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▶ Kellogg sees progress on health/nutrition initiatives

Kellogg Co. in June reported that it has made key progress in ongoing health/nutrition initiatives it launched a year ago to help consumers manage calories equation. Go to www.packagingdigest/kellogg

▶ Primitive plastic predators

Daniel Burd, 16, won the top prize at the Canada-Wide Science Fair for discovering strains of bacteria that work to rapidly break down plastic bags, some of which can otherwise take thousands of years to decompose. www.packagingdigest/info/burd

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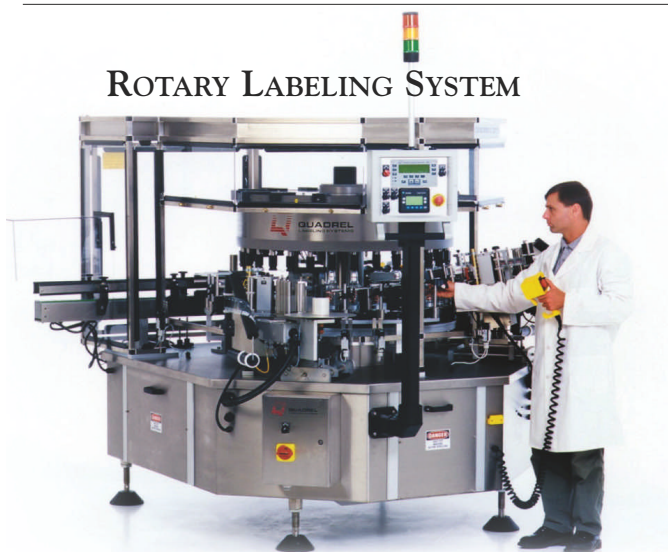
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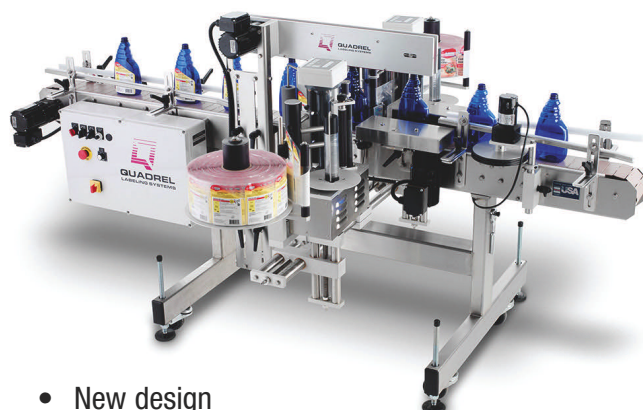
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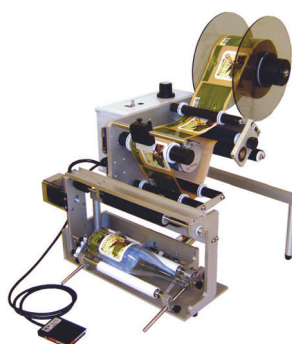
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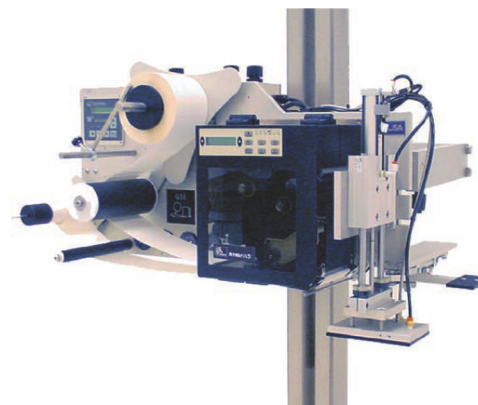
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'Slimming' chocolate

Brown & Haley's ROCA® Buttercrunch Thins are packaged in a resealable carton said to fit in a purse or a pocket. Opening the "chocolate wave" flap reveals a bright pink pad and eight individual chocolate pieces in an attractive gold tray that slides out. "The smaller size and slender shape are designed to meet the expectations of today's premium chocolate consumer," says Mark Greenhall of Brown & Haley.

The containers and display caddies are manufactured by **Emerald City Graphics** (www.emeraldcg.com). Brown & Haley hand-inserts the candies, which were developed over 14 months of testing. Buttercrunch Thins come in four varieties: Milk Toffee, Dark Toffee, Caramel Truffle and Dark Truffle. Each 2.8-ounce box has a suggested retail price of \$2.49. Assorted 48-count shippers and 24-count power wings are also available.



Rum bottle canister captures Caribbean allure

A specialty, rigid paperboard canister from **Sonoco** (www.sonoco.com) shows off 750-mL bottles of Doorly's XO Specially Selected Fine Barbados rum. Manufactured for distilled spirits packager **J&D Graphics** (www.jd-graphics.com) as a presentation vehicle, the canister stands more than 10 in. tall and fully encloses a rum bottle. "The buyer will associate the quality of the package with the quality of the rum inside," says Erik Frey, specialty sales manager for Sonoco. J&D provided the label. Purple litho printing and gold foil stamping heighten the elegance of the brand graphics and Barbados illustration. Sonoco used a convolute winder to assemble the can and apply the label. The package's foil highlights are matched by a gold metal plug. Doorly's is available throughout the Caribbean, the U.S., Europe and online.



Portion-packed soup to go

Greenshoot Soups from Urban Foods are said to be among the first convenient, individually-packed, fresh soups on the French market. The containers are coextruded and thermoformed in PP/EVOH/PP by **RPC Bebo Nederland** (www.rpc-bebo.nl). Barrier protection from the multilayer construction helps the soup have a shelf life comparable to traditional packages. The cup's rounded design can withstand high filling temperatures and is designed to fit standard car cup holders.

Injection-molded in PP by **RPC Halstead** (www.rpc-halstead.co.uk), the reclosable and stylish lid features a convenient drinking spout, a sip-hole cover and a complementary design with the cup's base for easy stacking. The cups are sleeved before being hot-filled. "The large sleeving area has also enabled us to produce a striking label design that has created a strong brand identity for the new range, and made a significant contribution to its successful launch," says Julien Ponceblanc of Urban Foods.

The Greenshoot line is available in France and Belgium in five flavors: carrot and coriander, peas and bacon, pumpkin, lentil and cumin and tomato and basil.



Foil-free holography tees off for golf balls

Bridgestone Golf's e6+ golf ball carton earned **Shorewood Packaging** (www.shorewoodpackaging.com) both Gold and Innovation Excellence Awards at the 65th Annual National Paperboard Packaging Competition. The cartons feature Shorewood's new Cast and Cure finish, a holographic transfer method that adds an embossed pattern at the end of the printing process. "Bridgestone wanted the packaging for this new product to have an elegant, understated pattern that would stand out among the sea of holography that currently characterizes golf ball packaging," says Leon Hill of Shorewood. The process lays down a primer that is shaped by an embossing film. The embossed primer is then cured to hold the shape, producing the look of a hologram without the costs of foil. "The whole experience was a great success," says Daniel Johnston, art director for Bridgestone.

The traditional outer box and golf ball folding cartons were offset-printed in six colors on a metallized polyester board laminated to .016 Everest® SBS board from **International Paper** (www.internationalpaper.com) for extra sheen. Cast and Cure was applied as an overall pattern to the printed sheets.

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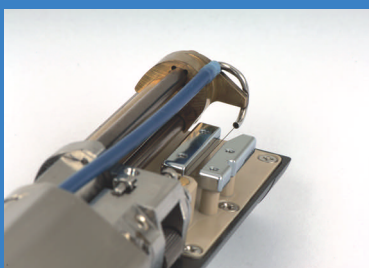
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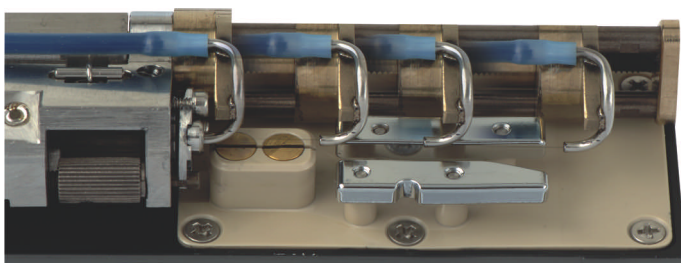
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Sparkling fragrance caps look luxe but aren't

Escada Moon Sparkle fragrance is launched, sealed by new caps manufactured by **RPC beauté** (www.rpc-beaute.com). Both the mens' and womens' fragrances feature an ABS electroplated cap, a die-cut steel weight and a PP interior. The womens' design also includes an ABS electroplated collar and POM

(acetal) interior. RPC beauté says that recent investments totaling nearly \$1 million at its facility in Marolles, France—formerly the core beauty packaging company of Crown Holdings, Inc.—reduced production costs for the caps. “Even luxury brands these days have become extremely cost-conscious,” says RPC general manager Gérald Martines. The company engineered in-house a fully robotic, flexible, high-speed assembly line able to assemble any fragrance or makeup cap or closure with up to five different components, as well as automation in the loading/unloading area of the plating line.

“The variety of configurations of cosmetic products is virtually endless, even within

one defined product category—for example, fragrance caps,” says Martines. “The life cycle of products is very short, and new products are rarely similar to the one they replace. Because of that, volumes are extremely variable and unpredictable. So it is somewhat more complex to automate in our business than in others.”

According to the company, the use of chemicals has been reduced, no heavy metals are released and the process uses no solvents in contrast to varnishing or vacuum metalizing, which typically require oxidation or vapor burning that can produce greenhouse gases.



Look Mom, one hand

Avon's new Pro-to-Go slide-button lipstick makes beauty care a snap. Cosmetics packager **Risdon Intl.** (www.risdon-ams.com) was approached a year ago by Avon to develop a mechanism—now patented—for one-handed lipstick application. A single sliding button first pushes the lipstick's anodized aluminum sleeve through a swinging door in the case and then extends the lipstick from the sleeve. Reversing the button retracts the lipstick safely into the case.

“The challenge was having a one-handed lipstick that was smooth and well-fitting with a square case,” says Eric Bigotte of Risdon. “This is truly a luxury product.” The black ABS case features a clear UV top coat and a debossed Avon logo. Actress Reese Witherspoon is featured in the advertising campaign for the Pro-to-Go lipsticks, which are available online and in Avon's catalog.

Sunny new packages for tanning products



California suntans are an American legend. That's why California Tan, a leading manufacturer and marketer of professional salon suntan lotion products, wanted a bottle that could create a dazzling, new visibility for its latest product line, Cypher™, on retail store shelves.

The company asked **TricorBraun** (www.tricorbraun.com) for help. The new bottle, which began as a drawing in the sketch book of Carin Castelnuevo-

Tedesco, California Tan's vp of creative services, was handed off to TricorBraun's design and engineering department. After several months of collaboration, the two companies came up with the “cobra” bottle design for Cypher. TricorBraun sourced seven custom-designed components from international suppliers to assemble the final package. “It was important that all of these parts come as tightly put together as possible,” says Castelnuevo-Tedesco. “We didn't want to hand over a bunch of little pieces to our filling supplier.”

TricorBraun worked with California Tan's quality-control division to have the container parts delivered in an efficient way to meet the company's shipping deadlines. The results include luxurious jewel-toned containers in a twist-shape, with metallic accents and azure blue, teal green and lilac color schemes for the different product varieties.



Choice tequila in an upscale bottle

The latest addition to the 1800 tequila family has arrived—1800 Select Silver, from Agaver Carmichines, S.A. de C.V., Jalisco, Mexico, distributed in the U.S. by Proximo Spirits. The company says the spirit is the first 100-proof tequila. It's available in an iconic bottle that comes with its own shot glass. Livening up any party scene, the triangular, cut-glass, cosmetic-grade, flint bottle is made in Mexico. The glamorous stopper is also made in Mexico of the same glass as the bottle. Proximo declines to name suppliers. The stopper is unique in that it acts as a measure and a shot glass. The paper labels are printed in a blue and silver color scheme and are foil-stamped with the 1800 logo.

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LesserEvil adds more bite per bag

Snackfood company LesserEvil has added larger-sized bags for its most popular four products, Classic Kettle and Black&White Kettle Corns (6.5 oz) and Classic SeaSalt and SourCream & Onion Krinkle Sticks (5 oz). "We put our top-selling snacks in bags so folks can share them and still feel good about doing it," says Michael Sands, founder and CEO. The bags were designed in-house and printed by **American Packaging Solutions** (www.americanpackagingsolutions.com).

LesserEvil also sells snacks in 1.75- and 1.2-oz bags as well as its signature, vertically tapered cartons. The company's main platform is the natural ingredients it uses to create treats that are lower in fat and free of any trans fats, preservatives and gluten. Its new product line has a \$3.49 standard retail price.



Can tops fit brewery well

Maui Brewing Co. reports that it's the first brewery to use **PakTech** (www.paktech-opi.com) can top rings. Company founder and owner Garrett Marrero says the rings are more cost-effective than the paperboard cartons and wraps previously tried by the company. Maui says it can fit six times as many rings in a single pallet position as boxes and twice as many as wraps. The company also says that the rings work better in high-humidity environments. "Due to humidity in open coolers, the wraps would break and cause a bunch of headaches," Marrero explains. The rings protect the can tops, offer integrated handles and create a space for UPC labeling. Maui now uses the rings to package all of its beer.



Fuze ignites the beverage market in PET bottles

FUZE Beverage, LLC, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, converts its iconic, glass, single-serve bottle to a custom, 18.5-oz PowerFlex™ polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottle from **Amcor PET Packaging** (www.amcor.com).

"The signature, eye-catching graphics and the esthetic charm of our glass bottle have been captured in the new PowerFlex version to allow consumers practicality, safety and convenience in today's grab-and-go culture," explains Bill Meissner, vp of marketing at FUZE. Available in various types of retail outlets, the PET bottle allows the beverage to enter alternative channels, such as airlines, military and foodservice, that were not possible in glass. FUZE was available in a 16.9-oz PowerFlex bottle in early 2007. The smaller container size was created for multipack and special-purpose venues such as concerts and sporting events. The success of the 16.9-oz bottle, coupled with consumer research, convinced the company that the time was right to convert its flagship size.

The PET bottle closely replicates the look and feel of the glass version. Amcor worked closely with its FUZE counterparts to make sure that not only the esthetics were achieved, but that production and filling objectives were also met. The PowerFlex bottle features a revolutionary, patented, panel-less design that withstands hot filling (185 deg F) and absorbs vacuum via a unique diaphragm within the base which draws upward as the liquid cools.



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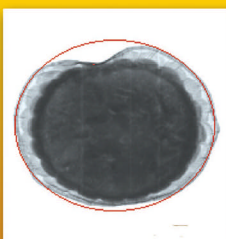
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comment

John Kalkowski, Editorial Director

Increases in raw material costs pound packagers



In the last month, I've seen a growing stream of price increase announcements from both suppliers and packagers. This is not new. As raw material and transportation costs have edged up over the last several years, the industry has been trying to increase its prices to keep up with the accelerating costs of production. However, rising costs have easily outpaced price hikes, and margins have been squeezed as though they are in a vise grip.

What's new is that the industry now is seeing substantial price hikes of up to 25 percent in a single leap for some materials—especially those based on petroleum—that are essential to packaging. In the past, many companies were happy if they could get a 2- or 3-percent increase every couple of years.

In times of plenty, their customers had come to expect that they could even force price reductions, just as the end users were demanding more quality and quantity at lower cost. No one in the packaging supply chain seemed to have any pricing power.

For years, packagers have been tightening their belts to drive any unnecessary costs out of their manufacturing and sales processes. Lean manufacturing is more in vogue than ever. Staff sizes have been reduced. Purchasing departments hold enormous sway in buying decisions. But you have to ask, "How much more can be cut?"

What we see now is classic cost-push inflation in which the cost of making packaging spirals upward and eventually trickles all the way through the chain to consumers. It's a little easier to accept these price increases when you can see that the costs of petroleum products have essentially doubled in the last year. At some point, though, consumers will say, "Enough is enough." Then they will slow their purchases.

These are times that can inspire structural changes in an industry. An obvious action would be to recycle and reuse more packaging materials. Improved management of scrap and waste will help, as will downgauging where applicable. Even though it's easier said than done, find alternative materials that don't require costly components with limited availability. In one industry survey this year, 89 percent of the respondents have recommended lower cost equivalent materials to customers, but the recommendations were accepted less than 50 percent of the time.

