PLA milk bottle, which, barring an emergency, will remain in cool-temperature environments throughout its trip from the dairy to the consumer.

The problem comes when that cold chain is not ensured. Rigid packaging that will not be temperature-monitored and might end up spending time in an unrefrigerated trailer truck or warehouse in a warm climate will begin to deteriorate.

Manufacturer and converter **Ameri-Seal, Inc. (Booth S-5835)** does convert PLA film for its customers, but president Howard Millstein indicates that many companies using shrink sleeves are still leery of this film

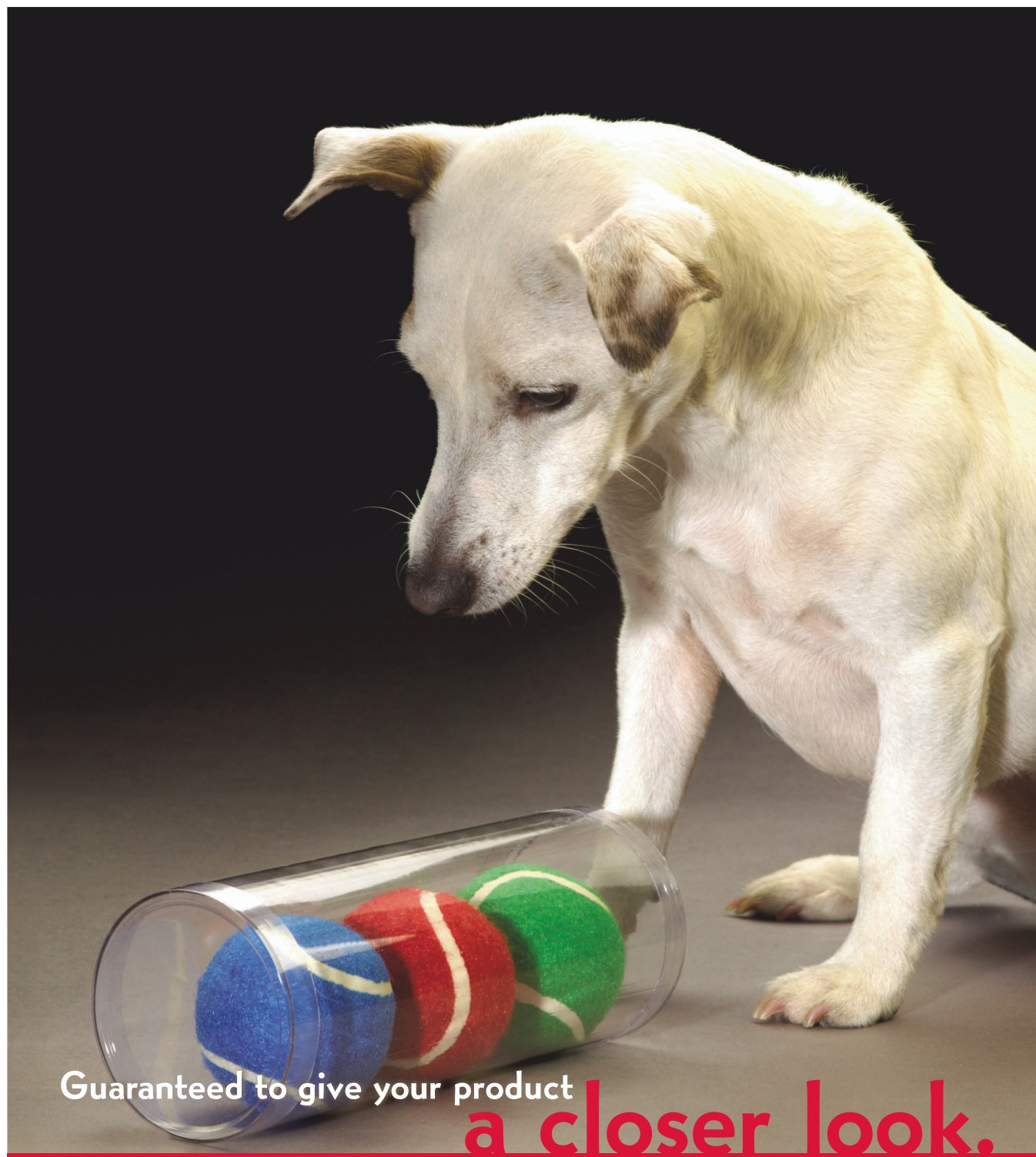
because it's not proven to be completely stable due to its corn base and because it seems to exhibit different shrink characteristics than traditional plastics.

"That is our main concern," he says. "Distortion of graphics is critical when the sleeves shrink onto a container."

When considering form/fill/seal pouches, Fran Ventura, vp of sales for **Ossid Corp., a division of Pro Mach Corp. (Booth C-709, -711, -723)** and a maker of f/f/s equipment, has a different perspective. He points

out that PLA is thermoformable and therefore can run on automated machinery. That, plus the support of clubstores committed to achieving sustainability in their packaging, will drive PLA's development, he says.

"We have worked with a customer doing preliminary work to make horizontal form/fill/seal pouches of PLA," he adds. "There are some challenges: It doesn't cut as cleanly as traditional plastic films, for instance, Continued on page 36



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SleeveCo produces PETG shrink sleeves for customers, including the label on Schultz's All Purpose Plant Food.



and we found that heat across the surface was not always uniform. There were hot spots and cold spots. No doubt it will take some time, but we will get there."

**T**he plastics that compete with PLA, both in film and in rigid applications, are PETG and recycled PETG (RPETG), PVC and OPS.

Each has its advantages. PVC is cheap and easy to use, but it continues to raise controversial pollution issues since it emits small amounts of vinyl chloride monomer, a carcinogen, during compounding. OPS is very popular in Asia, partly because it is less expensive than PETG and because, as a shrink film, it performs very smoothly. But it

## There don't seem to be any 'giveaways' to gain benefits using PLA films.

too is temperature-sensitive and has to be shipped in a controlled environment. And, OPS and PET are not without their environmental concerns in terms of acidification, eutrophication and photochemical oxidation.

Recycled PET (RPET), PETG and RPETG are the real competition. Howard Millstein of Ameri-Seal estimates that PETG accounts for 70 percent of his company's conversions. RPETG offers the added advantage of incorporating recycled material, which has made it a favorite with clubstores and, by extension, their suppliers. The EnviroShell™ package developed by Winterborne, Inc. ([www.winterborne.com](http://www.winterborne.com)) and its strategic partner Smurfit-Stone Container Corp. (Booth C-2423), for instance, combines a "sandwich" of corrugated surrounding an RPET blister that creates a package that is reportedly 65-percent recyclable, including 50-percent post-consumer waste and the 100-percent-recyclable RPET.

SleeveCo (Booth S-5604), which has also been a user of PLA almost from its introduction to the marketplace, produces more PETG than PLA shrink sleeves for customers and has won a number of awards for the quality of those sleeves, including a gold award

from the International Gallery of Superb Printing.

Currently, the traditional plastics still dominate the packaging marketplace in terms of volume, but PETG and RPETG are moving up quickly. And where does that leave PLA in the race toward environmentally sustainable packaging? This question is the object of a great deal of scrutiny and not a little speculation.

For more information about PACK EXPO Las Vegas 2007, visit [www.packexpo.com](http://www.packexpo.com) or contact PMMI's Show Department at 703/243-8555; fax: 703/243-8556; or e-mail [expo@pmmi.org](mailto:expo@pmmi.org).

### More information is available:

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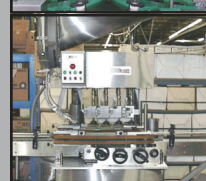
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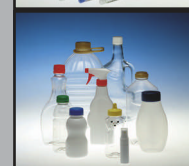
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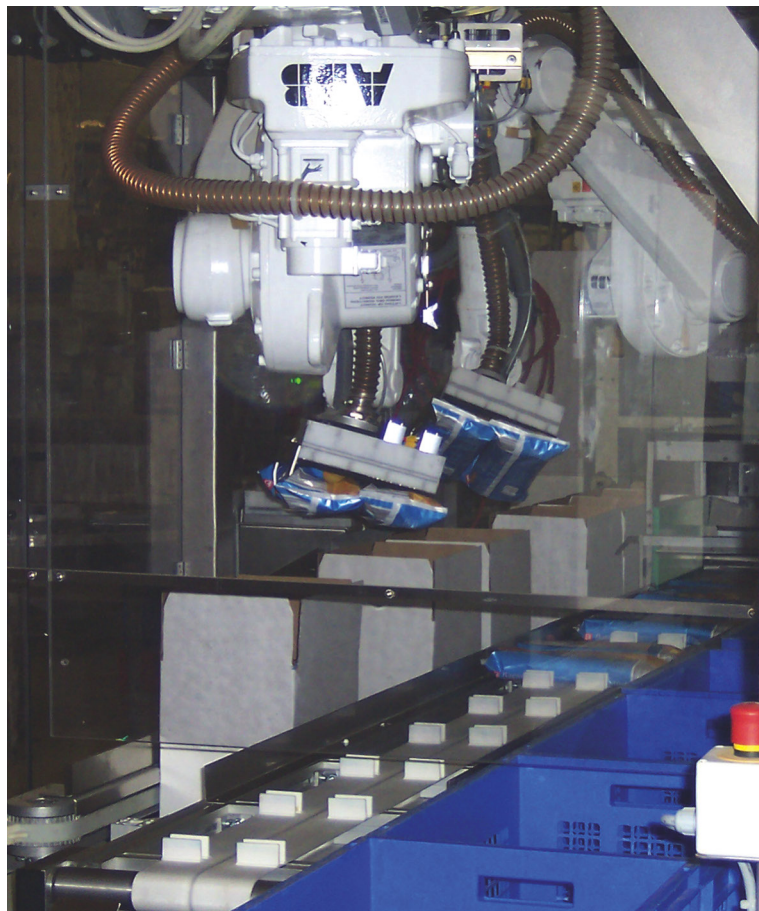
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The robotic packaging system, left, must handle a variety of packages because customers work with different case sizes and different packing configurations. The cases can have from three to six layers, with three to nine baguettes packaged in each layer. The baguettes are arranged transversely on the discharge belt, above, to increase packaging reliability and reduce line speed.