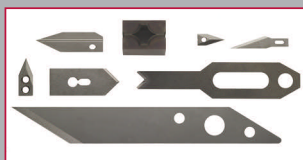
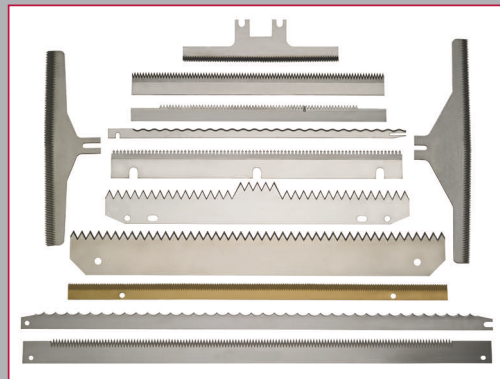
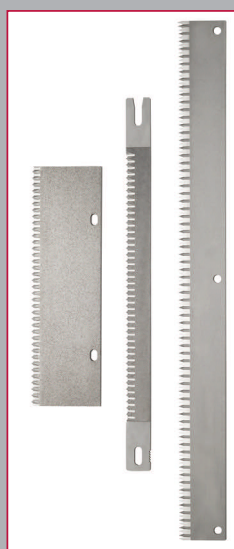
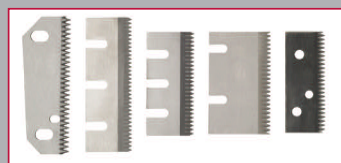
Packagers need to map new strategies for buying raw materials; it's likely they're doomed if they wait for costs "to return to normal." The current pricing situation holds as many opportunities as challenges.

John Kalkowski

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new products equipment

RFID



RFID emissions certified Ten IDENT RFID read heads received FCC approval, certifying that their electromagnetic fields fall within radiated emissions limits, the co. says. These guidelines are designed to minimize potential electromagnetic or radio-frequency interference between various devices in a facility. The IDENT products operate at frequencies of 125 kHz, 250 kHz and 13.56 MHz.

Pepperl+Fuchs, 330/486-0001.
www.am.pepperl-fuchs.com

Linear drive

The M RG80 linear drive supplies up to 800 lb of side thrust for heavy-load, linear-motion applications. The drive features "rolling-ring" linear-motion engineering, enabling mechanical control over reversal, thereby eliminating the need for electronic controls. Also has a reversible motor. Additionally, linear pitch (speed) may be manually adjusted without gear reduction or adjusting drive motor speed. The drive provides linear motion in packaging and converting equipment and in other production machinery requiring a reciprocating linear motion component.

Amacoil, 800/252-2645.
www.amacoil.com

Diaphragm gauge Model 730 capacitance diaphragm gauge features a RoHS-compliant frequency bridge circuit design that reportedly yields very low noise while maintaining a fast response time. Welded entirely with Inconel wetted parts, the sensor offers a wide compatibility with process chemistries. Output spans from 0 to 5 VDC or 0 to 10 VDC, and reading accuracy is rated at +/-0.5 percent standard and +/- 0.25 percent in an optional configuration. Suggested applications include semiconductors, absorption chillers, lasers, autoclaves, vacuum packaging, freeze drying and vacuum distillation.

Setra Systems, 800/257-3872.
www.setra.com

RFID reader The INfinity 110 HF RFID reader incorporates the new Texas Instruments TRF7960 chip and reportedly provides application developers with a variety of tag choices by supporting numerous protocols. The module is designed for compactness and low power consumption, requiring only a 3.3-v power supply. Future upgrades and feature enhancements—including the addition of new tag protocols—can be made through firmware flash updates.

Sirit Inc., 866/338-9586. www.sirit.com



Weighing platform The PBA220 platform, designed for light-duty dry applications, provides high-performance weighing in dry environments. The unit is available in a square or rectangular option, with six capacities and nine dimensional sizes. Shares all accessories with the existing line of PBA330 platforms, including a low-profile cart, a roller top, a ball top, a column and a floorstand. The platform is ideal for dry product within the food, pharmaceutical, chemical and OEM/system integrator sectors, the co. states.

Mettler Toledo, 800/523-5123. www.mt.com

Printer connectivity The Monarch® 9855® RFMP and Monarch 9855 HF RFID printer/encoders are said to work seamlessly with Microsoft BizTalk Server 2006 R2. Demonstrated at this year's *RFID Journal Live* show in Las Vegas, the printers write to RFID chips embedded in thermal direct or transfer bar code labels.

Avery Dennison, Printer Systems Div.,
937/865-2369.
www.ris.averydennison.com

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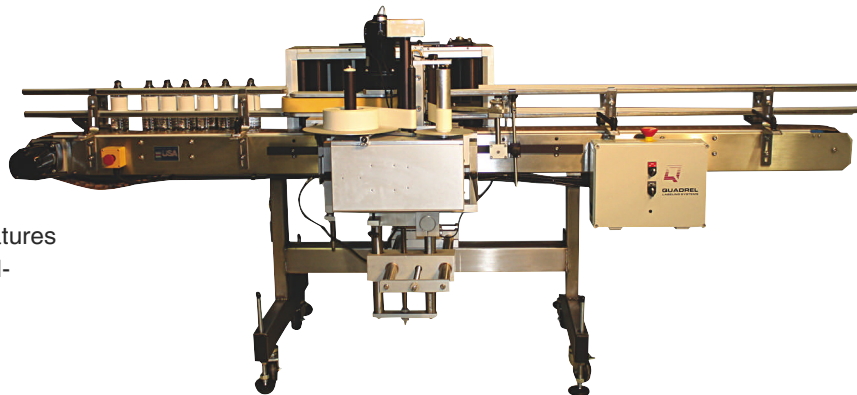


new products equipment

Labeling system The Moduline vertical-roller labeling system is used to apply wraparound labels to tall, unstable cylindrical containers at speeds up to 100 packages/min, the co. reports. The system incorporates a vertical-roller conveyor to stabilize each container during label application. This in-line labeling system also features wipe-on label applicators, an M3 microprocessor controller, a wrap station and an all-stainless-steel conveyor.

Quadrel, 800/321-8509.

www.quadrel.com

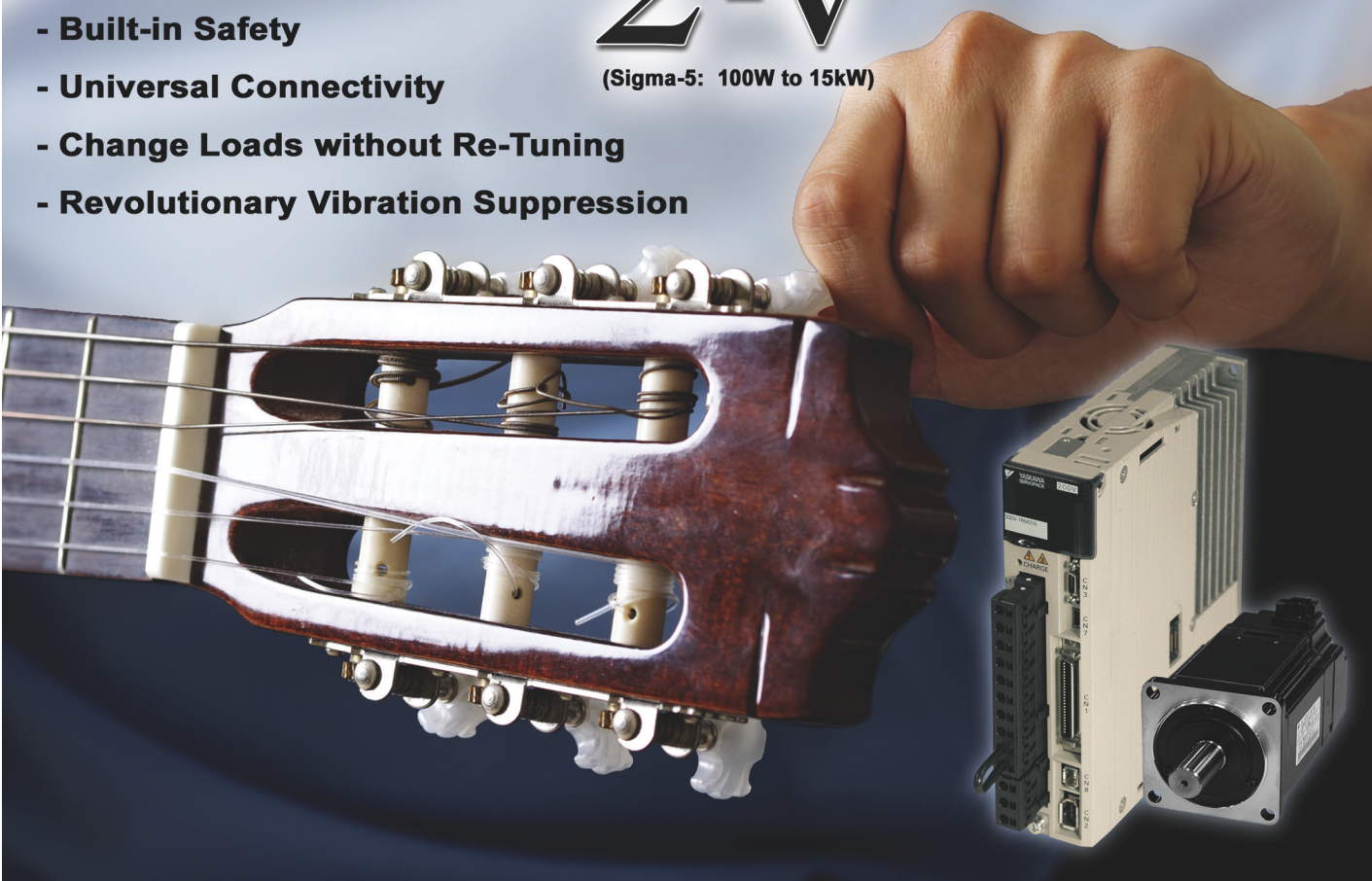


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RFID reader Expected to ship this month, the XR450 fixed RFID reader features both bi- and mono-static antenna ports for simplified deployment. The mono-static reader is said to be more durable and have greater data capture capabilities. Other changes for the XR series include new management software and enhanced security features like SSH and SSL support to protect information as it moves across external network interfaces. Also, custom applications can be built and hosted on the device.

Motorola, 866/416-8545.

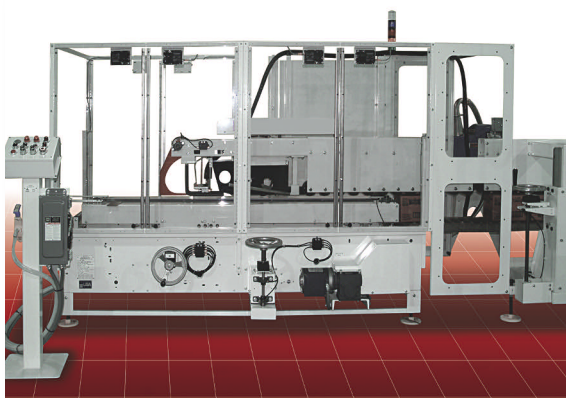
www.motorola.com



Output modules The DirectLOGIC line of output modules includes a new fault-protected version designed for the DL205 PLC. The F2-16TDxP 16-channel current output modules, available in sinking and sourcing configurations, feature 16 input points that are automatically assigned as fault status indicators for the corresponding outputs. The modules are equipped with electronic short circuit protection to detect missing external 24-VDC, open-load overtemperature and overcurrent load. The protected output modules also feature user-resettable fault conditions.

Automation Direct,
 770/889-2858.

www.automationdirect.com

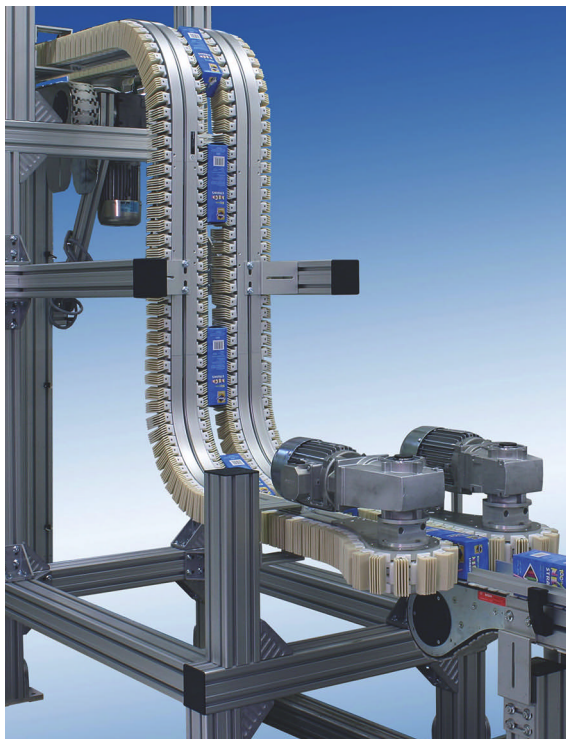


Top/bottom sealer This high-performance, adjustable top-and-bottom sealer uses hot-melt glue to seal cases, providing 7 ft of compression. Controls are housed on a slim pedestal rather than directly attached to the machine. Other features include a stack beacon with customer-preferred colors, electrical and pneumatic lockout capabilities, an alphanumeric character program for PLC input and output and a pressure switch that automatically shuts off if the air pressure is too low to properly run a case. Five photoeyes help to increase the accuracy of each case sealed, and the PLC control can be installed onsite by the customer.

MARQ Packaging Systems, Inc., 800/998-4301.
www.marq.net

Wedge conveyor VarioFlow S chain conveyor systems now include a new wedge conveyor. These conveyors provide a compact footprint while enabling users to elevate or lower products quickly and easily with a minimum of construction effort. Flexible cleat chains gently secure the product during vertical transport from one level to the next, and are constructed of a special, FDA-approved material. With versions available in aluminum and stainless steel, the new wedge conveyor complies with the strict hygiene requirements of the medical, cosmetic and packaging industries, the co. says.

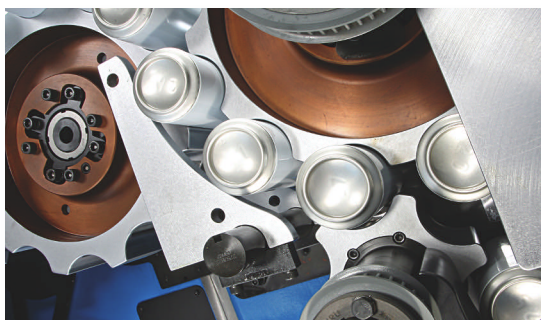
Bosch Rexroth Corp., 800/322-6724.
www.boschrexroth-us.com



Motion controller

The TMC-3D combines a multi-axis motion controller and a digital servo drive in the same compact unit. The controls of this system include up to 8 Technosoft intelligent drives with an embedded servo drive suitable for DC, brushless and step motors. 3D and 2½D coordinated-motion paths can be executed through the motion controller and other two Technosoft drives using PVT commands, the co. reports, stating that this combination offers a cost-effective solution for precise multi-axis applications suitable for various industrial fields.

Technosoft, 41 32 732 55 00.
www.technosoftmotion.com



Can sorter A high-speed selective sorter has the ability to remove a can at production speeds while maintaining the working dynamics of the necking process. Provides accurate sampling and avoids spoilage. The selective sorters' HMI software also provides a limitless combination of programmable recipes to accommodate different sampling needs.

Belvac, 800/423-5822.
www.belvac.com

Vision sensor

The Inspector Vision Sensor is an intelligent vision solution able to verify completeness and quality, even if products vary in size by as much as 20 percent, the co. notes. The vision sensor provides a simple pass/fail output, ensuring only the correct product makes it through. Is able to keep up to the quickest line speeds. Applications include verifying label position, date-code presence and cap inspection in packaging, as well as bowl-feeder inspection and verification of part assembly. The vision sensor offers a 384x384 resolution and an IP 67 metal housing, ideal for the toughest environments. Comes with an integrated dome light that delivers high quality images even on glossy and reflective surfaces, without a complex setup.

SICK, Inc., 800/325-7425.
www.sickusa.com



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new products materials

Flexible packaging

Film

Clarifoil cellulose acetate film for carton windows, print laminations, labels and tapes has been awarded the OK certificate for home compost conformity issued by AIB-Vincotte Intl. Certification, the co. notes. The film follows comprehensive testing, and the co. says the film already holds DIN EN 13432 and ASTM D6400 biodegradability accreditation, distinguishing Clarifoil as a compostable, biodegradable material used for food through luxury packaging.

Celanese Corp., 201/541-2476.
www.clarifoil.com



Security tape Security Essentials is a term describing a package of special features the co. builds into its tear tape as a step toward protecting against counterfeiting. Technologies including microtext print, fine-line print, UV, color-shifting inks and holography can be used individually or combined for a multi-layered security solution integrated into the tape, the co. says, for a wide range of package styles.

Payne Richmond Inc., 804/518-1803.
www.payne-worldwide.com

UV-cured ink A thermoformable, UV-cured ink system debuts as Rho TH Ink, allowing full forming, the co. claims, on styrene, acrylic and many other plastic materials commonly used in displays. Cited are highly challenging molds with 90-deg edges and more than 10-cm (4-in.) depth, showing exceptionally good results on a wide variety of thermoplastics. The co. says the ink is environmentally friendly.

Durst Phototechnik Digital Technology GmbH, 43 485 27 17 77.
www.durst-online.com
Sun Chemical Corp., 708/562-0550.
www.sunchemicalink.com



Netting Flexible mesh netting comes to market under the Vexar® Compostable Netting name, aimed at organic and other produce growers and environmentally aware consumers. The co. says the mesh conforms around delicate fruits and vegetables while also being certified to the ASTM D6400 standard for commercially compostable thermoplastics. Requires no costly changes to packaging equipment, the co. says.

Conwed Global Netting Solutions, 800/426-0149.
www.conwedplastics.com



Multipack carrier Targeted at craft brewers as an alternative to paperboard multipack carriers is the BrandPak™ system, consisting of a top-lift handle, a glass-bottle ring carrier and a wraparound stretch band. The components are also cited for 4-, 6-, 8- and 12-can mutipacking. For both package types, the co. offers its codeveloped Ringmaster™ portable low-speed ring-carrier application machines, with 6-pack output rated for bottles at 10/min and 15/min for cans. Helps eliminate manual loading of board multipacks, conserve materials and reduce waste.

ITW Hi-Cone, 630/438-5300.
www.brandpak.net
United Silicone, 716/681-8222.
www.unitedsilicone.com

Metallized OPP film Metallyte™ UBW-ES is offered as a new, metallized white OPP film with ultra high barrier and enhanced seal technologies for flexible packaging applications. The film has economic/performance benefits versus thin aluminum foil and sealant laminations, the co. says, reporting a WVTR of 0.3 g/m² (38 deg C, 90 percent RH/24 hr), OTR of 0.1 cc/m² (23 deg C and 0 percent RH/24 hr) and 1,500 g/2 ½ cm) seal strength, citing the film's ability to seal through contaminants.

ExxonMobil Chemical, 281/870-6000.
www.exxonmobilchemical.com

Adhesive film For general-purpose uses with low surface-energy materials including ABS, PE, PP, plain PS and many foams, Dublfilm® S1086 is offered as a thin polyester carrier coated on each side with a high-performance p-s acrylic adhesive. With a 76-lb PE-coated release liner for better handling on films and foam,

the product provides superior balance of peel and shear and excellent holding power, UV, humidity and temperature/chemical-resistance, the co. says.
Scapa North America, 800/653-5316.
www.scapana.com



PET polymer Aimed at food, beverage and beauty product packaging uses, new Polyclear® Crystal™ PET 3302 polymer is developed for thick-walled bottles and containers of unconventional sizes and shapes, the co. says. Benefits claimed include a glass-like clarity with surface sparkle, excellent moldability and outstanding processability and efficiency using single- and two-stage injection-molding and stretch/blow machines.

Invista, 888/646-8478.
www.polymers.invista.com



Recycling cushioning Encouraging recycling of its Fill-Air inflatable packaging film, the co. launches a mail-in program, with deflated cushions sent to a centralized facility to be ground up and repelletized for products ranging from trash bags to auto parts.

Instructions will be available from a web address printed on the cushioning, www.fillair.com/recycle.

Sealed Air Corp., 800/982-6197.
www.sealedair.com

Shrink bags Developed for bone-in, case-ready meat and poultry products, high-abuse plastic shrink bags reportedly are available in clear and in red, white, metallic blue silver or smoked. The co. claims it is the only high-abuse vacuum bag suitable for cook-in application, with excellent oxygen and moisture barrier properties, low leaker rates and an outstanding shelf life, needing no bone guard cloths, caps, boats, patches or wraps.

Vector Packaging, 888/227-4647.
www.vectorpackaging.com



Bags Gusseted, flat and satchel bags, with or without windows, can be produced on the Matador® NG, designed for baked goods and takeout products. The bags do not have a bottom but feature side gussets for the products to be packaged. In great demand in the marketplace, the co. says, the low-cost production of the bags makes the Matador NG an attractive option. The system is suitable for producing standard and long-sized bags, paper bags and more.

Windmoeller & Hoelscher Corp., 800/854-8702.
www.whcorp.com

Zipper reclosures A new generation of zipper reclosures is claimed by the co. One resealable type, adopted by Norwegian meat mfr.

SPIS Grilstad, reportedly increased access to the Norwegian market share from 18 to 75 percent with the packaging of 20 deli meat and sausage SKUs.

Zip-Pak, 815/468-6500.
www.zippak.com



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Anheuser-Busch:

Looking at today's issues



Packaging Digest recently spoke with A-B's senior director of packaging technology Bob Darnell to learn more about **TRENDS AFFECTING TODAY'S PACKAGING** and what lies ahead.



Bob Darnell, senior director of packaging technology at Anheuser-Busch, St. Louis, began his career in 1987 as a brewing industrial engineer. Now, more than 20 years later, Darnell oversees the Anheuser-Busch packaging technology division across the globe. His responsibilities include managing initiatives to improve packaging quality while also developing new and innovative packages for Anheuser-Busch's beverage business.

Darnell also serves as a member of the Packaging Management Council (PMC),

an association of senior packaging managers from consumer and industrial goods manufacturing companies, facilitated by the **Packaging Machinery Manufacturer's Institute (PMMI [www.pmmi.org])**. PMMI sponsors and produces PACK EXPO International 2008, November 9 to 13, at Chicago's McCormick Place.

Packaging Digest recently spoke with Darnell to learn more about the trends affecting today's packaging and what the future holds for packaging:

PD: How important is packaging to Anheuser-Busch?

Darnell: We spend a great deal of time and effort ensuring that the bottles, cans and containers we use to package our beers meet the demands of our consumers. In addition to offering consumers a wide variety of packages to meet their various needs, we must ensure that our packaging is safe and protects and preserves the high quality of our beer. In short, packaging is our last opportunity to make a statement about our products and convey our commitment to quality.

PD: How does Anheuser-Busch approach the package-development process?

Brewer medals in Olympic packaging

In the spirit of the Olympics, packaging development teams from China and the U.S. have collaborated on a limited-edition Budweiser three-pack that promotes this year's games.

The commemorative pack consists of three ½-L aluminum cans that feature generic images of athletes engaging in Olympic sports. Each pack holds a gold, a silver and a bronze

colored can.

The cans are housed in a Cluster-Pak® carrier, which is manufactured and printed by **MeadWestvaco (www.meadwestvaco.com)** at its 467,046-sq-ft. plant in Wuxi, China. **Komori (www.komori.com)** Lithrone LS740 sheet-fed presses were used to offset-print bold graphics with both English and Chinese writing onto the coated natural Kraft

paperboard carriers. The presses have seven ink stations in addition to two coating towers, which allow all printing and coating to be done in-line.

Each of the 21,400 packs delivered to Wuhan, China on May 29 has specialized print-finishing characteristics, including a ruboff feature that allows a consumer a chance to win a ticket to the Olympics.



Darnell: We use several steps in the package-development process, all of which are keys to our efforts in determining and providing the consumers what they want. Teams from numerous areas of the company lead us in this effort. From engineering to marketing to logistics, we get input from every department involved in the packaging process.



Our **biggest hurdles** are working across our entire supply chain to understand and implement **environmentally-friendly packaging**.

end users like Anheuser-Busch looking for from automation?

Darnell: Our current efforts around automation are focused on enhanced

consistency and quality. We can produce more efficiently with less downtime, as we have more consistent raw materials coming into our process. Continued on page 22

PD: *Consumer desires are a key catalyst for packaging innovation. What are consumers looking for and what do they want from your packaging?*

Darnell: Consumer needs can vary greatly and meeting those desires is one of the challenging and exciting parts of our role in the packaging-technology area. Some consumers want to keep it simple and traditional; others are looking for something unique. But all of them expect to have a package that is functional and not over-designed.

PD: *Sustainability is top of mind in the industry today. Do you think the issue has been well defined? Where are the biggest strides being made? What are the biggest hurdles that still need to be overcome?*

Darnell: Throughout our history at Anheuser-Busch, we've been focused on protecting and preserving the environment. Not only is it good business, it's the right thing to do. When it comes to packaging, we will continue to develop lighter-weight packages while maintaining quality standards. We have reduced aluminum can weights by more than one-third since the early 1970s, and we look for improvements every day. Our biggest hurdles are working across our entire supply chain to understand and implement environmentally-friendly packaging. We are focused on continuous improvement of existing packages to further reduce material use and test new packaging materials, while being focused on ensuring the quality of our products.

It's a challenge to find the balance between reducing packaging material and protecting the high quality of our products during shipment. Our goal is to optimize the reduction of packaging materials without creating waste in the distribution process.

PD: *Automation is a vastly growing area. What do you think the drivers are behind this growth? What are*

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PD: *What new or emerging technologies impacting packaging do you think will be important in the next few years?*

Darnell: At Anheuser-Busch, we are always investigating new ideas that can potentially enhance our packaging efforts and ensure the quality of our products. We really see

automation and the use of data to enhance processes as being the key technological drivers going forward for the industry.

PD: *What are some of the opportunities and challenges facing packaging in the coming years?*

Darnell: Reducing our environmental impact is going to continue to be a key focus throughout the packaging industry.

This is important to us as a company and to our consumers.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of our recycling subsidiary, Anheuser-Busch Recycling. In 2007, it recycled more than 27 billion aluminum cans, making it one of the largest recyclers of aluminum beverage containers in the U.S. We're very proud of its accomplishments, and it stands as an example of Anheuser-Busch's efforts to reduce its environmental impact



and educate consumers on the importance of recycling.

PD: *When sourcing solutions for new products or packaging, what resources do you use?*

Darnell: We work closely with our suppliers to explore our options. They are a great resource when developing a new package or trying to modify a piece of equipment to efficiently produce a new package. We are also working with other leading industries to benchmark and share best practices. Trade associations, conferences, seminars, shows, etc., are all valuable resources.

PD: *How does attending packaging tradeshow fit into your search for new packaging solutions?*

Darnell: Tradeshow are a very valuable source of information, making contacts and getting new ideas. For instance, we got a lot of new contacts by attending the National Restaurant Association show last year. It was a good opportunity to talk to our customers on their ideas, their needs and to visit with other beverage makers.

PD: *Can you describe Anheuser-Busch's approach to tradeshow such as PACK EXPO?*

Darnell: PACK EXPO is a great show. We use it as a learning/training opportunity, as well as a source of new ideas and contacts. We will often have developmental projects in mind and use PACK EXPO to help define those projects. Besides engineers, we have also sent our operations and marketing people to the event.

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Brewery equips to handle Fat Tire

New Belgium Brewing meets the growing demands of its Fat Tire beer explosion with new filling-line equipment and technology **NOT SEEN IN THE U.S. BEFORE.**



Pedaling his way through Europe on an old fat-tire bicycle, Jeff Lebesch had no idea his life was about to change. After sampling the extraordinary Belgian beers along his path, the Fort Collins, CO, electrical engineer quickly returned to his home and began creating a Belgian-style brew in his basement. Family and friends tested his first two creations, Abbey and Fat Tire, and reveled in the well-balanced tastes.

Lebesch and his wife, Kim Jordan, continued working on the basement operation and opened for commercial business in 1991. Kim handled the marketing and sales and even made deliveries out of the family station wagon. The team overflowed into a second location at a railroad depot, but in 1995, the multiplying crew outgrew this location and built its first brewery from the ground up. Fast-forward to today and New Belgium Brewing has become one of America's top craft brewers, offering a diverse collection of unique beers. It's astonishing that a small basement experiment grew sales to 437,000 barrels last year and the brewer anticipates a 9-percent increase in production this year.

New Belgium's former packaging room operated two filler lines, one of which handled 300 bottles/min while the other filled 120 half-barrels/hr. With the launch of a new organic beer, Mothership Wit, and the growth of the brewery, New Belgium found it necessary to expand its facilities to keep all the assets working together.

Finding a partnership

In 2006, New Belgium put together all of its basic criteria and building specifications to build

a new bottling and packaging hall. A team of brewery representatives, including maintenance, operations and engineering, interviewed suppliers and line integrators. Evaluations were based on after-sales service and the availability of parts and support, level of technology, vendor services, attitudes toward customer satisfaction and training and vendor reputation in the brewing industry. "KHS (www.khs.com) had really good ratings on equipment, technology, innovation, and it had a great reputation in the brewing industry," states Jim Spencer, New Belgium's engineering director. "Our founders, Jeff and Kim, always believed in innovation, and that's always been one of their core values," Spencer explains. "KHS is right out there in the forefront of technology."

KHS supplied technology that's new to the U.S., including a bottle filler, a case packer and a robotic palletizer now featured in New Belgium's new 55,000-sq-ft hall. The \$20-million-plus expansion features many green design elements and technologies, such as the KHS filler, which reduces CO₂ usage.

Fill 'er up

One of the innovative pieces that got New Belgium employees really excited was the electronic filler. KHS has numerous installations in Europe, but this is its first time used in the U.S. for

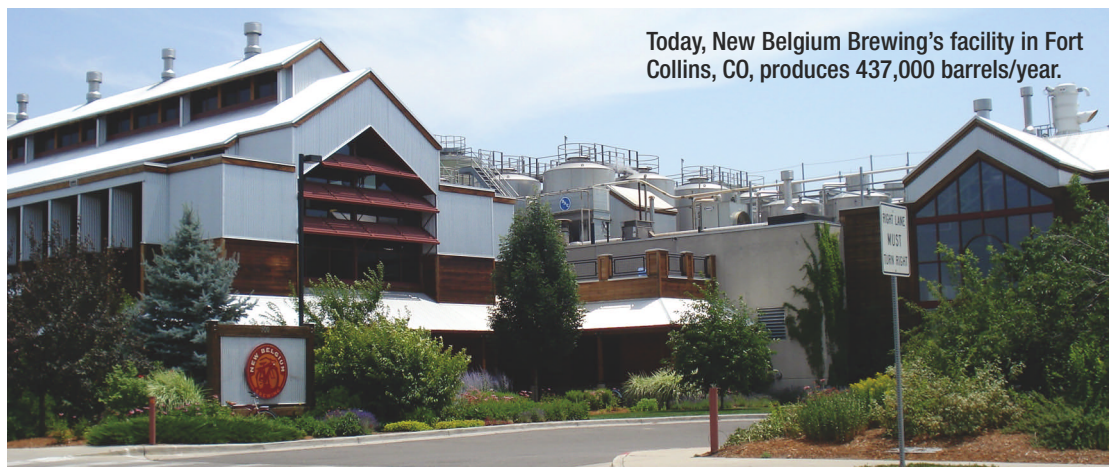
brewing. Like most European breweries, New Belgium preserves the quality of its beer by not pasteurizing. The KHS filler features flow meter and filling valve technology that ensures accurate fill levels and minimizes oxygen levels in the bottle during filling. The lower dissolved oxygen level protects the beer's taste and increases shelf life.

"The filler improves the control of fill heights as well as the amount of CO₂ and water consumption," Spencer says. "It is extremely flexible for product changeovers in terms of varieties and run conditions. We're all very excited about the level of technology and its overall design elements."

New Belgium's former bottling line operated at 300 bottles/min. With the new filler from KHS, the new filling line more than doubles that capacity to 700-plus bottles/min. The brewer's capability is now 850,000 barrels/year.

The new KHS Kisters wraparound packer uses an unfolded blank and wraps the corrugated around the product while inserting a partition between the bottles. New Belgium's old case packer unpacked and repacked bottles into already constructed cases. This machine is another first to the U.S.

"It's an innovative approach to a problem of packaging, of putting bottles in a container or a Continued on page 26



Today, New Belgium Brewing's facility in Fort Collins, CO, produces 437,000 barrels/year.