# Robotic packaging of baguettes

An end-of-line, robotic packaging system packs baguettes individually in flow bags, as well as in packages of two or three baguettes each.

Frozen baguettes are generally packaged by hand, particularly when multiple brands or supplies are being produced for large commercial kitchens and catering operations. This wide variety of configurations requires a packaging process that is both rapid and flexible. Finally, however, a baked-goods producer in northern Germany has automated its end-of-line packaging for baguettes.

German summers inevitably involve barbecue parties around an outdoor grill. And, increasingly, toasted baguettes are a must at such events. There is a pretty-good chance that these baguettes come from one particular northern German baked-goods producer. The company, a specialist in deep-frozen and refrigerated bakery specialties, not

only distributes products under its own brand name, but also supplies caterers, commercial kitchens and various other well-known brands.

The peak season for baguette production is between April and September. During this period, 200 herb- or garlic-butter-filled baguettes come out of the company's oven every minute, seven days a week, 24 hr a day. Traditionally, these baked goods have been packaged by hand, but the company's operations manager was not happy with this situation. "Even though end-of-line packaging is low-wage and mentally nondemanding work, the personnel costs were still a thorn in our eye," he says. Things are different now that two RobTec Cell end-of-line packaging systems from **Skinetta Packaging Systems** ([www.skinetta.com](http://www.skinetta.com)) are handling the

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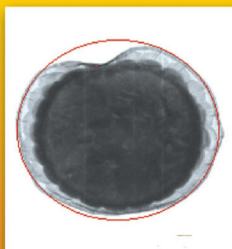
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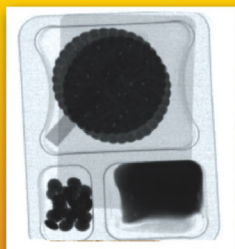
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delicate goods. Each RobTeq Cell incorporates two six-axis robots from **ABB, Inc.** ([www.abb.com](http://www.abb.com)).

Automated packaging of baguettes is no ordinary thing. "We had to overcome a number of challenges," says the operations manager. "We invited a number of vendors to submit their proposals, and Skinetta was the only manufacturer that favored a robotic solution from the very start. This proved to be the most flexible and practical solution, given the wide range of requirements."

**D**iffering requirements by the company's customers presented the first obstacle. "We pack baguettes individually in flow bags, but also in packages of two and three loaves each," says the operations manager. Another problem was that many of the company's customers work with different case sizes and different packing configurations. Cases can have from three to six layers, with three to nine baguettes packed in each layer. Moreover, some customers want the baguettes to be packed in the cases lengthwise and some want them transverse. Given the continuous stream of baguettes coming through the conveyor line, this requires extremely fast and flexible format changes. The grippers on the ABB robots automatically change the flat suction units that actually pick up the baguettes to meet these requirements. The baguettes are arranged transversely on the discharge belt to increase packaging reliability and permit reduction of the line speed.

A much more serious challenge, as it turns out, was the fact that individual baguettes were repeatedly dropped by the suction units on the robots. Alwin Sieber at Skinetta, who was responsible for this RobTeq Cell sale, describes the problems: "Initially, we tried using a vacuum pump, which let us achieve a



For more information about **SKINETTA PAC-SYSTEMS'** end-of-line, robotic packaging systems, visit [www.packagingdigest.com/info/skinetta](http://www.packagingdigest.com/info/skinetta)

very high degree of vacuum. Ultimately, however, the pump didn't work out, because folds in the package or in the sealing seams caused air leaks, which led to an equalization of pressure and thus separation of the film. The differing qualities of film used by different brands and distributors also presented a problem. Some of these films would lose contact with the nozzles, resulting in a loss of nozzle function."

Skinetta decided to use side-channel compressors. Although these pumps don't generate as much vacuum, their high flow volume means that they are unaffected by air leakage. The larger suction surfaces compensate for the lower suction capacity. Another advantage of the side-channel compressors is that varying product height does not cause a problem, because the flow volume and the foam-rubber plates on the grippers pull the flow bags upwards by suction. The robots always pack a complete collation, but by switching the suction chambers on and off, they can be made to pick up only two items from a three-item suction plate, for example.

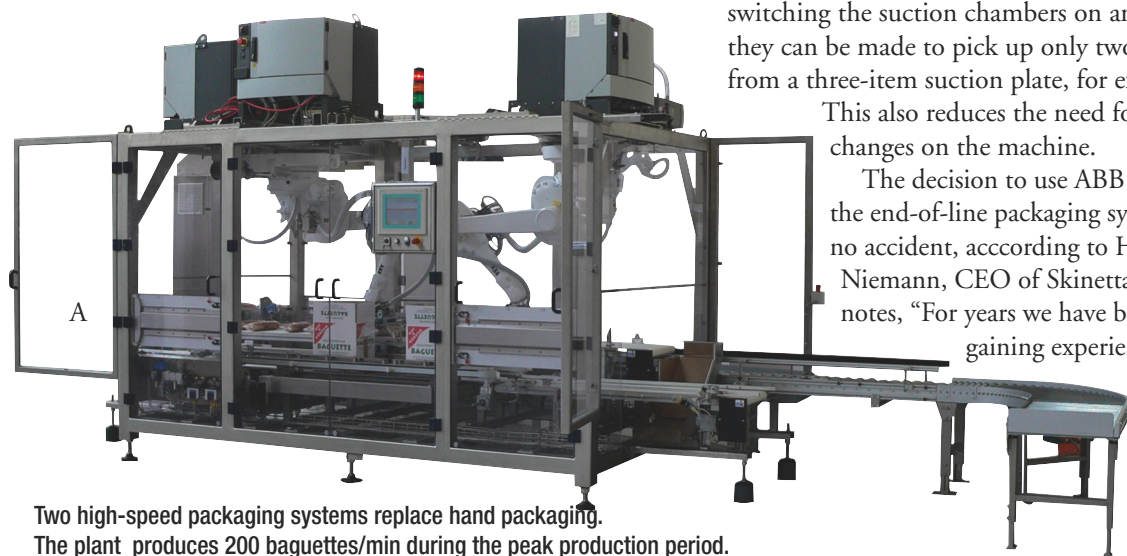
This also reduces the need for format changes on the machine.

The decision to use ABB robots for the end-of-line packaging system was no accident, according to Hansjörg Niemann, CEO of Skinetta. He notes, "For years we have been gaining experience in

complex projects that also demand a high degree of flexibility. In the process, we have found that robotic solutions can make sense even in situations where conventional pick-and-place solutions have been used in the past. Last year, for example, we developed a robot-based solution for COOP Switzerland to package bulk solids, such as coffee and baked-goods mixes, in standup pouches. These are primary packages that are normally packaged using pick-and-place and pocket conveyors. We've been able to use this technological lead to good advantage in a number of other solutions and end-of-line packaging configurations."

**A**ll that Skinetta needed was to convince the baked goods producer of the advantages offered by this approach. "We visited Skinetta's facility and had a look at the various proposed solutions," says the baking company's operations manager. "We couldn't afford a solution that would be too maintenance-intensive or susceptible to disruptions, and we can't simply turn off the oven. Likewise, we can't write off as spoilage any baguettes that come out of the oven during a case changeover." To solve this problem, the robot was programmed to automatically place baguettes that arrive during this phase into cases located in a buffer zone. The products are then fed back into the system afterward. The operations manager says that his company's decision to use the RobTeq Cell was, "ultimately based on the attractive price/performance ratio."

This baked goods company has stood by its quality-conscious approach since its founding in 1992. The product mix initially included original French specialties, such as baguettes and rolls, but was later expanded to include the classic German brötchen bread rolls. In 1994, the company took over another facility and began to produce strudel as well. It now has more than 750 employees and annual earnings of approximately \$1.33 million and exports its products to many European and non-European countries.



Two high-speed packaging systems replace hand packaging. The plant produces 200 baguettes/min during the peak production period.

#### More information is available:

Skinetta Pac-Systems, 574/254-1950.

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# RFID

## asset management:

### Keeping tabs on the tools of every trade

Radio frequency identification technology has been in the spotlight for its use in tracking items from manufacturing sites through distribution centers, onto trucks and the retail floor. But what about assets that don't go out the door?

Edited and excerpted by  
Lauren R. Hartman, Senior Editor

**W**hether it's a drill bit, an engine hoist or a piece of medical-testing equipment, an enterprise needs to know where it is, who's using it, and when its service life expires.

Any item used in a work process is eligible for intelligent asset management with radio frequency identification (RFID). And the return on investment can be substantial.

Valuable assets, valuable data: By tagging assets with RFID labels and hardened asset tags that can be identified by readers at key points in a work site, an organization can track more items in more locations with more accuracy than with paper-based or even bar-code systems. That means more useful data about when, where and by whom assets are used.

Are consumables being used at too fast a rate? Before RFID, you might know you were spending too much, but now, you can pinpoint the inefficiency. Are tools being

misplaced, or being hoarded by employees? With RFID, wasteful patterns can be identified and you can design ways to correct them. Is safety equipment being used properly? An RFID system can alert managers when it's time for refresher training.

In just about any setting, RFID can be a powerful solution. With stationary and mobile readers installed throughout a facility, RFID is always on, freeing up personnel for more critical tasks. An enterprise-class, WiFi network can establish a seamless link between RFID and an enterprise's Information Technology architecture, minimizing data-entry lagtime, human errors and infrastructure costs.

Since an asset-management system is completely internal, it can take whatever form the user wants—unlike a supply-chain management system, which requires coordination with suppliers and customers.

There are benefits for almost every industry. In manufacturing, "indirect materials" such as tools are crucial

Continued on page 42

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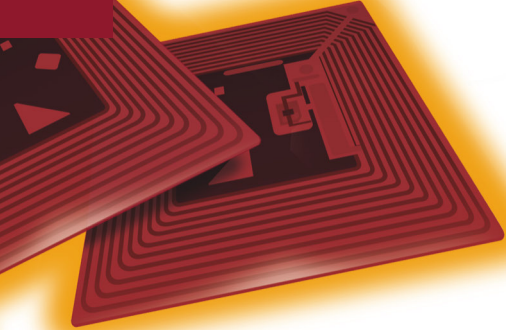
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components of the manufacturing process. A plant's tool or parts crib is often a hub of activity. But without RFID, the process is often monitored manually, and items may not always be checked in or out properly.

An RFID tool-crib installation helped Portland, OR-based Bassett Industrial

Supply, Inc. take longtime customer Wah Chang in nearby Albany to the next level in asset management. The specialty metals producer's stockroom was manned during only one shift; at other times, employees needed supervisors to gain access. There wasn't enough data on which departments were using which items, so accurate budgeting was next to impossible.

In partnership with **WinWare, Inc. (www.wwga.com)**, Bassett implemented an automated RFID portal system that includes employee

identification for access control purposes. According to Bassett vp John Lottis, the results have been dramatic: The use of consumables such as gloves and batteries dropped, and each tool's repair history can be tracked; more than 25 departments now share the cost of materials according to their actual usage, and the company's "always-open" stockroom makes everyone more efficient.

The Wah Chang implementation bags and tags small items with reusable RFID tags, and Bassett has

found the durability of the tags to be "phenomenal." It says the system was implemented in June 2005 with an initial supply of 5,000 tags, and apparently, it hasn't had to order any more of them.

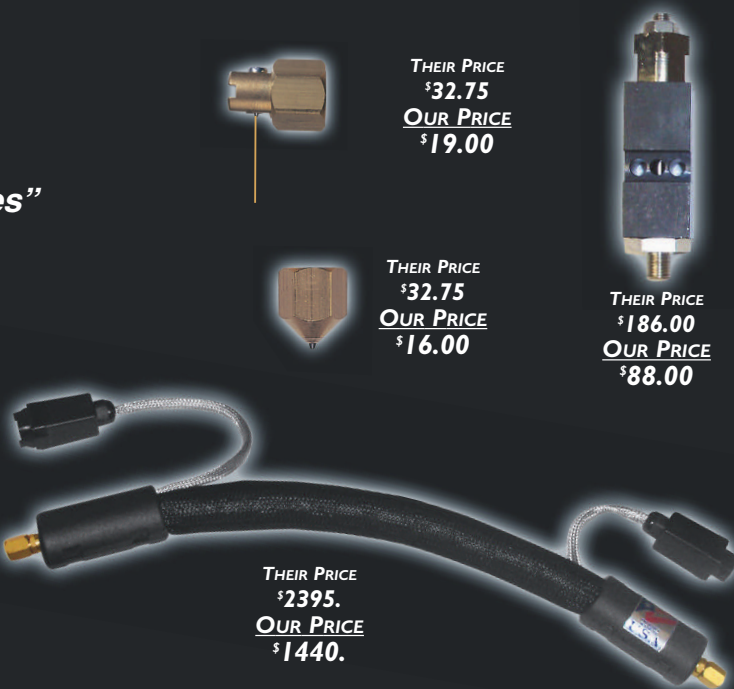
In aerospace, building and maintaining aircraft requires particularly high-value, "indirect materials," and losing track of these can hit the bottom line hard. RFID asset management can help the aerospace industry observe a critical safety requirement: The Foreign Object Detection (FOD) zone around an aircraft undergoing construction or maintenance. A single item left in the wrong place inside an aircraft could spell disaster during operation. But RFID provides an accurate, reliable way to make sure that every item that enters the FOD zone also leaves it.

Wrenches and drills aren't the only tools that keep enterprises running. In professional workplaces, laptops and servers are just as critical to a head office, and they can be tagged as

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## Wal-Mart addresses missed RFID deadline

Wal-Mart recently acknowledged that radio frequency identification implementations in its distribution centers are behind schedule, but it says that the overall effort is on track, and it has hastened efforts to add the technology to its stores. According to a report in February by *The Wall Street Journal*, the company's tests with the tags aren't indicating the savings the company anticipated. A spokesman acknowledged that the company missed its goal of installing RFID technology in 12 of its 137 distribution centers by the end of 2006.

Though Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. expects the number of its stores using RFID systems to reach 1,000 in April, it has come under fire from some analysts and users for failing to meet its plan for installing the technology in the DCs. But Simon Langford, Wal-Mart's director of RFID and transportation, was quoted as saying that several of Wal-Mart's top suppliers are achieving benefits from tagging pallets, cases and promotional displays that are shipped to the DCs. He was also attributed as saying that the missed goal reflects a change in course by the company to instead concentrate on RFID enabling its retail stores. Despite the missed deadline, Langford also insisted that Wal-Mart's overall RFID effort is on track and has been successful so far. "We're accelerating [RFID adoption] and doing so at a greater pace than last year," he added.

## Purdue Pharma adopts item-level tagging

Pharmaceutical products manufacturer, developer and researcher Purdue Pharma L.P., Stamford, CT, reports that it will integrate Gen 2 radio-frequency identification products into its high-speed pharmaceutical packaging lines to improve pharmaceutical supply-chain efficiency and security.

RFID chip and reader supplier Impinj, Inc. ([www.impinj.com](http://www.impinj.com)) made the announcement in February that Purdue Pharma's Gen 2 RFID-enabled line would be scheduled for production-level deployment in the second quarter of 2007. The line will reportedly incorporate the GrandPrix™ UHF RFID solution from Impinj, comprising Speedway™ readers and tags powered by Monza™ chips and application-specific near-field reader antennas. The line will reportedly be certified for production readiness via SYSTECH Intl.'s ([www.systech-tips.com](http://www.systech-tips.com)) TIPS® serialized product-tracking system, which includes exhaustive tests modeling Purdue Pharma production packaging environments. "We're working to implement innovative solutions that will enhance security in the supply chain," says Aaron Graham, vp of corporate security and chief security officer at Purdue Pharma.

"This technology was selected as an integral part of our packaging line improvements to help establish an ePedigree process that will significantly improve the delivery of our products to the pharmacy counter," he adds.

The Speedway reader boasts read rates with throughput exceeding 1,000 tags/sec in typical supply-chain environments and 200 tags/sec in dense-reader environments with up to eight interfering readers. It also features a monostatic antenna design said to deliver the highest performance while substantially reducing deployment ownership costs. The chips and readers carry EPCglobal's Gen 2 Conformance Certification and Interoperability Certification marks, according to Impinj.

well. Motorola has used its own RFID products at its enterprise mobility headquarters in Holtsville, NY, to track scanners and other equipment, cutting an estimated 10 to 17 labor hours a week, at a savings in excess of \$200,000.

Supply-chain assets: As far as things that aren't part of the external supply chain, if you operate a supply chain, you rely on a lot of internal assets. Warehouse forklifts and airline luggage pods can be saved from loss and sent where they're needed with RFID. Partnerships and new technology make RFID asset management work. RFID technology is a better fit for asset management

than ever before. A new generation of tags and readers offers enhanced data capacity, greater read distance and reliable functionality on metal surfaces. RFID tags are coming down in cost and more powerful, wireless LAN networks and IT equipment complement the growth of RFID. Mobile and wearable readers and rugged portable computers can take RFID-enabled data capture into practically any workplace.