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secondary container," explains Spencer. "This one takes up less floorspace, has higher levels of efficiency and altogether it is appealing."

Cases previously arrived at the brewery pre-erected, but now are made by feeding corrugated blanks under the bottles, and the case packer merges the bottles on top. At the same time, the case packer erects the partitions, aligns them and slides them into place between the bottles. To finish the case, the corrugated

The new wraparound case packer inserts partitions between bottles and wraps the corrugated around them.

case is folded, wrapped around the bottles and glued on the inside flaps.

KHS's cold-glue labeler allows New Belgium to add a back label on its bottles for the first time. "We're pretty excited about putting a back label on there to get people's attention in a different way," Spencer states. The labeler configuration allows the brewery to run at more than



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Robotic technology

KHS also won over New Belgium's interest with its robotic layer-forming palletizer, which can handle a wide variety of pack designs and pallet patterns. New to the U.S., the robotic arm orients cases into a layer, each layer is squared and then is slid onto the previously formed layer. Trucks wait to be loaded at the docks, and once the wrapped cases come off the palletizer, they go straight on the truck. This system makes palletizing tasks more accurate and eliminates the burden on the workforce.

Besides the highly advanced equipment and technology, KHS offered the dedication they felt they would get in return. "The tipping point [to choose KHS] was the support we felt that we were going to get from KHS," Spencer says. "Their commitment and partnership were huge."

With any startup line, there are bound to be some bumps in the road. "KHS worked extremely hard, sent engineers from Germany and the U.S. to get any problem solved and make sure it was running well enough to meet the requirements," Spencer states. "KHS really stands by their commitment and will do whatever it takes."

Looking ahead

The new line ran at an average 98-percent efficiency rate during the performance testing, far exceeding New Belgium's expectations. The expansion was built with more capacity than needed, allowing the brewery to accommodate its projected growth. Based on New Belgium's booming success since its humble beginnings, there's little doubt that it will soon be running at capacity and realizing an increasing return on its investment.

More information is available:
KHS USA, 262/797-7200.
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Target stores' Archer Farms brand replaces the conventional bag-in-box for several ready-to-eat cereals with a **RECLOSABLE, EASY-POUR CANISTER**

designed to keep the crunch and add plenty of convenience.

The canister is a likely first for cereals.

Bernie Abrams, Contributing Editor

Breakfast is becoming a battleground. The traditional bag-in-box is no longer a safe haven for dry cereal. As supermarket shelves become burgeoned with oversized bags and stand-up pouches of mass through premium brands, Minneapolis-based Target Corp. seeks a bigger place at the table with a paperboard canister.



Cereal swings in canisters



The Linearpak, being conveyed for filling, above, is able to satisfy consumer dislikes for traditional cereal structures.

Or, as a spokesperson says, "Target created the new Archer Farms® cereal canister to reinvent the breakfast experience by providing a package that is both easy and convenient for guests." That's Target-talk for consumers shopping its stores.

The canister is actually the Linearpak® from **Sonoco Consumer Products Co.** (www.sonoco.com), used in the past for pet products through cough drops. What especially excites Target and, of course, Sonoco is the Linearpak's ability to satisfy what they perceive as consumer dislike for the traditional bag-in-box structure.

A Sonoco spokesperson cites the conventional package's difficulty of opening, potential for spillage and poor pantry life because the inner bag can't be resealed as several reasons why Linearpak is so suitable for cereal.

The round-edged Linearpak, lauded for numerous virtues, reportedly was adopted in April for 18 varieties of Archer Farms cereals ranging in price from \$3.49 to \$3.99. Of these, eight are new flavor varieties.

All varieties use a single canister measuring 10x2½ in. The fill range varies with product weight and density. Sonoco says that the canister holds up to 25 oz; one supplied by Target, multigrain with yogurt

cranberries, contains 12¾-oz of product.

Along with convenience, advantages claimed for the canister design include less waste through spillage, good shelf life and environmental implications, because the body is made with two plies of paperboard containing 55-percent recycled material with 50-percent post-consumer content and a high-barrier liner as the cereal-contact surface. The outer full-wrap

paper label stock is flexo-printed in eight colors.

Sonoco doesn't provide exact specs.

It does assert the polyethylene-coated, foil membrane sealed across the flange assures freshness. It is removed by an integrated pull-tab. Providing reclosure, a friction-fit overcap molded of clarified polypropylene, features a transparent circular blister, about 1½-in.-dia, for post-purchase viewing of contents. A similarly sized, concave circle is debossed with the Archer Farms logotype components, including a silhouetted rooster.

Target doesn't make accessible packaging staff to discuss the canister's production-line characteristics, comparative material savings or other possible pluses. But the canister's rear display area does offer copy noting, "We've revolutionized the cereal box with a streamlined, bag-free container, an easy-flow spout, and a snap-shut lid that's recloseable for freshness. Breakfast will never be the same again."

Sonoco hopes the revolution carries over to other cereal brands. It says the annual bag-in-box cereal turnover is three billion units, valued at a total of \$6.12 billion, for more than 250 stockkeeping units. That's a lot of crunch.

More information is available:

Sonoco Consumer Packaging, 800/576-6626.
www.sonoco.com.

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for the packaging industry. Excellent chemical and puncture resistance gives added benefits to packaging requirements. Clarix® resins will readily bond to foil, textiles and paper substrates. Additives, such as UV inhibitors, release and slip agents, can be incorporated to help solve packaging challenges and improve performance. Clarix grades can include the benefit of low oxygen and air permeability performance.

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The inclined conveyor below keeps the angular dial fillers continuously supplied, in this case, with potatoes. At the end of the line, filled, sealed trays in baskets await transfer to delivery trucks (right).



Tray-packing sates school lunch crunch

High-speed tray packing, heat-sealing, metal detection and secondary packing helps Las Vegas school district's central kitchen produce more than 32 million meals a year, **AND THE NUMBER IS GROWING.**

The Clark County School District (CCSD) in Nevada serves a large and growing number of students lunch every day, providing breakfast as well to a large percentage of the student population. Currently, the district produces about 32 million meals each year. That number is growing at the rate of 2 to 4 million a year as the county, which contains booming Las Vegas, continues to add more to its population.

Those meals are prepared in a central kitchen and packaging facility that incorporates a high-speed packaging line rivaling those of major food packagers in speed, volume and complexity. That is why CCSD and other large school districts with central lunch facilities—in Pittsburg; Flint, Michigan; and Los Angeles, for have turned to **Food Equipment Manufacturing Co. (FEMC)** [www.femc.com] to create customized systems that

meet their individual needs.

"In addition to expertise in packaging machinery," notes CCSD foodservice director Charles Anderson, "We needed a company that was accustomed to dealing with large organizations, high-speed production and complex systems."

Planning for growth

In the 1970s, CCSD was already producing school lunches in a central kitchen and packaging them by hand in a 5,000-sq-ft facility. By 1996, administrators saw the demand that was coming as Las Vegas/Clark County's accelerated growth began. Clearly, packing lunches manually in a cramped facility would not be adequate to meet future needs.

Continuing to pack lunches by hand would mean a sizable workforce. To avoid that, it became critical to install an automated packaging line.

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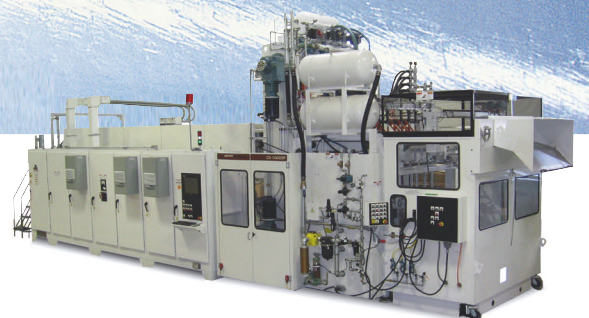
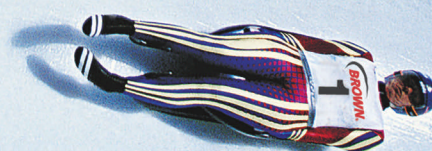
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The Clark County School Dist. (CCSD), encompassing the booming Las Vegas area, houses new filling and sealing equipment. Here, operators top off filled trays.

There followed an extended period of planning and subsequent readjustment, as accelerating population growth continually changed the project's requirements.

FEMC was chosen as the primary supplier based on its history of designing and manufacturing high-speed automated packaging lines for large food companies and its experience with Heinz, Nestlé, General Mills and Kellogg.

Anderson says CCSD worked closely with FEMC, designing and revising a packaging system that could meet such changing requirements. Points out FEMC sales manager Dan Auvil, "One advantage is that the system could take advantage of some of the latest developments in servo-motor technology. As a result, the system combines servo-driven elements with mechanical drive systems, which results in more precise control than we could have achieved with mechanical systems throughout."

Adds Anderson, "FEMC also took on the role of project manager, sourcing the elements of the system they did not manufacture themselves. This was a turnkey operation, including installation, startup, on-site training and ongoing maintenance."

The filling operation

The filling and packaging line incorporates most of the operations found in a comparable line at a food-manufacturing plant, including denesting, multiple filling stations, heat sealing and metal detection. Not included are the coding and marking systems required of packaged foods entering the retail food chain.

In place of the palletizing and stretch wrapping of a conventional manufacturing operation, an automated basket loader places filled, sealed trays into stainless-steel wire baskets for easy handling during

delivery to the various schools.

The line operates on a 55-ft, dual lane FEMC conveyor that extends through to tray denesting, filling and sealing operations. It begins with two types of denesters: two FEMC Eccentric Peel denesters that can drop paperboard trays (used for hot foods) on the conveyor belt and dual universal-screw

denesters that handle plastic trays (used for cold products such as breads, fruits and salads) that vary in configuration, depending on the contents. This dual setup enables the line to fill both types of trays interchangeably, without the need for time-consuming changeovers.

The filling station on the line

begins with two FEMC Angular Dial Volume Accurate™ fillers that dispense uniform-sized particulate or IQF (Individually Quick Frozen) products into trays. The trays are next fed from a single overhead hopper continuously filled by a **KLEENLine** (www.kleenline.com) inclined conveyor before

Continued on page 32

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a **Grote** (www.grotecompany.com) pendulum slicer cuts the sandwich meats and places the slices into the trays progressing down the line.

Two FEMC four-out piston fillers follow, capable of dispensing measured amounts of liquid and semi-liquid products, such as mashed potatoes, puddings and apple sauce. Supporting these piston fillers is a **Unifiller Systems** (www.unifiller.com) Hopper Topper that transfers product to the

hoppers that feed them.

Matching line speeds

The piston fillers feature traveling heads that move to match line speeds and maximize fill time and also have sealed ports that ensure accurate, uniform fill rates.

The fillers also offer the option, which CCSD selected, of tracking containers so that filling only takes place when tray presence is detected.

Each piece of equipment has a function in filling trays with the varied and nutritious meals specified by CCSD's resident nutritionist. But clearly, not every piece of equipment is active in every packaging run.

Denesters handle either paperboard or plastic trays depending on the product being packaged, and liquid or solid fillers come into play as those products change.

"The result," points out plant



All line equipment on/off functions are controlled from this single HMI.

manager Mario Saenz, "is that we can easily change over from one lunch menu to another without physically changing out

equipment."

Coordinating the line is an **Eaton** (www.eaton.com) Cutler-Hammer Panelview Pro human/machine interface (HMI) and Allen Bradley controls and logic from **Rockwell Automation** (www.rockwellautomation.com). This single HMI provides on/off control of each piece of equipment in the operation.

Specific controls for the non-FEMC equipment in the line are integral to the individual machines, and the FEMC piston fillers also have individual controls managing pneumatic functions not driven by the HMI. But these individual controls rarely need attention, Saenz says, having been set initially by FEMC during installation to coordinate with the speed of the line.

The maximum rates of speed of individual pieces of equipment vary, from 150 containers/min to 400 cpm. "The maximum overall production speed of the line is 200 cpm," says Charles Anderson.

Sealing, metal detection

Once filled, the two lanes of containers pass into an FEMC 10-ft-long rolling-head Heat Sealer that places film on the trays and seals it to the container lip. Containers next pass through a **Mettler-Toledo Safeline** (www.us.mt.com) metal detector and are now ready to be packed for transfer to the schools.

At the end of the line, two operations meet as empty baskets returning from schools arrive through an incoming dock area and enter a custom FEMC basket washer/dryer line. A metal wire belt carries the baskets through a hot, high-pressure wash and a cold rinse. The baskets then air dry as they travel on a second conveyor to the basket-loading area.

The sealed food containers move

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by conveyor to an **AMF** (www.amfautomation.com) Intellipac basket loader, where vacuum grippers load them, 10 at a time, into the clean baskets coming from the basket washer. The loaded baskets are then stacked on carts and removed to trucks for delivery to the schools.

A long recess

An unexpected challenge arose once the FEMC elements of the system were manufactured and the sourced elements assembled, in 2004. CCSD didn't have an existing building that could adequately house the new central lunch preparation operation. It was going to be necessary to expand and reconfigure a 338,000-sq-ft warehouse/freezer building, adding 45,000 sq ft of administrative office space.

As a result, FEMC kept the packaging system at its Ohio facility until the new building was ready for occupancy. "That was the best

Given the size and complexity of this system, I was amazed at how smoothly the installation and startup went.

alternative," says Auvil. "Like any complex machinery, a system like this should never be 'put in storage,' but kept active. Having it in our plant let us run it periodically and do regular maintenance to keep it in tip-top shape."

High marks

On completion of the expansion construction, the system was shipped to Las Vegas in three large trucks and set up in August 2007. The line went into production operation full-time only one month later, as the school year began.

"This system was designed and specified long before I was with CCSD," points out Saenz, "But I have to say that, given the size and complexity of this system, I was amazed at how smoothly the installation and startup went. There were very few hitches, and nothing we couldn't smooth out almost immediately."

Anderson continues, saying that during startup and presently, FEMC specialists maintain regular

contact with CCSD to ensure that the system continues to deliver. Currently, the CCSD Central Kitchen facility plans, prepares, packages and delivers 133,000 lunches and 41,000 breakfasts for each school day. The packaging line that makes that volume

possible running at its maximum speed of 200 cpm, with minimal downtime for maintenance and changeover, and has been doing so since September 2007, without missing a day.

"That," says Anderson, "is the reliability we were looking for."

More information is available:

FEMC Corp., 216/663-1208. www.femc.com.
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Label recycling: a materials issue

PACKAGING OPERATIONS concerned about the environmental impact of their bottles and labels can increase the recyclability of both by making sound material choices.

Encouraged by eco-conscious retailers and end-users, packaging suppliers are seeking alternative materials with less impact on the environment.

Often, they are asked about the recyclability of the packaging they manufacture.

When it comes to labels—especially those on pressure-sensitive stock—it is important to examine

all aspects of the recycling process. This includes how the recycling system works with labels; how label converters and packaging engineers can help labels move through the recycling stream efficiently; and, finally, how it may be possible to create a label designed for recycling right from the start.

The recycling stream

Materials pass through most U.S. recycling facilities in a similar fashion: Curbside collection programs bring materials to a municipal recycling facility (MRF); collected materials, which range from plastic to glass to paper, are sorted then given or sold, depending on their value, to recyclers.

Plastic bottles—one of the most common sources of recycled plastic—are taken by recyclers to processing plants. They are washed and separated in hot, soapy water to remove as many contaminants as possible. The bottles then are ground up, with the labels still attached, and washed once again to remove as much label material as possible. According to the **Association for Postconsumer Plastic Recyclers (APPR)** www.plasticsrecycling.org, it is estimated that up to 95 percent of all label materials are removed at this

point in the process. In most cases, the label material is landfilled. In some instances, plastics such as polypropylene (PP) are separated from the rest of the waste material and used for recycling.

Three roads to higher recyclability

While plastic recycling experts' opinions vary, they generally agree that packagers have three opportunities to improve the odds that removed label material will be recycled instead of landfilled. Packaging operations can choose label materials that have high value to recyclers; they can specify adhesives optimized for recycling; and packagers can ask for inks and varnishes that will not contaminate recycled plastic.

By boosting the market value of reclaimed label material, packagers can help create an economic incentive for recyclers to keep that material out of landfills. "From a material recovery perspective, the more of any one type of material in the recycling stream, the more important the need for a solution," Jeff McLaughlin, vice chairman of the **National Association for Polyethylene Terephthalate Container Resources** (www.NAPCOR.com) explains. "If all labels in the marketplace were on PET (polyethylene terephthalate) film substrates [for example], the industry would have a compelling volume of labels to recover."

Compatibility with the container recycling
Continued on page 36



Often blamed for "gumming up" recycling processes, label adhesives can vary in their compatibility with current recycling processes.



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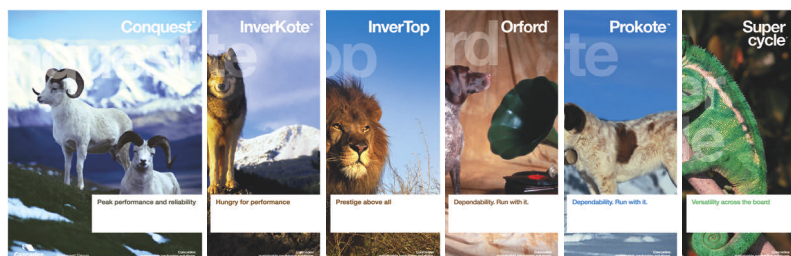
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processes also is important. In some cases, this involves choosing labels that separate easily from their containers; in other cases, it means choosing labels that can be recycled along with the container. As Jon Stephens, a member of the board of directors for the APPR explains, using materials that sink in water, such as polylactic acid (PLA), polyethylene

consumer goods companies and end users about label-recycling options. For example, the **Tag and Label Manufacturers Institute (www.tlmi.com)**, NAPCOR and APPR are establishing and promoting guidelines for material choices.

These groups encourage bottlers to use only PP labels on PET bottles. The amount of recyclable PP



The key to increasing a label's recyclability lies in making appropriate material, adhesive and ink-and-varnish choices.

terephthalate glycol (PETG) or polystyrene (PS), is not good for PET recycling. On the other hand, sinking labels are fine for high-density polyethylene (HDPE) bottles, but HDPE labels are even better.

Adhesive selection is another critical factor. While it is generally presumed that adhesives will "gum up" the recycling process, there are adhesives that promise greater compatibility with current recycling processes. McLaughlin sees value in adhesives designed to wash off of containers with hot water. As he explains, "Potentially, they could allow for shorter wash times, thus increasing throughput at the recycling plant, which would boost the value of the material to the recycler."

Explaining that washable adhesives need certain performance characteristics to add potential value to their recyclability, Stephens says: "Adhesives should release from the PET or HDPE surface at 70- to 80-degree Celsius, with caustic and surfactants present. Ideally, the adhesive stays with the label. Adhesive that does disperse must not redeposit on the washed PET or HDPE flakes."

Label inks and varnishes that contaminate the wash water during processing can negatively impact both the label and the container's recyclability. To evaluate how much of a label's inks and varnishes can bleed during the recycling process, APR has developed and posted a test protocol on its website.

Learning for success

Trade associations, recyclers, packaging consultants and label material suppliers are working together to educate packaging engineers,

coming off of bottles may encourage more recyclers to steer this material away from landfills.

The eco-sensitive label

So, is it possible to create a "recyclable" label? In a word, yes.

The key to increasing a label's recyclability lies in making the appropriate material, adhesive and ink-and-varnish choices. Packagers should choose materials that have high value to recyclers, specify adhesives that facilitate label removal and do not contaminate recycled plastic, and choose inks that meet APPR's bleeding labels protocol.

This article was edited by Packaging Digest staff and written by Avery Dennison marketing leader Amy Kovach and market research manager Sam Brown.

Brown conducts trend analysis for Avery Dennison, and Kovach leads the marketing, communication and education strategy for green growth and sustainable platform development for Avery Dennison, Fasson Roll North America.

More information is available:

Association for Postconsumer Plastic Recyclers,
202/316-3046. www.plasticsrecycling.org.
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sustainability



Now that we are well into the year of the Wal-Mart Scorecard, companies are setting sustainability targets for packaging. Understanding how targets drive actions and how the outcomes of actions speak to various audiences is essential in establishing appropriate expectations of what we are likely to achieve. For example, a target focused on reducing the mass of packaging used may drive actions resulting in cost-effective and lightweight packaging reducing energy and material in the near

just less bad?" Instead, we can set targets that encourage actions to develop cost-effective, efficient packaging, recognizing that the benefits of these strategies will plateau. We also set targets to drive us in directions that ensure new options become available in the long-term. In my mind, this dual approach is how we move the dial toward the creation of more sustainable systems for packaging. In this scenario, there is commitment to a strategy that doesn't have a payback in the near-term—a

recycling, if we don't support better systems to collect and recover packaging, efforts to improve packaging efficiency will lose steam.

The result is that the flawed, underlying system is unchanged and we continue to design, use and spend money on packaging materials that ultimately get a one-way ticket to a hole in the ground.

To give more than lip service to expectations that

Consumers need a role in the sustainability solution

term—easy benefits to communicate to an audience of managers and customers. But these benefits are largely invisible to consumers who cannot feel the difference in a 10-percent-lighter pack and may not understand the benefit of more efficient cube. In short, what speaks to one audience might not speak to another.

In a profitable company, it's reasonable to expect that gains in efficiency on an absolute basis will likely be overwhelmed by growth over time. So when efficiency strategies are maxed out, the question becomes, "Did we really make any strides towards more sustainable packaging or were we

difficult case to make to managers. However, one only need look at the U.S. auto industry to see the consequence of not pursuing near- and long-term strategies when they were forewarned that oil is a vulnerable and limited resource.

No issue more clearly represents this tension between near-term payback and the long-term investment than the collection and effective recovery of packaging materials. Despite our best efforts to use less packaging and design for

we intend to change packaging sustainability, we need to have targets that both align with what we want to achieve and speak to the expectations of our audience. One lesson from 10-plus years of improving the eco-efficiency of packaging in Europe is that consumers are largely unaware of the upstream impacts. If we want consumers to be part of the solution, they need to play a role. Many efficiency measures communicate in the supply chain but not necessarily with consumers.

Anne Johnson is the director of the Sustainable Packaging Coalition, a project of GreenBlue (www.greenblue.org). For additional information, email info@sustainablepackaging.org.

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A robot in one of the four cells layers shipping cases of olive oil on one of its two-pallet loading positions below.

Pompeian's palletizing goes robotic

Breaking with its traditional packing methods, the 102-year-old Baltimore olive oil importer/bottler adds a sophisticated robotic palletizing system for cases of oils and wine vinegars. The move is reducing labor costs and downtime while **INCREASING PRODUCTION EFFICIENCY.**

Lauren R. Hartman, Senior Editor

Pompeian, Inc., a leading importer, bottler and distributor of olive oils and wine vinegars in the U.S., is changing the way it does business, at least the way it packs cases of its familiar product at its headquarters in Baltimore.

For the first time, the 102-year-old company has automated its olive oil and wine vinegar processing/bottling lines with robotics.

This may not sound earth-shattering to most, but everything about Pompeian is steeped in tradition. Baltimore's original olive oil importer, Pompeian became the first brand of olive oil nationally introduced in the U.S. By monitoring the growing, harvesting and pressing of the olives and controlling the handling, shipping, storing and packing of the olive oil, as well as several varieties of vinegar—including a new, pomegranate-infused balsamic vinegar—and cooking wine, extra virgin olive oil/canola oil blends as well as prepared olives and artichoke hearts, Pompeian soon became an industry leader.

Distinguished on store shelves by its patented, tapered, ribbed bottles, Pompeian is now the fastest growing major olive oil brand, the top selling red wine vinegar and the fastest growing cooking wine brand in America (according to Information Resources Inc., 2005). The future looks bright olive green for Pompeian.

"We're also the fastest-growing national brand of olive oil in the category," says Kevin Lydon, vp of operations. All of its recent product introductions and increasing production volumes in a historic brick inner-city building were causing

the company's century-year-old facility to feel some growing pains. Until June 2007, the cases of olive oil and other products at the plant were hand-palletized and wrapped, resulting in low palletizing rates and higher manual labor costs than Pompeian would have liked. "Before, four individuals used to manually stack between 3,500 and 4,000 cases each ten-hour day on pallets," Lydon recalls.

With an expanding mix of stockkeeping units and packaging configurations, Pompeian realized it required faster and more flexible palletizing. The packaging group knew that not only automating the setup was the answer, but going robotic was the logical choice. Robotic palletizing promised increased capacity, decreased labor, reduced maintenance costs and downtime, and a safer work environment while Pompeian could get the versatility required for its diverse line of products.

It called upon robotic systems integrator **Flexicell, Inc. (www.flexicell.com)** to design and provide a robotic palletizing system for its shipping cases of oils, vinegars and other products that could take Pompeian from the past efficiently into the future.

"We desired repeatability and uptime performance, flexibility, the ability to handle ever-changing pallet patterns and new packaging structures and ease of use, as this was our first use of robotics," explains Lydon. "We couldn't afford a long learning curve or any extra downtime."

On to the future

From a streetside view, no one

would guess that the charming, turn-of-the-century plant contains such a sophisticated, 21st-century robotic system and the whole concept of robots may seem somewhat out of place at the 160,000-sq-ft facility rich with tradition. But adding robotic palletizing provided Pompeian an opportunity to reduce its labor costs, boost production efficiency and improve ergonomics. "Floorspace and ceiling height were an issue, and we had to add additional support under the floor," Lydon says.

Pompeian's 136 different products are available in a variety of containers, from 2-oz



bottles to one-gal metal tins. Especially popular are its 16- and 32-oz glass and vinyl bottles for olive oil in a patented, tapered, ribbed bottle design, as well as 125- and 750-mL glass and polyethylene bottles for White and Golden cooking wines, 48- and 64-oz sizes of handled, vinyl jugs and hefty, 1-gal metal F-style tins.

The company's case-packing, logistics and material-handling solutions had to step up in order to keep pace with demand.

"We pack more than ten different case sizes on some of the lines, so the robots were designed to handle six or seven different pack patterns and fifteen to twenty-one

Each of the four robotic cells has two pallet-loading stations so that the robots don't have to stop [operating].

different products," says Lydon. The maximum weight of a pallet load is about 2,250 lb, he says.

Flexicell created a multiple-robot palletizing and stretch-wrapping system to accommodate Pompeian's four bottling lines for olive oil, vinegars and Marsala and Sherry cooking wines and their corresponding corrugated shipping cases.

Integrated into the historic building were four palletizing cells featuring **Fanuc Robotics' (www.fanucrobotics.com) M710iC/50** six-axis palletizing robots, chosen especially for Pompeian's application for their flexibility, speed and reach.

Each of the robots incorporates Fanuc's R-J3iC controller and a hand-held I pendant operator-communication tool

that function with Fanuc's Handling Tool software. At Pompeian, the robots can handle cases weighing up to 37 lb.

Each of the cells is capable of palletizing loads from one production line to one of two loading positions.

Flexicell also equipped the cells with its in-house-built safety guarding, **SmartScan (+44 0 15326 401313)** safety light fences, custom-designed and built end-of-arm tooling, a pallet conveyor and an

automatic empty-pallet dispenser at the front of the station capable of holding up to 20 pallets, dispensing one pallet at a time.

The system was also custom-programmed by Flexicell, which used **Rockwell Automation's (www.rockwellautomation.com)** Allen-Bradley CompactLogix programmable logic controller and Fanuc's Handling Tool software. The robotic cells are coupled with **Hytrol (www.hytrol.com)**

E-Z Logic infeed conveyors that transport the shipping cases filled with product to the cells from existing case-packing equipment.

Empty 48x40-in. pallets and full pallet loads are transported throughout the system using a Flexicell-built, multi-function pallet-transfer cart that runs back and forth on a 105-ft-long rail embedded into the new brick and concrete floor that was added to the

Continued on page 40

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area to complement the plant's old-world, historic esthetics. The motor-driven cart shuttles the palletized loads of cases to a **Wulftec** (www.wulftec.com) Model WCA-150 automatic pallet stretch wrapper.

"We're very pleased that Flexicell recommended a Wulftec stretch wrapper," Lydon tells *PD*. "The machine has worked flawlessly since the installation."

Four loads at a time

Adding all of this new equipment into the historic building could have been a challenge, but it was business as usual for Flexicell. Along with the new equipment, Pompeian installed a steel-reinforced red-brick production floor in the area to maintain visual esthetics and to ensure support for the robots, Lydon notes.

Lydon and Flexicell's regional sales manager Jack Peters teamed up to head a team that includes Fanuc, Wulftec and Hytrol to develop the end-of-line palletizing cell system with the performance and flexibility to handle Pompeian's many stockkeeping units packed at speeds from 9 to 27 cases/min, depending on the specific packing line and the end-of-arm gripper tool being used.

Brains rather than brawn

With fewer operators, the lines run as many as



Depending on case size and products palletized, loads range from 70 to 216 cases/pallet.

six days a week and can handle Pompeian's various case sizes and packing patterns, palletizing four loads at once. Each line is dedicated to running certain package sizes and product types. There are two oil lines, one vinegar line and one cooking-wine line.

"Labor costs have been reduced, and we now utilize the operators to run another line, so we increased capacity rather than eliminated head count," Lydon says.

"This system has provided flexibility in ways we didn't completely foresee when we began the project," he observes. "Our operators are able to reduce the stress and strain on their bodies, and we are able to utilize their intelligence instead of their brawn. We're increasing productivity, which

jumped twenty-seven percent on our production lines after the equipment installation."

Being that the pallets are stretch-wrapped before they leave the area has also reduced warehouse damage by 85 percent, he adds, and saves an hour's time loading trucks. "Overall, we are extremely pleased with the addition of this equipment," he points out.

In production, filled, sealed shipping cases are transported to the palletizing area on four

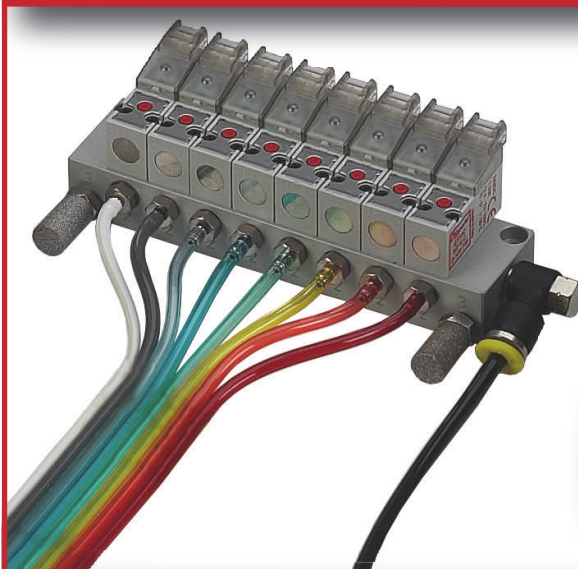
separate Hytrol E-Z Logic zero-pressure buffering conveyors. Reference pushers ease the cases against a guide to accurately align them into position in a cell before the robot begins picking them up.

Able to grasp either one or two cases at a time, each robot has custom end-of-arm tooling that Flexicell designed with vacuum grippers powered by an electrical vacuum pump from **Busch** (www.buschpump.com) and places the cases onto a pallet placed on each side of the robot, layering the cases according to the pack pattern designed for that specific product load.

When the pallet is full of cases, the robot sends a signal to the transfer cart to come to the cell and pick up the load.

The cart has two pallet positions or spaces (one

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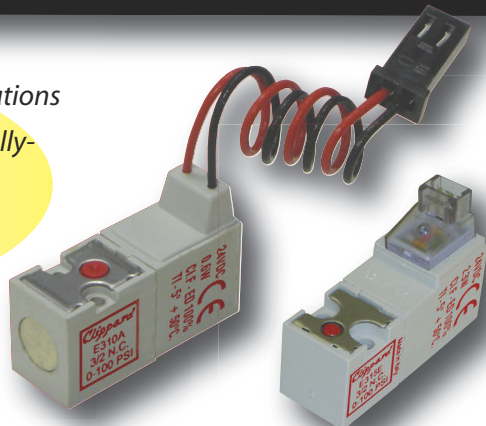


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already seeing a payback.” This is just the first step in Pompeian’s overall plant modernization plan, he sums up. “We’re expanding our warehouse, increasing production rates and adding a state-of-the-art, large-volume filling line. Flexicell did a fantastic job. We would only use Flexicell Robotic Solutions for our future projects.”

More information is available:

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side for an empty pallet; one side for a full load to be accepted from the cell), and indexes the full load to a discharge point at the stretch wrapper’s conveyor infeed using chain conveyors.