The technology is only effective when it's supported by solutions that can manage and generate value from

the RFID data. This requires intimate knowledge of work processes the data is describing. The use of partnerships can translate RFID expertise into fully realized solutions. Those using RFID needs to achieve buy-in across the organization, since an RFID-based asset-management system requires both managers and workers to modify existing processes for maximum benefit.

In the end, no business can prosper without a clear picture of its assets and how they're being used. Traditional methods of securing asset information

were seldom cost-efficient. As a result, many businesses gave up trying to see the complete picture, learning to live with a certain level of loss and inefficiency. With RFID, the new capabilities of asset management are rewriting the ROI arithmetic, and various businesses are getting their first real look into exactly what goes on within their walls.

*Author Philip Lazo is vp and general manager of the RFID infrastructure business in Motorola's Enterprise Mobility Business.*

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# COGNEX



To accommodate the full line of Dr. Weil supplements, as well as its expanding private-label business, ANS installed a new packaging line that includes, from left, a slat counter, a cottoner and a desiccant inserter.

# New line keeps capsules healthy

A new packaging line equipped with a desiccant dispenser designed for the needs of nutraceutical packers improves flexibility and speed at Arizona Nutritional Supplements.

Arizona Nutritional Supplements (ANS), a leading contract manufacturer and packager of custom nutritional and dietary supplements in Chandler, AZ, recently faced some growing pains. The company was awarded a license agreement with Dr. Andrew Weil to produce a new line of vitamins bearing his name. This new business opportunity, combined with rapid growth in its client base, required ANS to increase its line speeds significantly, while at the same time

maintain current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP).

Help arrived quickly with the installation of a new packaging line featuring desiccant-insertion equipment designed specifically for the vitamin supplement industry. Manufactured by **Multisorb Technologies** ([www.multisorb.com](http://www.multisorb.com)), the new APA-1000 desiccant inserter turned out to be the right solution at the right time. Other equipment on the new line includes a slat counter from **Integrated Packaging Systems (IPS)** ([www.ipsnj.com](http://www.ipsnj.com)), a cottoner from **Deitz Co., Inc.** ([www.deitzco.com](http://www.deitzco.com)), a capper from **SureKap, Inc.**

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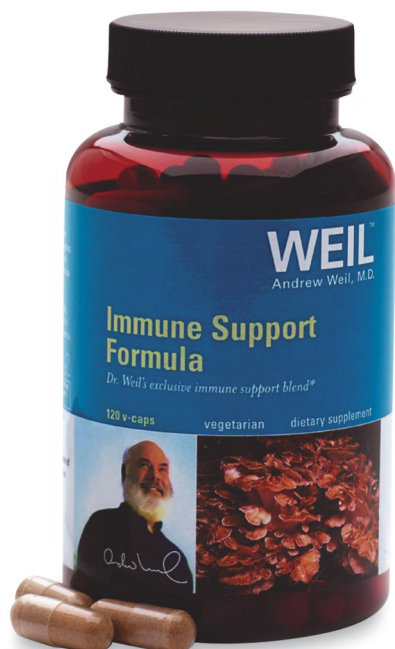


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**We didn't need machinery with all the bells and whistles; we needed accuracy and high speed.**

([www.surekap.com](http://www.surekap.com)), a pressure-sensitive labeler from **So. California Packaging Equipment** ([www.scpe.com](http://www.scpe.com)) and a neck bander and shrink tunnel from **Axon Corp.** ([www.axoncorp.com](http://www.axoncorp.com)).

Within two weeks of implementing the new packaging line, ANS was able to reduce its packaging shifts from two to one—a dramatic improvement that not only met ANS's immediate needs, but also gave it the capacity to grow in the future.

**A**s the vitamin supplements market continues to grow, more nutraceutical manufacturers are adopting cGMP standards for quality assurance, and ANS is a state-of-the-art example. Founded in 1997, ANS manufactures tablets, capsules and powders at its 50,000-sq-ft facility and provides a comprehensive range of contract packaging, labeling, warehousing and worldwide shipping services.

ANS has implemented quality-assurance programs to ensure the safety and purity of all raw materials. Material analysis, visual inspection and laboratory validation are performed on all products before distribution. Complete documentation is provided according to cGMP standards, and ANS employees receive continuous training.

ANS produces more than 1,200 different formulations, vitamins, minerals and herbal supplements for more than 90 different companies, and it has the capacity to manufacture up to 150 million capsules and tablets per month. The company has grown rapidly, and managing the growth of this successful operation has been a challenge.

The license agreement with Dr. Weil represented the first time ANS would

handle everything for an entire line of vitamins, including manufacturing, distribution and product marketing. While the opportunity represented a milestone for ANS, it also presented the company with a dilemma: Facing an ever-expanding client base, ANS needed to increase its line capacity on the warehouse floor and optimize its packaging efforts.

"We have tripled our size in just three years," says Kirk Neal, vp of operations at ANS. "We needed help not only in

ramping up for the new product line for Dr. Weil, but also in addressing our increasing growth on the entire private-label manufacturing side."

**A**NS began searching for versatile equipment that could handle high speeds. "When we started looking for a new packaging line, we wanted something capable of efficiently handling production runs from 5,000 to 50,000," says Neal. "At a minimum,

we needed a system that could run 120 100-count bottles per minute and could be changed over easily and quickly from one bottle size to another."

ANS worked with Jeff Grass of **Equipment Technology Co.** ([www.equiptechco.com](http://www.equiptechco.com)), an integrator who helped analyze the performance requirements for the packaging machinery and components. After a thorough search, ANS discovered Multisorb, which develops specialized  
Continued on page 46

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sorbent technology and high-speed sorbent-insertion equipment, along with service and support.

Multisorb customizes machinery primarily for pharmaceutical customers,

however the company recently launched the APA-1000, a machine similar to equipment used for high-speed pharmaceutical packaging lines, but designed to meet the requirements for nutraceutical packaging. ANS says it had found its perfect match.

The APA-1000 incorporates checkpoints to ensure positive desiccant placement in packaging and consistent packet separation from spool lines. The dispenser system provides touchscreen flexibility for multiple bottle/desiccant/line-speed configurations and can be incorporated into existing



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packaging lines.

“Multisorb demonstrated a real propensity to work with us,” recalls Neal, adding that the company understood the special requirements of the vitamin supplement market. “We’re not a pharmaceutical company, and we didn’t need machinery with all the bells and whistles. We needed accuracy and high speed.”

At first it was suggested that ANS use a canister-type desiccant inserter, however despite an initial savings in equipment, this option would have been more expensive in the long run, due to the higher costs of canisters versus desiccant packets. “We felt packets were the way to go since they are much more cost-effective for keeping products dry and stable,” Neal says.

Neal uses ½-g StripPax® desiccants from Multisorb. The low profile and

**We felt packets were the way to go since they are much more cost-effective for keeping products dry and stable.**

compact shape of StripPax saves space and displaces a minimum amount of product in bottles, and its flat contour eliminates confusion with pills, Multisorb notes. StripPax packets are manufactured to tight tolerances so that packet sizes and seals are consistent, resulting in accurate separation and insertion. It is formed with sonically welded, uncoated Tyvek® material that is designed to be nondusting and to be extremely tough and durable, according to Multisorb.

“Depending on the application and the amount of sorbent used, we’ve found that StripPax packets save customers between twenty and eighty percent compared to the equivalent canister size,” reports Ed

who has seen this new machinery has been really impressed. The new line has worked out great, and

it's just what we were looking for as we move our company to the next step."

More information is available:

Multisorb Technologies, 716/824-8900. [www.multisorb.com](http://www.multisorb.com).

Axon Corp., 919/772-8383. [www.axoncorp.com](http://www.axoncorp.com).

Deitz Co., Inc., 732/681-0200. [www.deitzco.com](http://www.deitzco.com).

Equipment Technology Co., 310/545-4321. [www.equiptechco.com](http://www.equiptechco.com).

Integrated Packaging Systems (IPS), 973/664-0020. [www.ipsnj.com](http://www.ipsnj.com).

So. California Packaging Equipment, 909/598-3198. [www.scpe.com](http://www.scpe.com).

SureKap, Inc., 770/307-4755. [www.surekap.com](http://www.surekap.com).

After p-s labeling, supplements are conveyed to a neck banding machine and then through a heat tunnel.

Gentile, business development leader at Multisorb. In addition, Gentile notes, canisters can sometimes jam in dispensing equipment, and canister tops can pop out, resulting in contamination on the packaging line and downtime for cleaning.

The APA-1000 can run a range of sachet sizes from 0.59 to 1.97 in. wide and 1.18 to 3.94 in. long, however ANS is currently only using continuous reels of the ½-g size of StripPax desiccants. "At this point we're running only one size, but the new machinery enables us to run additional sizes," says Neal.

Another factor in the decision to purchase the APA-1000 was its ability to handle quick and easy changeovers for different bottle sizes. The APA-1000 is fully automatic and inserts sachet-style desiccants at rates up to 120/min. As a result, ANS went from two shifts to one in just two weeks. This change led to a dramatic reduction in labor costs and overhead, further increasing overall efficiency.