As a full load waits for the transfer cart or is being discharged to the cart, the robot, meanwhile, continues palletizing because the cell is designed for loading in either of the two positions. The maximum number of cases it layers per load is eight; the maximum amount of cases per layer is 30.

Says Peters, “Each cell has two pallet-loading stations so that the robots don’t have to stop [operating].”

The cart moves the full pallet load to the turntable stretch-wrapper’s conveyor infeed before the load is securely film-wrapped. At this position, the cart simultaneously receives an empty pallet from the pallet dispenser located parallel to the stretch wrapper. As full pallets are wrapped, the cart continues on its programmed path down the rail to repeat the process at another cell.

The transfer cart uses ultrasonic sensors from **Omron’s STI Ultrasonics** (www.sti.com) that halt the cart if it gets too close to an object or a person. Other sensors on the line include photocells from **Banner Eng.** (www.bannerengineering.com), protected by steel bunkers to prevent damage and misalignment.

“The rails are embedded in the brick flooring,” explains Peters. “This allows forklifts and foot traffic to move easily over them.” Depending on the case sizes and the products being palletized, the loads range from containing 70 cases to 216 per pallet.

‘Oils’ well that ends well

The entire palletizing/case-handling system was designed, constructed, assembled, tested, installed and delivered in less than six months. The cells operate 10 hours/day and four days/week.

“We couldn’t have asked for a better startup,” says Lydon. “We’re

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A 'paws' for petfood packaging

Edited by **Lauren Hartman**,
Senior Editor

Approximately 63 percent of American households own a pet today and the number of households that have a pet leaped from 58.3 million to 71.6 million over the past decade. In 2007, Americans spent about \$41 billion on pet products. It's no wonder, then, that people are so devoted to their pets that even if they're allergic to them (between 10 to 19 percent claim to be), they still share their homes with their furry or feathered companions. This is great news for the petfood and petcare market, as indicated by a national pet owners survey conducted by the American Pet Product Manufacturers Association (APPMA) for 2007-2008.

But with opportunity comes competition. Innovative product and packaging development is the key to taking advantage of the growing pet market. The top two ways that pet owners find new products include browsing the store shelves and television advertisements, according to the APPMA. Packaging not only improves the shopping experience, but can also play a large role in consumer loyalty to a brand. More than 700 new toys, treats and other products were introduced alone in 2006 at the Global Pet Expo, making packaging an even more crucial component in selling products.

Studies indicate that petfood packaging follows many of the same trends as packaging for humans. Brand differentiation, brand enhancement and convenience rate highly with consumers when selecting a brand of food or petcare products.

Top market drivers

There are many major trends influencing the growth in the petfood and petcare segment. This paper addresses 10 forces guiding the market in 2008 and how packagers can utilize packaging to take advantage of these growth areas:

Today's pet owners love their furry friends so much, they're putting money where their hearts are. A white paper reveals research from market associations that looks at **TRENDS IN PETFOOD PACKAGING**.

I. The pet as a family member

The family dog, cat or fish is no longer considered to be the family pet. Instead, they are a family member that deserves premium quality care. Nearly 50 percent of all pet owners not only buy birthday or holiday presents for their animals, but also let the dog sleep in their bed. According to a pet survey in 2006 by Mintel, 83 percent of pet owners call themselves mommy or daddy. As humans anthropomorphize their pets, they purchase products and services for their pets that are fun and an extension of their own personal lifestyle.

To stay ahead of the competition, new and established pet brands must convert consumer needs into tangible products that offer convenience and ease-of-use.

People want their pet products to convey a premium quality, and packaging that is inferior to human product standards will fail to deliver the necessary shelf impact to draw in shoppers. The petfood and petcare segment is one of a handful of markets where price sensitivity is very low. Consumers are more interested in the quality, taste and functionality of products, and selecting packaging that communicates this message can make products stand out on the store shelf.

One great example is Iams Savory Sauce, which is a topping equivalent to human foods like ketchup, and is primarily used to enhance the eating experience for the dog. The package conveys the message of quality and taste very clearly in its sauce-style polyethylene terephthalate (PET) container and flip-top dispensing closure. This

package makes the product look so appetizing, that it could be mistaken for a human-grade gravy.

II. Women's influence on packaging

Petfood and petcare manufacturers need to cater to the female buyer when selecting packaging to brand products, because women are the buyers of pet products in 8 out of 10 households (says APPMA). Furthermore, women are more likely to own dogs and cats, and their emotional commitment to their pets can transfer easily into spending more money on accessories, treats and toys (Mintel Pet Survey 2006).

Our own research, developed through focus groups conducted over a number of years, indicates that women know exactly what appeals to them. If packaging does not meet their requirements, their buying decisions are clearly influenced.

The study found four areas that influence the packaging preferences of women: packaging color; shape; product image; and text. For instance, if the product shape is not ergonomic or if a package is difficult to lift and carry, it is much more difficult to sell to women. Packages like Purina's Tidy Cat litter and Deli-Cat brand catfood appeal to the female buyer. Both items come in large jug containers that are easy to store in a cupboard and have convenient carrying handles to make their use easier.

III. Convenient treats

Giving a pet a treat is one of the most enjoyable activities a person can do with their pet. Most people give their dogs an average of three treats per day, for anything from training and tricks to the excitement of watching their pet indulge (APPMA). Overall,

90 percent of dogs and just less than 70 percent of all other pets are given treats. The experience of giving a treat must be simple and fun. Convenient packaging that can provide easy access and freshness is more likely to attract and maintain consumers to products.

Moist cat treats are no hassle for the owner. They often come in standup pouches that are resealable, ensuring the product will stay fresh up to the last treat.

Focus group research indicates that a premium-looking package translates into a quality product in the consumers mind. For instance, Chomp's YipYap all-natural treats for dogs come in a tin reminiscent of Altoid's high-end package for its "curiously strong" mints. The success of this product can be greatly attributed to the effort that went into selecting a premium quality package. The takeaway for brand managers of petfood products is that packaging can make or break your products success in the pet treat segment.

IV. Recalls spark interest in "Made in America" products

In March 2007, major petfood manufacturers started recalling a variety of petfoods and treats that would eventually affect more than 5,300 petfood products. By the end of March, more than 100 pet deaths and 500 cases of kidney failure were blamed on contaminated pet products. A survey conducted by CMi (now part of NSF Intl., an international food safety and assurance



company that operates throughout the food supply chain) in 2006 suggests that 75 percent of Americans are concerned about food safety issues and that they pay close attention to food packaging.

The recalls across both human and pet foods have made consumers increasingly aware of where their petfood is made, because the majority of the problematic food was made outside of the U.S.

Consumers lost trust in brands they had been using for years and are now taking a very careful look at the

new products. Many pet consumers will only buy products that are "Made in America," and if the packaging does not convey this or if the message is too small, then the brand could lose business. One product that has capitalized on this idea is Pet Factory's rawhide products, which contain a simple blue sticky label that's central message is "American Beefhide." If you have an American-made product, take advantage of marketing this fact on your

package in a visible way.

V. Heightened awareness of ingredients

The magnitude of the petfood recalls has encouraged pet owners to educate themselves on what exactly ingredients such as "wheat-gluten" and "meat byproducts" contain. Many consumers are questioning the integrity of brands and are considering a switch to something new. This gives new

players an opportunity to differentiate themselves with ingredients that offer healthier alternatives to a usual name-brand food.

Innovative packaging that communicates a message that the ingredients in a petfood are healthy and of human quality can definitely appeal to pet owners. For example, Old Mother Hubbard's oven-baked dog treats are packaged in a bag that Continued on page 44



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looks fresh from the bakery, with text that lists the healthy ingredients of oatmeal, eggs, apples, and carrots on the front of the bag.

VI. Pet organics and nutrition

As people look for healthier lifestyles, they seek the same care for their pets. The trend to more natural and organic foods for humans has already been emulated in the petfood market, with an increase in organic petfood sales of 46 percent in 2005, 36 percent in 2006, and an expected, continued growth of 25 percent throughout 2008, according to the Organic Trade Assn. The number-one drawback to owning a pet for the majority of owners is that eventually it will die. As pets begin to age, their owners are looking for ways to extend their lives and many owners turn to vitamins and supplements. Overall, the pet health product segment is expected to grow 63 percent by 2012, indicates Simmon Market Research.

Consumers are least price-sensitive in this segment, considering that more than one-third claim that money is of no concern when it comes to their pet's health (obtained from a Hartz survey).

Sellers of organic or natural pet products can use packaging to help brands capitalize on this healthy trend. For example, Zuke's "Natural PurrZ" cat treats communicate the [healthy] message in the product name and the treat offers convenience to the pet owner with its resealable, standup pouch.

With vitamins, it's important to remember that the human still has to operate the package and ensure product safety. Difficult child-resistant and certain continuous-thread closures can be especially hard for aging adults to use. It is also important for the packaging to communicate in an easy and fun way why organics and pet nutrition are the right products for pets.

Organic cat and dog kits from C&P's Organix, offer a fun and convenient way to introduce organic pet products into the consumer lifestyle. The kit offers a variety of organic pet foods and treats that come in a neatly packed storage container with a handle for carrying.

VII. Filling an empty nest

The "Baby Boomer" generation has been a major market driver for everything from houses to cars to entertainment to almost all consumer products for several decades.

Generally defined as those born between the years 1946 and 1964, the very first of these "Baby Boomers" are turning 60 this year. Many are suffering from the empty nest syndrome that comes with watching kids go to college, start a career, and/or get married. The pet, any size or species, is the new surrogate child to keep them company and make them laugh. Many boomers claim that owning a pet helps them stay healthier and makes the transition of

growing into adults easier.

Baby Boomers place a significantly higher monetary value on convenient



People want their pet products to convey a premium quality.

packaging, compared to other generations. If pet products aren't easy to use, then they won't have a chance at converting this demographic. One typical market misconception is that Boomers are at a point where they are brand loyal and reluctant to change. Surveys indicate differently. A study by the American Assn. of Retired People (AARP, 2002) indicated that consumers 45 and older are as likely to change brands as younger consumers. For added convenience and an easier-opening package, assuming quality is equal, the Boomer generation would have little or no issue



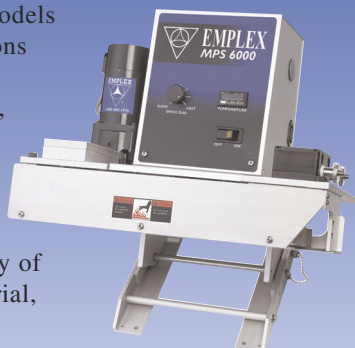
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in making a brand change and would likely even consider paying more for that brand.

Purina's Fancy Feast canned variety pack is an excellent example of packaging convenience that appeals to Baby Boomers. The cans come in a paperboard case with a handle for carrying and a dispensing chute that opens for easy access with just the tear of a strip. Additionally, the can itself has a pull-tab that eliminates the need for utensils and makes serving a gourmet meal simple and clean.

VIII. Cleaning up the mess

One major disadvantage of owning a pet can be the mess and smell the beloved creature can leave in its trail. As a result, petfood and petcare manufactures have launched a variety of innovative cleaning products that remove stains and odors. We all know that our pets tend to be repeat offenders when it comes to accidents, so these innovative products come in a variety of stockkeeping units to cater to a pet owners every need, whether it be wipes, sprays or detergents.

Getting rid of fleas and ticks is another issue. Sergeant's Sentry Natural Defense, which protects against fleas and ticks, is a good example of eye-catching packaging that comes in a variety of options.

One of its most innovative offerings comes in an ergonomically shaped high-density polyethylene bottle topped with a dispensing cap. The bottle design helps this package stand out against the growing number of petcare products on the store shelf and

As people look for healthier lifestyles, they seek the same care for their pets.

the closure builds brand loyalty once the consumer experiences the ease of dispensing at home.

Pet owners also have seen a growing number of luxury pet-cleaning products in high-end department stores, such as Kiehl's dog cleansing spritz. This product comes in an upscale, cosmetic-looking PET bottle and can be found at Nordstrom and Saks Fifth Avenue stores. The products that will be most successful in the "cleaning up the mess" market will be those that not only offer an innovative product, but a user-friendly package.

IX. Eco-friendly pet products

The environment is a growing

concern among many people, and a lifestyle change for us will very likely translate into a lifestyle change for our pets. With sustainability and the awareness of the diminishing supply of natural resources, manufacturers should "think green" when creating products and packaging. If selling an eco-friendly product, make the packaging eco-friendly as well. Several eco-friendly kitty litters out there don't utilize environmentally friendly packaging.

Cat litter is also heavy, and many of the eco-friendly brands don't yet offer a handle to make carrying them easier. Items, such as pet beds made from plastic bottles and recycled-material dog toys can both benefit from more eco-friendly packaging.

X. Emerging pet markets

Eastern Europe, Latin America and South Asia are seeing growth in the market for petfood and petcare

products. As they gradually improve their standard of living, consumers will have a rising disposable income, part of which is likely being spent on care for their new pet companions. Knowing what types of packaging delivers convenience in their terms will help build brand loyalty in the pet market.

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system integration

As noted here in March and May, the more time end users spend interviewing the system integrators being considered for an automation project, the less time they'll spend clearing up misunderstandings after the project is underway. Here are two more interview questions that system integrators wish they'd hear more often.

What will I get for my investment in this project, and what is it really going to cost?

Two questions integrators wish they'd hear more often

Many end users look only at the capital expenditures for an automation project, but a savvy system integrator will make sure they consider the big picture, including all the hidden costs. For example, Michael Gurney, a co-owner of Concept Systems, notes that downtime can be expensive, so it pays to choose an integrator who uses standardized hardware to minimize the downtime required for equipment replacement. Gurney adds that "utilizing an integrator who will follow the client's established hardware standards reduces spare parts inventories and improves maintenance personnel's familiarity."

Software packages with annual license renewals or upgrade fees can be a particularly aggravating source of hidden costs. Although these are typically legitimate expenses covered in the integrator's contract, many end users are unpleasantly surprised when they find they committed to paying such fees year after year. Asking a prospective integrator to explain all recurring costs up front can save a lot of bickering after the contract is signed and the project is complete.

Particularly astute integrators can take the question of expenditures and returns one step further. They can advise their clients on which automation projects to pursue. As Bob Zeigenfuse, president of Advanced Automation, puts it, "A good integrator can discover opportunities and turn them into useful solutions that further the client's business objectives." This ability should become readily apparent during the selection process.

Where do you see the greatest risks in this project, and how would you minimize their impact?

Risk is also a cost that end users should discuss with prospective integrators. "It's important that a system integrator understands what risks exist in a potential project. It demonstrates that they understand the scope and have accounted for

the unknown issues," says Todd Williams, managing director of the Systems Div. at The Benham Companies (Concept Systems, Advanced Automation and The Benham Companies constitute the Class of 2007 in *Control Engineering's* Integrator Hall of Fame).

He adds that the highest-risk items in an integration project are the interfaces to other systems. "The integrator must understand the interfaces, and everyone involved must know who is responsible." Says Zeigenfuse, "One of my pet peeves is the focus on the technological issues." He says clients should ask integrators not only about potential technological risks, but about how they would manage those risks and the human element. He adds, "The processes and people associated with the implementation are more than 50 percent of the risk."

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





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Cultural evolution

Dairy with roots in '60s counterculture uses **FRESHCOAT BOARD CARTONS** to bring its kefir to mainstream markets.

Linda Casey, Associate Editor

The year was 1960, and Chuck Kesey and his wife, Sue, had recently graduated from Oregon State University, where Chuck studied dairy technology and Sue had taken business science classes. With the help of Chuck's father Fred Kesey, who founded and managed the Eugene Farmers Creamery, the couple entered the packaging-and-distribution side of the dairy business by supplying 1-gal glass returnable jugs of milk to other creameries. The couple also supplied the Springfield, OR, schools with milk—hence, their dairy's name became Springfield Creamery.

Meanwhile the '60s counterculture, of which Chuck's brother Ken Kesey, was an active participant, continued to groove. In 1962, *Viking Press* published Ken's most well-known book *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. In a review published on Feb. 16, 1962, *Time* magazine stated the book is

(From l. to r.) The gabletop cartons are loaded flat into the f/f/s machine's magazine. The machine's bottom tucker begins forming a carton's base. To help ensure clean folds, the carton's bottom flaps are prefolded. The f/f/s machine also prefolds the gable top.