The installation of the equipment was smooth and quick, ANS reports. Several representatives from Multisorb traveled to the ANS facility to help install the equipment, and they remained on-site following the installation to help train relevant personnel and to troubleshoot.

"The new Dr. Weil product line has nineteen formulations that make up thirty-nine stockkeeping unit numbers, so there were bound to be a few minor obstacles to overcome with the new packaging equipment," says Neal. "Multisorb's representatives were willing to stay and work with us to teach our employees about the new equipment."

The APA-1000 also integrates well with the other equipment on the line. Equipment Technology helped ANS integrate each piece of new equipment, including conveyors and air and electrical hookups. "I believe the selection of equipment chosen by ANS demonstrates a commitment to moving business to the next level," Grass notes.

"It's just been a phenomenal experience," concludes Neal. "Everyone



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# New line packages gel caps

Baxco Pharmaceutical installs a sophisticated packaging line to run a variety of its own nutraceutical gel caps and other capsules, as well as products for other companies.

Jack Mans, Plant Operations Editor

**E**stablished in 1996 and incorporated in 2001, Baxco Pharmaceutical, Inc. produces over-the-counter nutraceuticals and vitamins, mostly soft gels, under its own brand name and as a contract packer. Its UBB Vitamins line has been one of the leading brands of multivitamins and supplements to Southeast Asia, particularly Vietnam, and the company has now begun marketing the products in the U.S. and Canada. The company started out purchasing the packaged products for resale, but last year, it installed a new packaging line to run its products. "We had some complaints in the past, and this lets us ensure top quality without relying on anyone else," says CEO Dennis Wong.

After talking to them at WestPack last year, Baxco chose a complete packaging line from CVC Technologies, Inc. ([www.cvcusa.com](http://www.cvcusa.com)). "We were very impressed with the quality and price of their machines, as well as their service," says Wong. "They visited our plant and presented several possible layouts, and we decided on a U-shaped line because it minimizes the number of workers required. One operator can monitor a number of machines.

Another real advantage is that CVC is only an hour away from us. They installed the line at their plant, and it was easy for us to visit them and watch the line run our bottles. Then, they installed the line at our plant and trained our operators."

The line at Baxco incorporates mainly CVC machines, although it includes a desiccant inserter

**They did an excellent job for us at the beginning of the project, and they have continued to give us excellent service.**

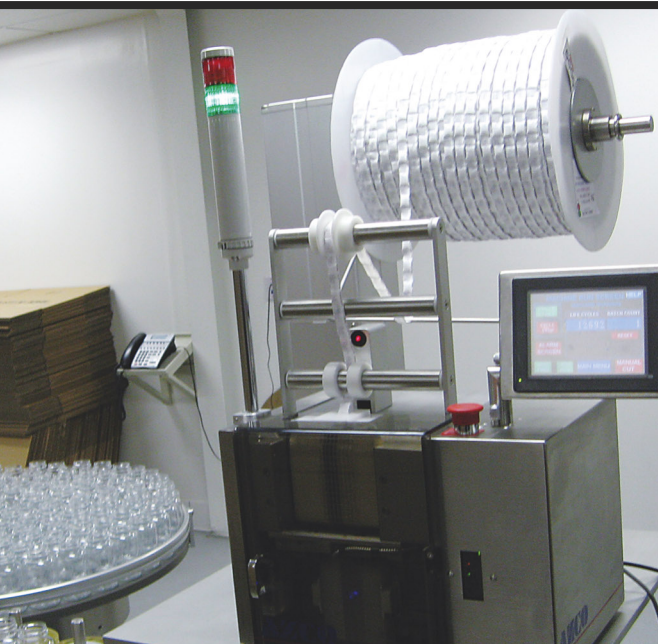
from Azco Corp. ([www.azcocorp.com](http://www.azcocorp.com)) and a tamper-evident neck bander and heat tunnel from Marburg Industries, Inc. ([www.marburgind.com](http://www.marburgind.com)). "The desiccant inserter illustrates how well CVC treated

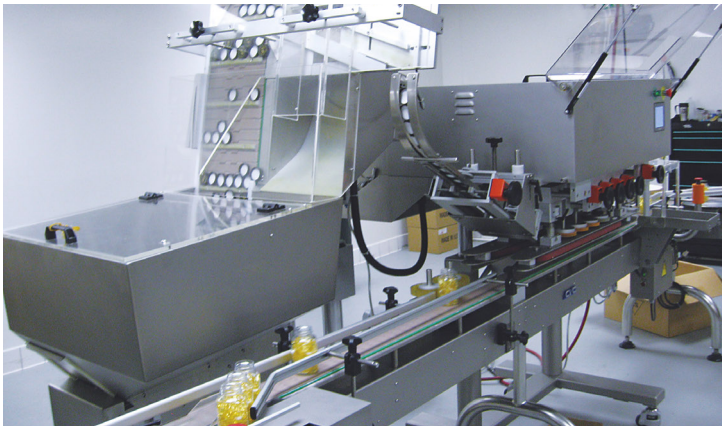
us," says Wong. "I bought a different inserter, but this new machine came out, and they replaced the one I had bought at no cost."

The packaging line starts with a loading turntable onto which a worker manually places the bottles. They then travel to an Azco SP-4D SUR-PAK™ pouch dispenser, which cuts desiccant pouches from a roll and inserts them into the bottles as they pass continuously beneath the machine. The desiccant web is driven by a series of upper and lower belts creating a tractor feed through a dancer-style motorized unwind. The belts are turned by a direct-current brushless stepper motor that enables the speed to be adjusted to maintain consistent web tension.

An optical sensor detects a window in the seal between the desiccants and signals the unit to cycle. Sensors shut down the unit if the desiccants are not entering the machine or if it is not being delivered to the bottle. State-of-the-art electronics accurately

A dispenser, below left, cuts desiccant packets from a roll and inserts them into the bottles as they continuously pass beneath. Capsules discharge from a hopper on the filler, below center, into 12 counting channels on three vibratory trays in a series. Each individual channel is equipped with eight product sensors to count each product in free-fall. Capsules drop from the trays through a filling nozzle, below right, that dips to cover the neck of each advancing bottle, thus avoiding product spillage during the filling operation.





through a filling nozzle that dips to cover the neck of each advancing bottle, thus avoiding product spillage during the filling operation. An auto-rejection system removes incorrectly filled containers from the conveyor and resets the bottle count to display the correct number. The machine can also be programmed to stop immediately when a bottle is incorrectly filled. The unit can run up to 60 bottles/min, and count quantity can be set from one piece to 9,998 pieces/bottle. An additional counting unit can be added in the future to double the current line speed.

Next, the bottles are conveyed to a CVC 1205 in-line capper. Caps for the bottles are loaded into a floor hopper, and an elevator lifts them to the top of the machine where they enter the cap track. The caps must be presented to the cap hopper with the open side facing outward, so the slats on the elevator are designed so that caps that are lifted from the floor hopper with the top side facing inward will fall back into the hopper. Caps travel down the cap chute and are picked off of the feed lip by the bottles as they pass beneath. The cap chute is adjustable for

Continued on page 50



Caps are applied by an in-line capper, top. After the bottles pick the caps from a chute, they travel past four pairs of capping spindles that tighten the caps. Sensors at the outlet of the capper detect bottles with missing caps or insufficient torque and automatically reject the bottles.

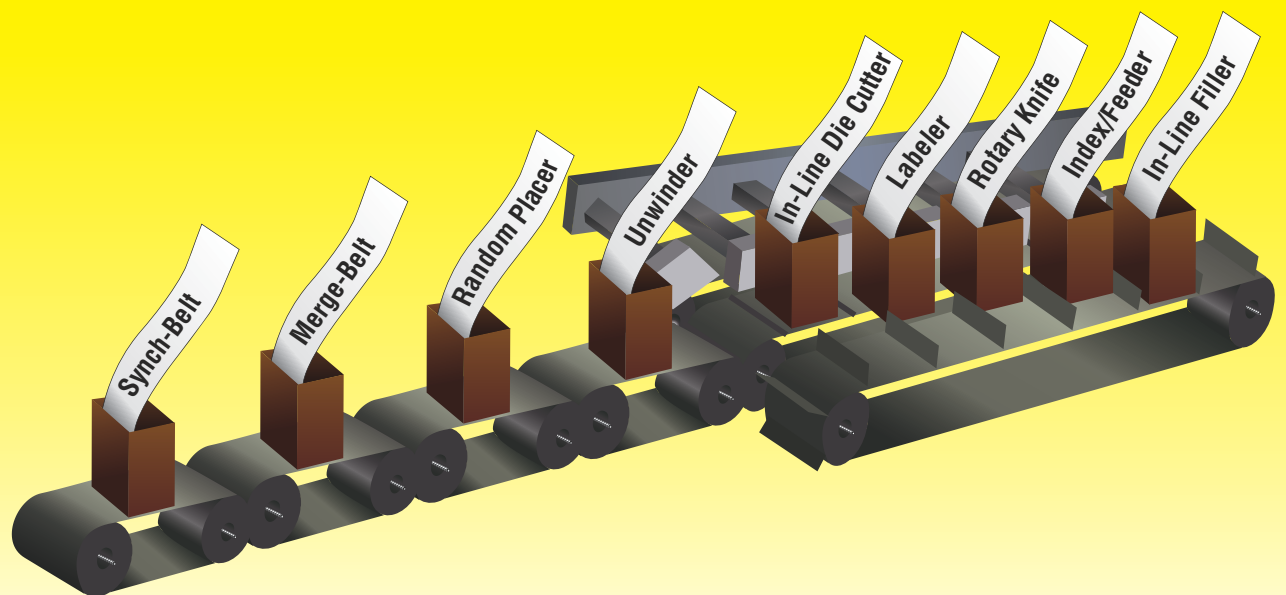
register cut position even with irregular pouch lengths, to ensure no miscuts and no stopping. Setup changes are made through a membrane keypad that accesses a microprocessor. An RS232 Windows-based interface option enables customers to download parameters directly from a PC to Azco's dispenser without operator intervention.

The bottles leaving the inserter travel to a CVC Model 1220 tablet/capsule counter and filler. The capsules discharge from a hopper on the machine into 12 counting channels on three vibratory trays in a series. Each individual channel is equipped with eight product sensors to count each product in free fall fashion, as well as a detecting system that automatically self-adjusts sensor sensitivity to offset the gradual accumulation of dust on the sensor window. The counter/filler, which can instantly recall data for setup accuracy and efficiency, has memory for up to 50 preprogrammed data settings, such as vibrating pulse, vibrating frequency, filling time, quantity per container and more.

The unit accurately senses all shapes and sizes of products, including tablets, capsules, caplets, soft gels and transparent soft gels, and it can also detect half capsules. "We run a number of different size capsules, and we can set their sizes into the computer," says Wong. "The counter reads the size of the pills and rejects any that don't match. It will also detect capsules that are broken in half, which is really beneficial."

Capsules next drop from the trays

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different sizes of caps and has a sensor to detect the caps in the chute. The cap elevator will stop when the cap chute is full.

After the bottles pick the caps from the chute, they travel past four pairs of capping spindles that tighten the caps. The machine features CVC's unique capping torque setting mechanism in which the cap-tightening torque can be set to meet the different torque-level requirements of bottles for different applications. A calibrated dial on each pair of spindles enables the proper torque to be set for each bottle and enables the torque to be easily reset when changing from one bottle to another.

Sensors at the outlet of the capper detect bottles with missing caps, missing

hot-stamp printer that prints a lot number and production and expiration dates onto the label before it is applied. A servo drive on the labeling head and encoders on the conveyor motors ensure precise placement of the label. As with the capper, gauges enable the operator to set the machine precisely for different bottles.

The labeler is equipped with CVC's SelfSet™ encoder system that ensures precise label placement by instant synchronization of all moving parts. The SelfSet system automatically calculates the optimum sensitivity and label placement without moving the label sensor. When the first product passes the product sensor, the SelfSet microprocessor scans and identifies the product length or diameter and the label length, and it then sets and synchronizes the labeling

position, dispensing speed and label-protrusion position. It takes only one bottle and three seconds to complete the procedure. The system can save up to 50 jobs in memory and can recall them at the push of a button.

Next the bottles are conveyed to a model M500 continuous-motion Autocapsembler from Marburg Industries to apply tamper-evident bands over the tops of the bottles. A roll of tubular material is mounted on the back of the machine and is pulled down into the machine, where it passes over a mandrel to open it, after which the piece for the neckband is cut off the tube and pushed down over the bottle. An operator programs the length of the tamper-evident band desired, and this

can be retained in memory on the control unit for the machine. Bottles leaving the bander enter a Marburg shrink tunnel that uses radiant tubular heaters. The finished bottles are conveyed to a collection turntable from which workers manually pack them into cases.

As part of the line, CVC installed sensors at strategic points to shut down machines if bottles back up and then restart the machines automatically when the bottles start moving," says Wong. "They also installed large, red emergency-stop buttons that an operator can hit if there is a problem. All-in-all, CVC thought of everything we might need. They did an excellent job for us at the beginning of the project, and they have continued to give us excellent service. The line has run very well, and if I have any kind of a problem, they're here immediately."

Bottles leaving the capper are conveyed to a CVC 300CR-108 wraparound labeler. A wheel spaces each bottle as it enters the labeler, and the bottle then triggers the labeling head, which dispenses one label at a time. This places the leading edge of the label against the bottle, which then enters the wiping section, where a belt presses against the side of the bottle and rotates it so the label is wrapped completely onto the bottle. The labeler is equipped with a



Labels are applied by a wraparound labeler, left, that is equipped with a hot-stamp printer that prints a lot number and production and expiration dates onto the label before it is applied. A continuous-motion neck bander, above, cuts tamper-evident bands from a tube of material and places them over the tops of the bottles.

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# Pine cleaner bottle: What's old is new again

Saba Chemical shines up the King Pine household disinfectant brand and hopes to trigger sales with its launch of a 21st-century, PVC version of the brand's vintage drop-shoulder glass bottle that existed 70 years ago.

Lauren Hartman, Senior Editor

**K**ing Pine disinfectant has been around since the 1930s. People still remember their grandmothers using the Black Pine-scented cleaner in its unmistakable drop-shoulder glass bottle. That's why current manufacturer Saba Chemical, Brooklyn, NY, recently brought the King Pine brand household disinfectant back to life after the cleaner had been repackaged by a previous company owner in plastic cylindrical bottles, which Saba Chemical says didn't exactly "clean up" in sales. Instead, Saba Chemical simulated the style of the iconic King Pine glass bottle from 70 years ago as part of a brand rebuilding strategy and reintroduced the familiar drop-shoulder oval in polyvinyl chloride with a 21st-



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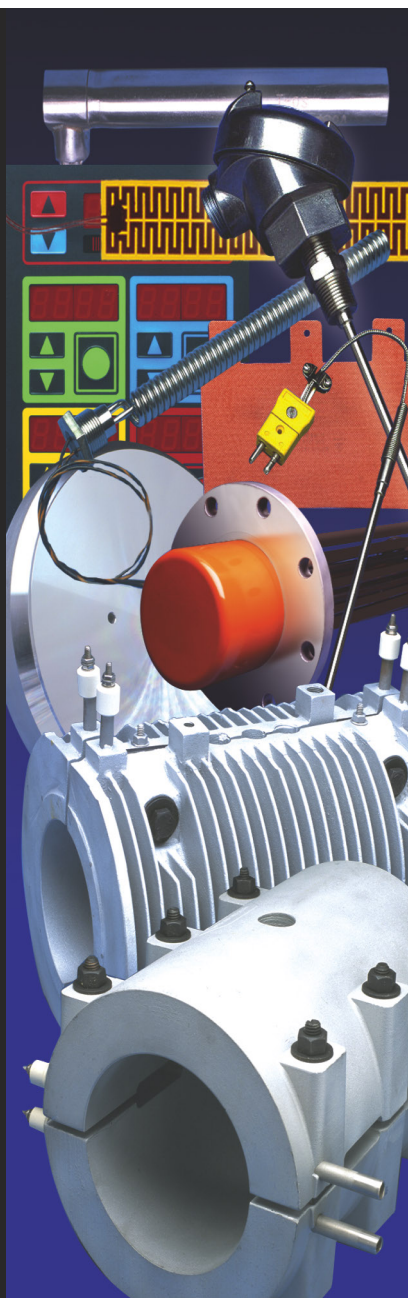
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Extrusion/blow-molded by **Novapak Corp. (www.pvcc.com)**, the new, round-shouldered containers have an Art Deco look, with all of the classic appeal of the older glass versions, which in the New York area, spark memories and prompt people to reminisce. Originally manufactured by Johnson Chemical in Brooklyn, the disinfectant cleaner line went to PVC containers in the late 1980s, in conjunction with Novapak. Soon thereafter, the original owners retired, leaving the product line to their children, who moved production, marketing and distribution to Florida. Later, the King Pine brand was acquired again by King Pine Intl., which moved the operation to Ohio.

The new owners at the time then altered the bottle design from an oval to a very different cylindrical shape in plastic. The cylindrical bottle was decorated with a wraparound label and looked like many of the other disinfectants on the market.

Explains Jack Sabbagh, vp of Saba Chemical, "In New York and surrounding areas, King Pine was a well-known brand. But it moved to Ohio and started to evaporate in the

## When a product is in the market a long time, **changing containers radically** can be a disaster.

marketplace. When a product is in the market for such a long time, changing its container radically can be a disaster." Another reason for King Pine's demise, he speculates, was the proliferation of dollar stores that offered all kinds of different products and various private-label alternatives.

Few companies have a license to produce a concentrated pine cleaner



**Tenneco Automotive uses Novapak's TILT-NECK BOTTLE** to give DuPont Performance Chemicals' auto care treatments a new sales angle. See [www.packagingdigest.com/info/teneco](http://www.packagingdigest.com/info/teneco)

like King Pine with as much Black Pine ingredient (19.9 percent) for the retail market. "This is the strongest pine cleaner available at the retail level," Sabbagh says. "It's usually found only with industrial products. But by putting it in a cylindrical bottle, it was no longer distinctive in the market."