“a roar of protest against middlebrow society's rules and the invisible rulers who enforce them.”

While much attention has been paid to the psychedelic nature of the 1960s, it's important to note that the natural food movement also was a huge part of this culture.

The woman behind the brand

In 1969, the couple found themselves in a transitional period: Chuck's father had passed away, the dairy industry was in flux and the natural food movement was at full speed. The Kesey's knew they had to find their niche to survive.

The Kesey's found their muse in Nancy Van Brasch Hamren, who was working as a bookkeeper at Springfield Creamery. Hamren had an affinity for natural foods and a yogurt recipe passed down from her grandmother.

Hamren and Chuck began working on perfecting her grandmother's yogurt recipe. The result was Honey yogurt, which Springfield Creamery says is the first yogurt sold by a U.S. creamery containing acidophilus cultures.

Springfield Creamery sold its Honey yogurt in glass canning jars and 5-gal buckets at Willamette People's Co-op and Porters Fine Foods in Eugene, OR. When the manager from Willamette People's

Co-op called and asked for some of that “Nancy's yogurt,” the folks at Springfield Creamery realized a brand was born.

With a little help from our friends

According to Sue, an underground comic book route operated by a University of Oregon graduate named Gilbert Rosborne and his partner—musician Huey Lewis—was instrumental in expanding the brand into the Bay Area. She says the comic book shops were savvy enough to make the connections between Nancy's Yogurt, Springfield Creamery and her brother-in-law Ken.

The creamery got further attention in 1972, when the Grateful Dead performed the first of many concerts there. This all helped the Nancy's brand get on natural foods stores' shelves in Washington, Oregon and California.

More than just yogurt

The Nancy's product line now contains more than 80 products, including yogurt, cottage cheese, sour cream and kefir.

Like yogurt, kefir is a cultured-milk product. According to the National Center for Home Food Preservation, it is believed to have originated centuries ago in the Northern Caucasus Mountains.





A vacuum arm (above) rises to meet a bottom-formed-and-sealed carton. The carton (below) is lowered to f/f/s machine's track.

Since its launch in 1975, Nancy's Kefir grew its fan base in the Northwest. Understanding that the European-style drink has a distinctive taste with sour notes and a breadlike aroma, the creamery decided to play it safe and keep kefir a regional product.

"We didn't market outside the Northwest at all," says Sheryl Kesey Thompson, who along with her brother Kit Kesey, work with their parents at the creamery. "Kefir just was a beast unto its own, and it was a real small portion of our business at that point."

When the Kesseys began seeing the proliferation of single-serve dairy drinks in 2006, they re-examined the marketing strategy for Nancy's Kefir. "We felt like we have that in our little eight-oz kefir," recalls Sheryl. "We've been making it for years."

Packaged for travel

Before Springfield Creamery could bring Nancy's Kefir to a national, mainstream market, the packaging needed an update. The containers had to be more durable to withstand longer trips, and they needed an approachable yet sophisticated look.

Before the recent redesign, the packaging for Nancy's Kefir hadn't changed since 1975, when an employee literally created its

handmade look with some art pens in the back of the creamery. "The nutritional label has been updated over the years, but the graphics have not been updated since kefir launched in 1975," explains Sheryl. "It needed some love."

The rest of the Nancy's line had received a packaging makeover in 2003. "We didn't redo our kefir at that point, because we were undecided about what sort of container to put it

in," says Sheryl. "So, we held off on kefir until it was relaunched in 2007 with a new recipe that's fully organic and the packaging redesign."

"When we finally decided to relaunch the kefir, there was a lot discussion about whether or not to go to a bottle," Sheryl adds. The family eventually decided against using plastic bottles, citing that the product would end up looking like every other product on the shelf. The

Kesseys also were fond of the kefir's existing gabletop packaging that was being supplied by **Tetra Pak** (www.tetrapak.com).

After learning that Tetra Pak had new board options, the Kesseys decided to keep the gabletop package but change the material. Nancy's Kefir container would now be made from FreshCoat board. Sheryl says the FreshCoat-board containers have

Continued on page 55



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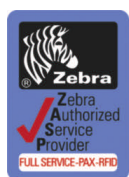
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West meets East

Bay Area baking behemoth installs an **AUTOMATED PACKAGING LINE** to help sell its delicate Petite Palmier cookies from coast to coast.

Linda Casey, Associate Editor

Headquartered in a 120,000-sq.-ft state-of-the-art baking-and-packaging facility on the West Coast, Sugar Bowl Bakery has grown into a multi-million dollar pastry empire that sells to hotels, convention centers, grocery stores and warehouse clubs.

Like many other industry giants, this baking behemoth's story also has humble beginnings. But



Above: Sugar Bowl Bakery sells three to four times more Petite Palmiers than it did before automating its packaging processes. Right: Operators visually inspect each cookie before placing it into a tray.

San Francisco-based Sugar Bowl Bakery's story starts on the other side of the globe.

From violence to poverty

Flash back to 1975. The South Vietnamese government has collapsed. The three attempts by the Ly family to leave their native Vietnam by boat met with varying levels of success. The fourth attempt only succeeds because the family, in its desperation, trades all of its property with the Viet Cong in order to get out.

When Andrew—one of five Ly brothers—finally arrives in the U.S., he has only \$1 in his pocket and no knowledge of English. With limited language skills, Andrew Ly ends up working in San Francisco coffee shops and bakeries.

A failing business brings opportunity

In 1984, the brothers—Paul, Tom, Binh, Sam and the aforementioned Andrew—pulled together \$40,000 in savings and bought a failing donut shop in San Francisco. In order to grow the business, the Ly family talks to the local Asian retailers about expanding the donut shop's offerings. As they began to expand the Sugar Bowl Bakery product line, the Lys discovered they excelled at making complex pastries, including palmier cookies.



Petite Palmiers, big business

As the orders for the Petite Palmiers® started rolling in, Sugar Bowl Bakery began to dedicate more and more people to producing and packaging the delicate treats. "I think what happened is that their products just started selling like crazy, and they had to just start throwing people on production lines," recalls Doug Hill from systems



integrator **Hill Packaging Systems** (www.hillpackagingsystems.com).

Sugar Bowl Bakery holds dear its *10 Secrets to Success*, and its manual palmier packaging process was not in line with Secret Number Seven: Focus our time and resources.

Customized treatment

The Ly family brought in Hill Packaging Systems to do return-on-investment (ROI)

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analyses for potential packaging processes, with equipment ROI targets ranging from three months to one year.

The Lys decided to start packaging automation immediately after baking, with a conveyor system using **KVP** (www.kvp-inc.com) high-temperature belting with cooling fans. Hill Packaging Systems created automated, quality-control systems made from **Eriez Mfg Co.** (www.eriez.com) metal detectors integrated with **Thompson Scale Co.**, (www.thompsonscale.com) checkweighers.

A custom-built Hill Packaging Systems wraparound labeler, which the system integrator makes from either SL2000 or SL1000 devices from **Universal Labeling Systems, Inc.** (www.universal1.com), was chosen for its ability to withstand frequent washdowns. The integrator added a **Diagraph** (www.diagraph.com) Lynx 4900 bar coder, which time- and date-codes filled trays, to the labeling station.

The final station in the palmier packaging line is home to a **Wexxar/BEL** (www.wexxar.com) semi-automatic case packer.

Packed to move

The new packaging line helped Sugar Bowl Bakery increase its production while keeping the process clean and dry. This helps the Petite Palmier cookies enjoy a shelf life of nine months after manufacturing—all without the benefit of preservatives.

"A lot of people feel that they need to use tons of preservatives to make the product last longer, but it has a lot to do with the process

too," Sugar Bowl Bakery operations manager Kevin Ly explains.

With the security of the rigid packaging, Sugar Bowl Bakery was able to increase its bakery products distribution from the Bay Area to the East Coast. The bakery sources its crystal-clear PET clamshell packaging from multiple suppliers, including **Dart Container Corp.** (www.dartcontainer.com) and **PWP** (www.pwpc.com).

Further automation ahead

Enthused by the results from automating the Petite Palmier line, Sugar Bowl Bakery has started automating the bakery's packaging line for madeleine cookies.

At the time of this writing, Doug Hill and Hill Packaging Systems technician Rudy Mayagoitia, are installing the madeleine packaging line incrementally. Not all of the new packaging equipment will mirror the

machines used for the Petite Palmier line. Like the Petite Palmier line, the new line will use the integrator's customized conveyors. The Lys again are looking at Eriez metal detectors, but they also are considering systems by **Lock Inspection Systems** (www.lockinspection.com). The new checkweigher will be a PMB1ESC semi-automatic, dual-lane linear scale from **Weigh Right** (www.weighrightasc.com).

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Food-packaging high rollers

This year's Food Marketing Institute/United Fresh shows in Las Vegas were a 'full house' of **NEW PACKAGE OFFERINGS**, technology, convenience and ease of use to enhance consumer-minded, healthier foods.

Lauren Hartman, Senior Editor

From juices to desserts, produce to soup, individually packaged portions were aces at the Food Marketing Institute show this year.

Consumers are starting to buy smaller package sizes to control high food bills and their waistlines, and packagers are keeping track. And for the first time after a 26-year run in Chicago, the early May show, along with the United Fresh and Markettechnics

deli packs of meats, cheeses and franks, health-conscious entries in packaging kits, a variety of microwavable bagels with fillings and more ethnic versions of its Easy Mac cups with peelable lids.

Pomegranate-spiked beverages and food items were the flavor of the day at both shows, and more specialty flavor combinations captivated showgoers with eye-catching package structures



Portion-packs and smaller sizes cater to consumers trimming their waistlines or their food bills.

expositions, was held at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in Las Vegas.

The change of venue took a little getting used to, as nearly a dozen of the top food processors were absent, but it didn't stop the packaging innovations from shining. The show parlayed packaging portability, convenience and healthier food and beverage introductions into winning hands.

In fact, there were new products aplenty, and Kraft launched more than 80 of them, though not all were on display. Kraft intends to cut some of its portion sizes, thereby keeping prices down, and says it will launch several smaller package sizes and repack Oscar Mayer deli meats in single-serve structures. A taste of what appeared at the Kraft booth includes Cool-Whip in an attractive aerosol can, topped with a swirled, dollop-shaped white overcap, smaller, more portion-controlled

and taste-appealing graphics. A mere appetizer of items is described here.

Fruit cups to-go

Like so many exhibitors catching on to portion packaging for their products, Sunkist Growers has taken its luscious, jarred fruits and put them in handy, clear, 8-oz multilayer cups with peelable film membranes (1). The new portion-packed cups slightly resemble spoonable yogurt packs. Also available in 24-oz glass jars, the premium fruit line will be marketed in the cups across the chilled cases of the produce section at grocery, convenience and clubstores. Sunkist Premium Sweet fruit is being manufactured by the Better for You Food Div. of the Old World Enterprise Group under license from Sunkist Growers, and sales will be managed by the Sunkist

fresh produce sales organization. Old World says the line is cold-chain-managed, meaning that it is kept refrigerated at below 35 deg F all the way to the grocer's produce section, to ensure the highest level of freshness and taste. "The new line offers consumers a better-for-you product, with more natural taste," explains Richard Sanderson president of Northbrook, IL,-based Old World Enterprise Group. "And the convenience of both eight-ounce cups and the jars makes it easy for consumers to feel good about eating healthy." Old World's product marketing manager Sarah McLaren tells PD that the clear cups, which are



nitrogen-flushed, are produced in Spain by EDV (www.edvpackaging.com) and are made of ethylene vinyl alcohol/polyethylene terephthalate and contribute to the product's 120-day refrigerated shelf life.

Launched in January, the fresh-cut fruit contains 100-percent juice and includes peaches, Valencia oranges, Mandarin oranges, pineapple, red grapefruit, tropical fruit and citrus salad.

Sanderson says that the new line has tested well with consumers, and they played back attributes and strengths of the Sunkist brand as being known for freshness, citrus and health.

"They also favored the clear packaging, which was preferred by consumers who compared it with the competition and reported that the new packaging was higher quality and showed more of the real fruit," he adds. The clear cups, which effectively showcase the brightly colored, fresh fruit inside, are sold in singles and retail for \$1.89. McLaren says Old World began a test market launch in September 2008. The product is currently available in eastern areas of the U.S. at Acme and in the West at SuperValu. More store locations are quickly adding the cups, she says.

Mini produce packs tempt tiny tastebuds

Cherry tomatoes, candy peppers and mini cucumbers in small thermoformed, lunchbox-friendly trays with clear peel-off lids (2) under the Sunset Kids label were head-turners at the Mastronardi Produce booth. Situated near pristine Point Pelee National Park in Kingsville, ON, Mastronardi Produce Ltd., a leading grower, packer and distributor, calls its glass and plastic greenhouse operations one of the largest in the world. The clear, curvy Mimi 3-oz tray-packs haven't yet appeared in the marketplace, but the prototypes at the United Produce show were thermoformed of a glass-clear web of a polypropylene.

A PET material is also in the offing. Mastronardi is trying to qualify one of several films and machinery for both the trays and the film lidding that contain recycled content—perhaps even with some post-consumer-recycled plastic in it—but that's still pending.

"We're going to market soon in the U.S. and Canada," Mastronardi's marketing manager

5.



6.



Chris Veillon says. "We want the packs to be earth-friendly, so we're still determining several things about the components and materials." The company also wants to use environmentally friendly inks on the lidding material, which it wants to be easy enough for small children to be able to peel off yet be durable and stay firmly on the packaging in distribution and in chilled cases.

Steamed potatoes in the bag

Wada Farms' Easy-Steamer fresh gourmet Red, Yukon Gold and Idaho Russet potatoes make preparing dinner a breeze. Ready to steam in their own bag (3), the washed, whole spuds come in a clear-film windowed pouch that holds 1.5 lb and is preperforated for venting during microwave heating. The bag saves time so that it's better spent on deciding which potato variety to eat, says Wada Farms. Launched about six months ago by Idaho Falls, ID-based Wada, a family-owned marketing group that began growing potatoes more than 60 years ago, the value-added Easy-Steamers microwavable, preservative-free potatoes can be heated in a mere eight minutes.

The steam cooks the product to peak flavor, says Wada, and it can either be mashed right in the bag or served from the bag. Wada Farms Marketing Group also handles sales for Dole potatoes and onions.

"We are very excited about this new line of products. The consumer responses have been amazing. We believe this to be the wave of the future, and we want you to be riding it," says the company's website. "The Wada Farms and Dole Easy-Steamers were launched in November of last year. It's a progression from the Easy-Baker (individually wrapped microwave potatoes). It's meant to be a healthy, fresh and, most importantly, a fast alternative to the otherwise slow-cooking potato," explains Chris Wada, merchandising manager. "It seems that everyone who tries them, loves them. Our biggest issue is getting the consumers educated on what the product is and how to use it."

Wada goes on to say that the new microwave-safe film bags are made by Emerald Packaging (www.empack.com) of a 2-layer lamination.

Available across the U.S. in a number of large grocery retailers, the bags sell for \$2.49 to \$3.28. "The only difference between the Wada and Dole labels are the graphics design," says Wada. Each bag has a four-week shelf life when kept in a cool dry, dark location.

Crafty packaging from Kraft

More focused than ever on growing its iconic brands and making them more relevant for consumers, Kraft Foods presented all sorts of new offerings in improved and/or new packaging structures that span several

product platforms, including snacks, quick meals, healthy products and premium taste experiences.

With lunchtime meals getting squeezed into shorter and shorter timeframes, Kraft took cues from busy, active lifestyles and developed Deli-Creations (4) with convenience and portability in mind. The new packages in its Oscar Mayer meats group include Deli-Creations flatbread or subroll sandwich kits.

According to Kraft, most consumers like a hot lunch, but don't have the time to make one. It says that 70 percent of Americans work straight through lunch or spend only 5 to 10 minutes grabbing a quick bite. The company developed Deli-Creations with a restaurant quality. Launched in January for \$2.99 to \$3.99, there are five varieties of flatbread sandwiches and five subroll sandwiches, all geared to time-pressed consumers who want a quick and easy meal.

Each 6.8- to 7.1-oz kit-like package incorporates the makings for one sandwich with individually wrapped or pouched meal components, complete with Oscar Mayer deli meats, specialty sauces and Kraft's natural cheeses, in a windowed carton. The product's refrigerated shelf life is about five weeks. The packages can be heated in the microwave for one minute.