In 2005, King Pine changed ownership yet again when Saba Chemical purchased the brand, and the third-time buyout was indeed a

## Our two **best sellers are the original bottles.** We are building our company on the familiar bottle and on memories of what King Pine looks like.

charm. Saba Chemical made two decisions that saved the brand from the brink of extinction: It moved its production operation back to New York, where the

brand was originally known, and it brought back the original drop-shoulder container shape, but in PVC. Continued on page 54

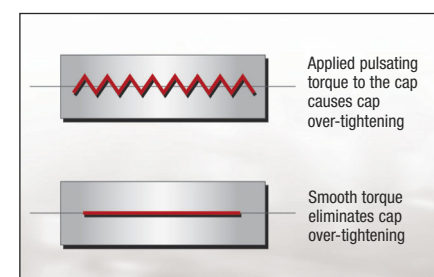


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Sabbagh says while the original King Pine line included a variety of both cleaning products and insecticides, the main seller was the pine cleaner. "We wanted to take baby steps [with the line]," he says. "We have brought back only the pine cleaner product."

Rich Frungillo, regional sales manager for Novapak, explains that the drop-shouldered oval bottles in PVC have a tight radii, and their flat front and back panel surfaces sport simple, four-color, double-sided paper labels from **Model Graphics and Media** ([www.modelgraphicsinc.com](http://www.modelgraphicsinc.com)) that display original artwork created to hark back to the brand's rich history. The only major change made to the bottle graphics was the addition of the word "original" above a crown illustration on the top portion of the main label panels.

Novapak began producing the 12- and 20-oz drop-shouldered bottles for shipment to Saba Chemical in early 2006. Saba Chemical mixes and bottles the product. **Brad-Pak Enterprises** ([www.brad-pak.com](http://www.brad-pak.com)) and **McKernan Packaging** ([www.mckernan.com](http://www.mckernan.com)) supply the threaded, opaque-white polypropylene closures for the bottles. Saba is also standardizing the cap to incorporate the King Pine logo.

The rounded, 12-oz bottle size with its new/old shape was the first to return to the marketplace in mid-2006, followed by the 20-oz size. Today, the King Pine cleaner line includes seven bottle sizes: 8-, 15- and 20-oz bottles;

## Customers saw the original package shape in PVC and realized it was the product they remember and were happy it made a comeback.

12- and 20-oz drop-shouldered ovals; and ½- and 1-gal PVC oblong jugs with handles. Sabbagh says the cylinders sell best in areas outside the tri-state New York area, while the drop-shouldered bottle is favored there.

In fact, he's happy to report that supermarkets in the New York tri-state area as well as a number of New York-based distributors have taken the brand back into stores. Sabbagh credits the original packaging style for rekindling retailers' appreciation for the black-pine cleaning product.

Thus, the old-time King Pine brand is new again and off to a sparkling fresh start. "Our two best sellers in the line are the original bottles," says a pleased Sabbagh, who points

out that Saba Chemical plans to eventually phase out the cylindrical bottle shape entirely.

"A lot of customers thought the line was obsolete before," Sabbagh summarizes. "When our customers saw the original, 'vintage' package shape in PVC and the label, they realized it was the pine product they remember and were happy to see it make a comeback to the market. The first thing everyone says is, 'I remember when my grandmother used this product.' We are building our company on the familiar bottle and on peoples' memories of what King Pine looks like and how well it works."

Frungillo adds that Novapak has noticed more packagers are requesting new bottle designs that are inspired by bottle styles of the past or original container styles because of the brand recognition they have. "Maybe it's a trend, we're not sure, but we have received other requests, and it seems to be catching on," he says.

### More information is available:

**Novapak Corp.**, 800/975-2784. [www.pvcc.com](http://www.pvcc.com).  
**Brad-Pak Enterprises**, 908/233-1234.  
[www.brad-pak.com](http://www.brad-pak.com).  
**McKernan Packaging**, 800/787-7587.  
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www.pkgsummit.com

# Packaging Summit is in sight

The Packaging Summit Expo and Conference will run May 15 to 17 at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont, IL. Included will be two awards ceremonies and special appearances from Wal-Mart, including a demonstration on how its Sustainability Scorecard works.

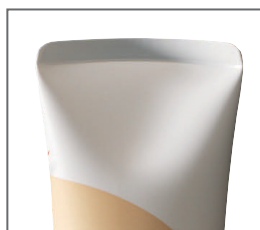
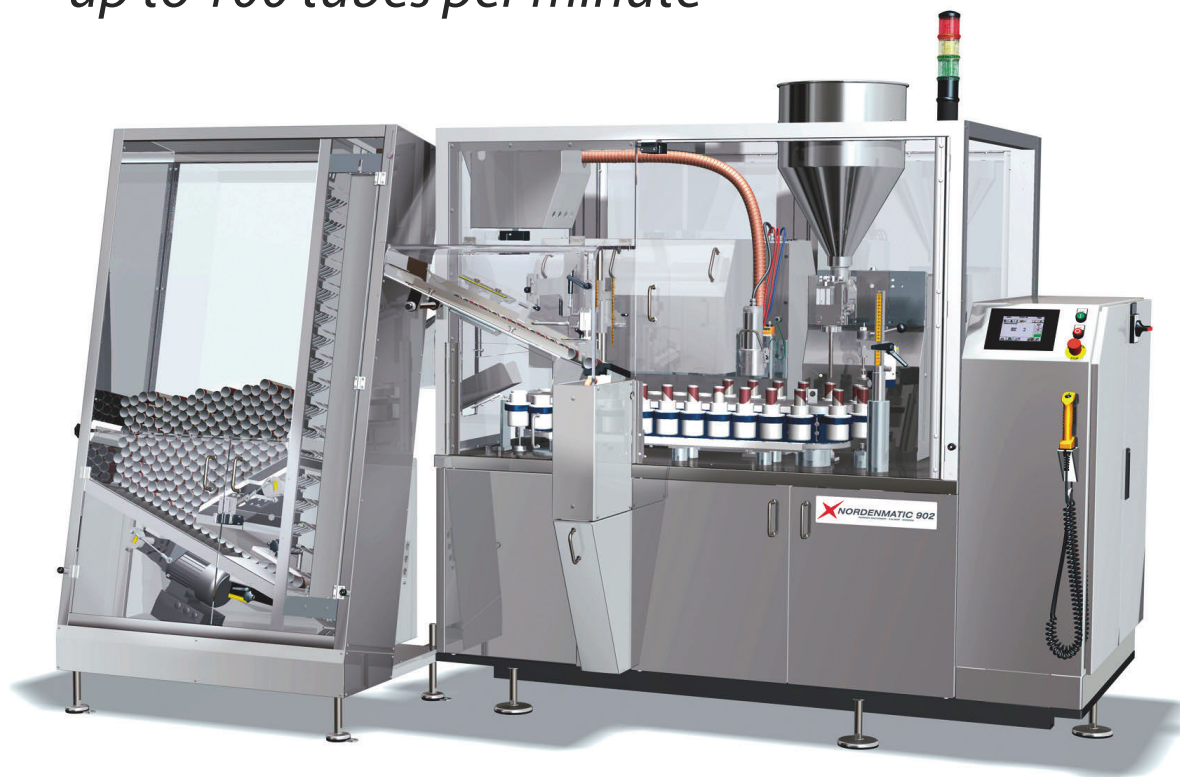
**D**esigned for packaging professionals, the Packaging Summit Expo and Conference will encompass sustainability and contract packaging and services, as well as innovations in packaging materials. Included during the show will be awards receptions for the AmeriStar Awards on Tuesday, May 15, and the WorldStar Awards on Wednesday, May 16. An innovations hub that showcases winning designs from both competitions, the Hall of Packaging Excellence, will be located near the entrance to the show floor.

The three-day conference program is divided into four focus areas. Innovate! will be the topic du jour for Tuesday morning, followed by Be Sustainable! in the afternoon. A special lunch presentation will be made by Wal-Mart's Matt Kistler, vp—packaging and product development. Later in the afternoon, Wal-Mart will offer a hands-on demonstration of its Sustainability Scorecard on the show floor. Wednesday morning is Think Globally! and Thursday is Outsource! In addition to Wal-Mart's Kistler, presentations will be made by Estée Lauder's John Delfausse, vp of packaging development on how to move sustainable packaging from idea to implementation; The International Trade Center's Pierre Picot, senior consultant, International Packaging, on the European Union regulations; and U.S. Foodservice's Jane Chase, vp packaging development, on six steps to managing packaging innovation.

The conference program includes roundtables addressing innovation with contract-packaging resources, including panelists from Miller Brewing and Packaging Unlimited. Topics include: Growing Partnerships through Software; Sourcing in the Far East; Sustainability and Global Outsourcing; and Avoiding Pitfalls in Outsourcing Packaging Functions. Also showcased are the key players in packaging services, including package designers, packaging consultants, package testing labs and staffing agencies.

The following exhibitor has a marketing message in this issue: **Gilbreth**, p. 5.

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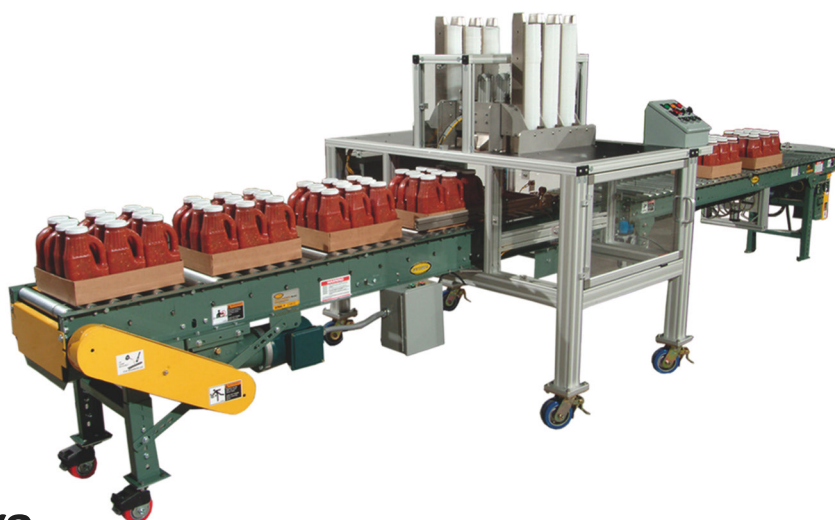
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New this year to the conference program is a Supply Chain and Security track. Also on the agenda is a new RFID Master Class, presented by the International RFID Business Assn. in collaboration with RFID Technical Institute. The conference also includes several sessions specifically addressing packaging. "The Future of Consumer Packaging for Pharmaceuticals" will be presented by Lynn Dornblaser, director of consulting, Mintel, Inc. "Innovation in Pharmaceutical Packaging: Reassessing the Role That Packaging Can Play in Health Care Management" will be presented by Nina Goodrich, director, Innovation, Alcan Packaging. Also, "Total Cost of Ownership of Pharmaceutical Blister Packaging" will be discussed by Angela Roggenhofer, market development manager, Honeywell Specialty Films.

For information or to register for the show or conferences, call 888/334-8704 or visit the website, [www.interphex.com](http://www.interphex.com).

The following exhibitors have a marketing message in this issue:

**ABOX Automation Corp.**—Booth 2862, p. 50

**Cozzoli Machine**—Booth 731, p. 36

**Eriez Magnetics**—Booth 303, p. 38

**Hewlett-Packard**—Booth 2785, p. 23

**Hitachi America**—Booth 1779, p. C-2

**IMA No. America**—Booth 2218, p. 31

**Intelligent Motion Systems**—Booth 1579, p. 44

**Klöckner-Pentaplast**—Booth 2037, p. 14-15

**MG America**—Booth 1519, p. 33

**NJM/CLI Packaging Systems**—Booth 529, p. 45

**Shibuya Hoppmann**—Booth 2584, p. 12

# newsmakers

## MOVERS & SHAKERS



Luis De la Mora  
IPN

**IPN** hires Luis De la Mora as president—marketing and sales for its U.S. operations. **Healthcare Compliance Packaging Council** appoints Hubert H. Keil vice

chairman of its board of directors. He is managing director and CEO of Uhlmann Packaging Systems.



Lisa M. Maxwell  
Pearson Packaging Systems

**Pearson Packaging Systems** hires Lisa M. Maxwell as regional sales manager, North Central—West. She will be based out of Chicago. **IMA Nova®** and **IMA Swiftpack** name Bill Finnigan

product manager for the Swiftpack brand of electronic tablet counters.

**National Instruments** promotes eight to vp. These are: Jon Bellin, vp of R&D, application and system software; Kevin Schultz, vp of R&D, data acquisition and distributed I/O; Arlene Porterfield, vp, global information technology; Owen Golden, vp of sales, Americas; Francis Griffiths, vp of sales, Europe; John Hanks,



Stuart Shepherd  
Kuka Robotics Corp.

vp of product marketing, data acquisition and industrial control; Victor Mieres, vp of sales, Asia Pacific; and Tony Vento, vp, applications engineering. **Kuka Robotics Corp.** appoints

Stuart Shepherd president.

**Prisym, Inc.** appoints Martyn Kerluk U.S. manager along with Christine Partridge who is named strategic accounts manager. Shawna Wagener



Andrew D. Span  
CVC Technologies, Inc.

becomes sales and marketing administrator. **CVC Technologies, Inc.** promotes Andrew D. Span to executive vp, sales and marketing, U.S. operations.

**R.A. Jones**

**& Co., Inc.** appoints Vince Donaghy national account manager for consumer and personal products industries for the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states.

**USA Strategies** hires Pat Harrington as a senior account manager.

**International Paper** announces that Marianne Parrs, its executive vp and chief financial officer, intends to retire at the end of 2007. Parrs, 62, joined International Paper in 1974.

**The Flexible Packaging Association** announces its 2007 board of directors. Officers are: Ilene Gordon, **Alcan Packaging**—chair of the board; Peter B. Schottland, **American Packaging Corp.**—immediate past chairman; Charles Coker, Jr., **Sonoco Flexible Packaging**—

executive vice chairman (chairman-elect); and Michael Impastato, **Flint Group**—treasurer.

## GROWING & GOING

**Graham Packaging** closes its plant in North Charleston, SC.

**AC Technology**, a member of the **Lenze Group**, announces an additional expansion to its new 125,000-sq-ft facility in Uxbridge, MA, to include mechanical products.

**SIG Combibloc, Inc.**, relocates its North and Central American headquarters from Columbus, OH, to the greater Philadelphia, PA area.

## BUYING AND ALLYING

**Klockner Pentaplast Group** sells its flexible film business to **Wipak**, the packaging division of Finland-based **Wihuri Group**.

**Thiele Technologies** acquires **SWF Companies** from **Dover Corp.**



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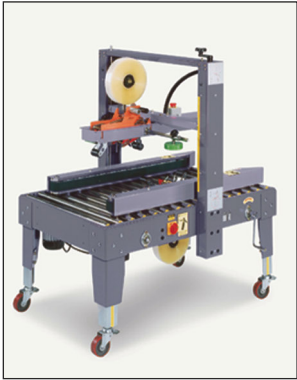
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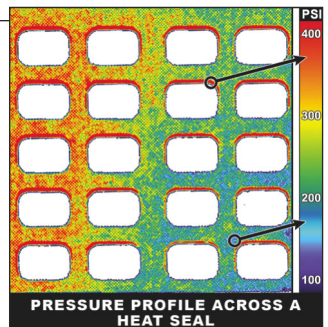
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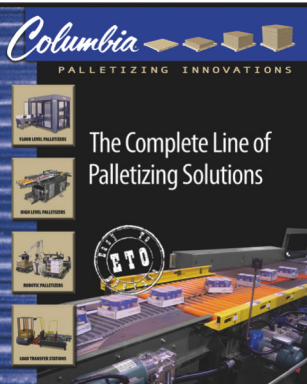
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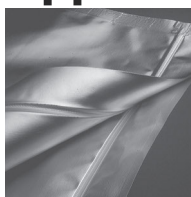
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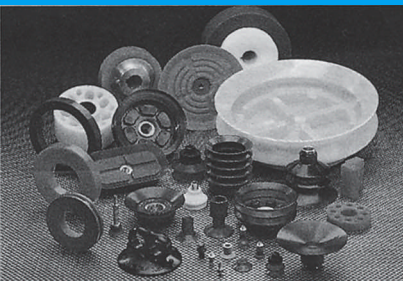
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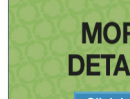
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### New research from Packaging Digest and the Sustainable Packaging Coalition

*Packaging Digest* and the Sustainable Packaging Coalition surveyed Packaging Digest's subscribers to understand the awareness and adoption levels of sustainability in the packaging marketplace. Download the PDF file and see the results of the survey at [www.packagingdigest.com/sustainstudy](http://www.packagingdigest.com/sustainstudy)

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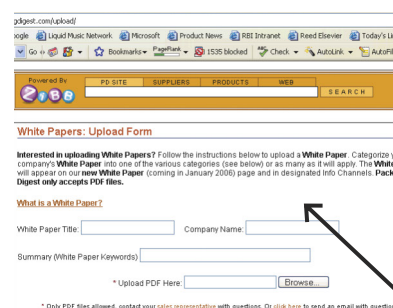
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### Consumers seek healthy and quick snacking, says report

A gap in the market for snackfood that is simultaneously convenient, healthy and indulgent is ripe for exploitation by canny retailers, according to a new report.

### Tyson unveils new R&D facility

Tyson Foods has unveiled its new R&D facility, designed to enhance the company's ability to create new foods and bring them to market more quickly.

### Kraft hopes to take a bite out of takeout

Kraft Foods, Inc., looking for a way to end a prolonged sales slump, is trying to take a bite out of its real competition—restaurants.

### Both Coke and Pepsi lose market share in 2006

Coke and Pepsi both saw their share of the soda market fall in 2006 for the second straight year, led by weak sales of Coke Classic and regular Pepsi, says an industry report. At Coke, the world's biggest soft drink maker saw its domestic market share dip to 42.9 percent last year from 43.1 percent in 2005 as total soft drink sales overall slipped 0.6 percent in the U.S. last year.

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