Kraft is marketing several portable, take-along, portion-packed items like this, including Deli Fresh cheese slices with a rigid (presumably thermoformed), tray-and-lid package that helps keep the fresh taste inside; Oscar Mayer Mini Hot Dogs in a standup, resealable zippered pouch; Deli Fresh Singles, individual portions of shaved meats in a twin-pack flexible pouch for one- and two-person households; and Ritz Crackers Fresh Stacks, a smaller version of the cracker package similar to a soft drink can "fridge dispenser."

Cool Whip whipped topping also got an update. It's now available in a handy, 7-oz aerosol spray can (5) in Extra Creamy, Lite and Original versions. The tall can makes topping off everyday treats fun

Continued on page 54

Shrink Sleeve

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and easy, and has a swirled white plastic overcap that resembles a dollop of the fluffy, white topping.

Unveiled in May, Cool Whip aerosol has an improved formula that holds its shape better on top of desserts, Kraft says. It also has a can nozzle that makes it handy to more evenly direct the product right where it's desired—on a cake, for example—as opposed to having to dole out a spoonful of product from the tub. The aerosol version can also be better used to decorate desserts and treats.

Kraft's Sydney Lindner, associate director of corporate affairs, tells PD that packaging details and supplier information for the products described are proprietary.

Campbell soups up V8 in cartons

Now, when you go to reach for soup on the shelf, you could have a V8. A real twist on Campbell Soup's

strategy to trade consumers up to higher levels of satisfaction centering on wellness, convenience and quality, we have launched Campbell's V8 soups," she says. "We believe the soups will meet consumers' needs centered around wellness, convenience and quality. We expect them to be well received."

Fresh ideas in petfoods

Pets are more important to consumers than ever before (see related article in this issue), and at FMI, the portion-packs were also going to the dogs and other pets. A few examples from FreshPet, which produces the Homestyle Select and Deli Fresh brands of refrigerated dog food, comprise fresh-refrigerated dog treats and dog food packed in pouches and chub-packs as well as thermoformed trays for dry/moist bites (7).

New Select Bites contain no

Pets are more important to consumers than ever before, and at FMI, the portion-packs were also going to the dogs and other pets.

V8® brand, known for its 100-percent vegetable juice, fruit-smoothies and fruit juice line in bottles and cans, is the launch of Campbell's V8 Soups (6) in ready-to-serve, cube-efficient, Combibloc Compact 500-mL (18.3-oz) aseptic, laminated paperboard cartons from SIG Combibloc (www.sig.biz). The velvety smooth pureed soups include Golden Butternut Squash, Tomato Herb, Southwestern Corn, Sweet Red Pepper and Garden Broccoli. Being unveiled in August, the new soups will sell nationally for \$2.99 each at supermarkets and mass-merchandise stores.

V8 soup cartons will be filled/packaged at Campbell's Toronto manufacturing facility on an existing CB6 filler, also from SIG Combibloc. The package is a composite carton made of paperboard, PE and foil, with the outer paperboard coated with PE to keep moisture out. The package also has a middle PE coating. The foil protects the product from light, odors and oxygen. An inner PE coating provides a liquid barrier.

Campbell USA's Liesl Henderson, director of sales communications, describes the new line as a marriage of great-tasting Campbell's soups and the vegetable nutrition of V8 juices. The soups provide a delicious way for consumers to enjoy the benefits of vegetables. "Consistent with our

preservatives or fillers, byproducts, corn or wheat, the Secaucus, NJ-based company says, adding that all of the chicken, meats and other ingredients are sourced locally.

Launched nationally last October, the Select Bites foods come in clear PET outer trays thermoformed by Direct Pak, Inc. (www.pmcglobalinc.com). The tray-pack holds two polypropylene vacuumized pouches from Sealed Air's Cryovac Div. (www.sealedair.com), and offers a 14-week refrigerated shelf life. The packs hold 14 oz of "gently cooked," bite-sized foods, such as Chicken & Vegetable Recipe or Beef & Vegetable Dinner—the same foods found in the company's chub-packs, but with the convenience of an open-and-serve tray that eliminates the need to slice up the food.



7.

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Filled and sealed 8-oz cartons are discharged by the f/f/s machine.

helped Springfield Creamery reach a five-week shelf life for the kefir.

To update the kefir to the new Nancy's branding, Springfield Creamery worked with **Flint Design Co.** (www.flintdesignco.com), which successfully redesigned 84 stock-keeping units (SKUs) of other Nancy's products in 2003. Commending Flint Design Co., Sheryl says: "They did a nice job for us because they took all the natural, hand-done elements of that feel of the original packaging—that kind of organic, hand-done flow that we wanted to communicate. Flint Design Company did a nice job of communicating that on the packaging redesign."

The new packaging includes messaging for consumers not already familiar with the company, the Kesey family or their products. Sheryl explains: "The opportunity to do the packaging redesign allowed us to bring messaging forth about kefir's health benefits, and about probiotics, our ingredients and who we are as a company. Because we are a pretty unique company with our longevity, and the fact that we were family-owned and operated all these years."

In addition, the back panel of the redesigned carton also announces that the family-owned creamery recently has been certified as an organic manufacturer.

Upping productivity

Now that Springfield Creamery had new packaging for the national launch, the company needed to update its packaging production line to increase its productivity. Kit led the charge of looking for a new filler that would have the capacity for the kefir's new national market and a small footprint while being reliable and, as his sister puts it, "not breaking the bank."

The Kesey's bought a **NiMCO** (www.nimco.com) 380QLCP CAP-PAC® form/fill/seal (f/f/s) machine with a Cap-Pac spout applicator, which is capable of forming, filling and sealing gabletop cartons from 8 to 32 oz at speeds up to 2,400

cartons/hour. The stainless-steel-frame machine has indexing electric heaters; a variable-frequency, mechanical-drive system, PLC touchscreen controls, and inside-out rotary and Cap-Pac spout applicators.

Gabletop cartons enter the machine as flats and exit the machine as formed, filled and sealed cartons. To help ensure clean folds, the NiMCO 380QLCP folds the tops and bottoms of the cartons twice

before filling and sealing. Cartons exit the f/f/s machine via a discharge track to be coded with a **Videojet** (www.videojet.com) 37E ink-jet printer.

Room to grow

The packaging line and container update has given Springfield Creamery room to grow its kefir distribution channels, which Sheryl believes will be easy to fill. "Our salespeople love to go out and talk about the kefir because

it's such an easy sell," she says. "All anybody has to do is taste it."

More information is available:

Flint Design Co., 503/295-1979, ext. 204, www.flintdesignco.com.
NiMCO Corp., 815/459-4200, www.nimco.com.
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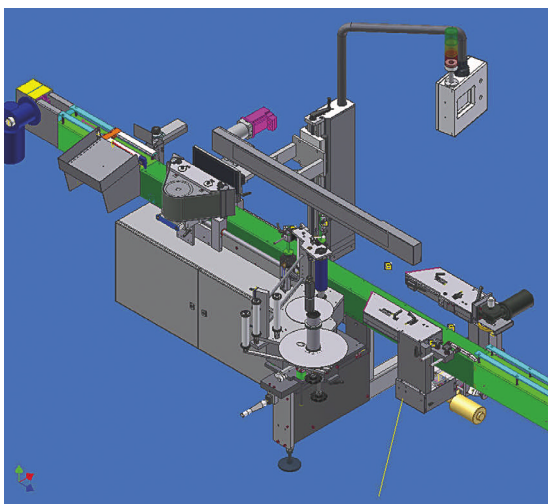
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P-s labeler Model 130 Bronco is a p-s labeler that handles up to 200 bottles/min. Featuring the Allen Bradley Kinetix/Compactlogix platform, the labeler can be designed and easily retrofitted in the field to accommodate a wide number of applications. With synchronized servo motors and robust components, the labeler offers superior label-placement accuracy, equipment reliability and quick, repeatable format changeovers while simplifying maintenance, the co. says. The labeler can handle round, square and oval containers from 1 to 14 in. tall and 5/8- to 7-in. dia, applying single, dual or wraparound labels. Easily accepts a wide variety of options including hot-stamp or thermal-transfer coders, vision-inspection systems, bar-code readers, missing-label detectors, reject stations and more.

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Vi-Cas Mfg., 513/791-7741.

www.vi-cas.com



Scara robots The TH Series has been upgraded to the TH-A Series of Scara Robots. Standard cycle times are 0.31 sec with a 2-kg payload for the TH650A, and 0.39 sec with a 5-kg payload for the TH850A and the TH1050A. X-, Y- and Z-Axis positioning repeatability for all three models is ± 0.01 -mm., while C-Axis positioning repeatability is ± 0.004 -deg. The rigid construction and vibration-free performance of the robot series results in a longer robot life, the co. states. The TH-A Series features a sealed labyrinth structure as standard. Piping positions are flexible, and may easily be changed by the end user. Because two harnesses are in the robot arm, it is easy to replace them. Other features of the robot series include lower profiles, reduced noise levels and easy maintenance.

Toshiba Machine Co.,
847/709-7308.

www.toshiba-machine.com



Bagger A versatile, automatic horizontal bagging machine called the Zippy Bagger uses a rotary sealing head to ensure straight and even seals. The bagger is designed for premade wicket bags of either laminated or PE materials. Equipped with PLC controls and a user-friendly touchscreen, this bagger is easy to operate. The bagger is suitable for packaging fresh produce, candy, snackfoods, pasta, baked goods and much more, the co. states. Running at speeds of up to 35 cycles/min., the machine is flexible and works with a variety of bags including standup, handled and resealable types with no change parts. It can handle bags from 5.5- to 14-in. wide and from 6- to 20-in. long.

WeighPack Systems, 888/934-4472.

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Pouch flattener/conditioner An automatic in-line pouch flattener/conditioner (PFC) has a massaging roller design. The PFC discharges pouches in a flat and stack-stable condition, ready for insertion into cartons, wrappers or other style containers. Speeds vary, depending on the product. An optional "reject" is available upon request.

Packaging Systems Automation, Inc.,
763/473-1032.

www.psautomation.com

Safety switches A new range of mechanical safety switches is capable of being used in any number of workplace safety applications. The switches are constructed of durable thermoplastic or rugged zinc alloy metal, and are capable of withstanding the most demanding of installation environments, increasing worker safety and improving productivity, the co. says. The most commonly used types are offered, including key interlock door switches, hinge-mount switches, pull wire switches and standard limit switches with manual reset buttons. The switches are available in four different body sizes, with 10 different contact configurations and five different cable gland entry options.

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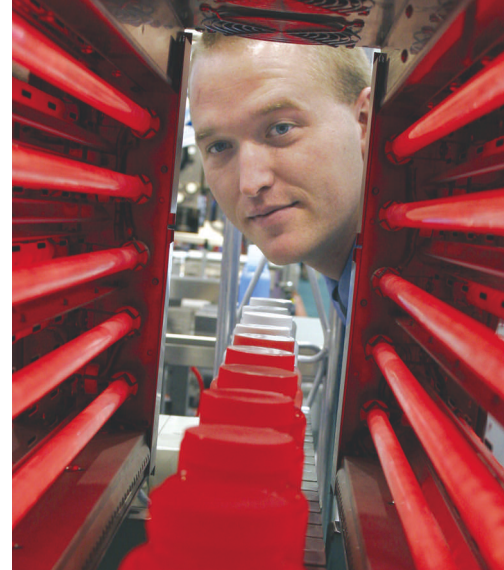
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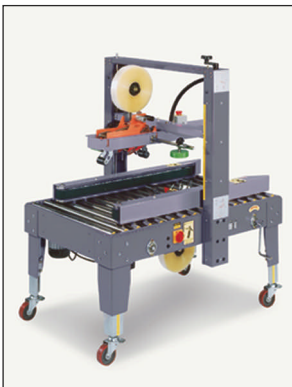
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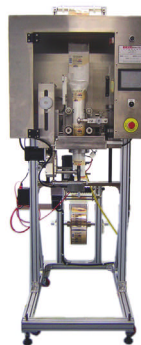
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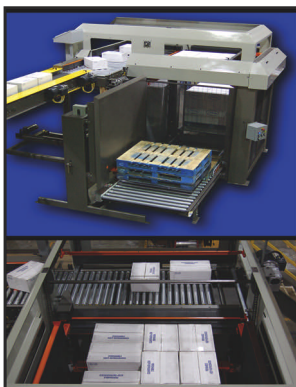
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Multivac appoints **Kevin Ryan**

regional sales manager within its Medical-Consumer-Industrial Div.

Mark Andy Inc. appoints **Silvia Birtel** marketing manager and **Jill Smith** marketing specialist.

Shuttleworth,

Inc. promotes **Bret Ranc** to COO for sales/marketing, engineering and manufacturing.

Georgia-Pacific appoints **Patrick Smorch** director of packaging sustainability.

General Conveyor Co. Ltd. names **John Quarrie** vp and general manager.

Peach State Integrated Technologies



Robert Brands
Rexam

names **Anne-Caroline Brown** marketing director.

Rexam names **Robert Brands** managing director of its Personal Care Div.

Sun Chemical

names **Brian Leen** president, North American Inks.

Pitman Co. names **Peter Moore**, executive vp sales, the successor of president Joe Demharter, effective April 2009.



Siegfried Gaessner
UVA Packaging

UVA Packaging appoints **Siegfried Gaessner** national sales manager.

Plymouth Printing Co. Inc. appoints **Keith Dovel** president and COO.

PPG Industries appoints **Gregory Wagner** general manager, industrial coatings, Americas.

Sandvik Coromant names **Karl Almquist** productivity center manager

for its training facility and technical center.

Serac Group promotes **Marc Binet** to



Marc Binet
Serac Group

vp over sales and operations in North and South America. **Cognex Corp.** names **Robert Willett** Modular Vision Systems Div. president.

Network Services Co.

names **Mike Murphy** vp business development.

Exopack Holding Corp. names **Tom Vale** COO.

Sidel names **Luc Desoutter** sustainable development vp to spearhead solutions and environmental initiatives.

Festo Corp. names **Mike**

Cybulski president and CEO.

EtherCAT Technology Group appoints

Luke Lecheler communications coordinator for North America.

Prism Group Holdings Ltd. names



Luc Desoutter
Sidel

Filip Buyse president and CEO.

he Color Management Group names **Marc Levine** director of business development.

The Drucker Group hires **Bob Wolff** as public relations director.

GROWING AND MOVING

PPI Technologies Global opens its Beverage Pouch Group offices and a pouch/tray machinery showroom in Sarasota, FL.

Portola Packaging, Inc., consolidates its Clifton Park, NY, operation into three other U.S. locations.

Spinnaker Coating LLC opens a slitting distribution center for pressure-sensitive materials in Vails Gate, NY. **Sandvik Coromant** and the Northern **Alberta Institute of Technology** (NAIT) open the NAIT Sandvik Coromant Centre for Machinist Technology.

Qosmedix relocates its Edgewood, NY, corporate offices and warehouse to a larger, 43,00-sq-ft facility and appoints **Hui Herskovitz** vp.

Bishop-Wisecarver Corp. opens a sales and customer support office in Shanghai.

Barry-Wehmiller Design Group, Inc., opens a new engineering consulting office in Modesto, CA.

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SCA Cool Logistics is named the exclusive distributor for Entropy Solutions, Inc. in Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore.

Alliora, Curtis Packaging and Utility Printpack form the luxury packaging alliance Global PrestigePack.

Exopack Holding Corp. sells its film business in Newmarket, ON, to Dynamic Solutions Unlimited, LLC.

Wildcat Packaging USA, maker of wooden wine boxes, purchases an equity stake in San Diego-based Golden State Box Factory.

PolyOne Corp. is named the exclusive compounder of filled systems with Eastman Chemical Co.'s Tritan™ copolyester in North America.

Quincy Compressor Inc. acquires Air Perfection based in Dixon, CA.

O.BERK Co. acquires AQL Decorating Co., Inc., a decorator of plastic, glass and metal containers based in Fairview, NJ.

PMC Film Canada sells its rigid film product line to Klöckner Pentaplast.

CHEERS

Multivac receives the **Hormel Foods'** Spirit of Excellence Award, given to a supplier based on delivery performance, product quality, customer service, administration and plant quality audits.

Rock-Tenn Co.'s Folding Carton Div. achieves SFI Fiber Sourcing certification.

The Product of the Year USA, a New York City-based, consumer-voted distinction for various packaged goods is accepting submissions through July 31. For entry details, contact Product of the Year at 212/813-6444 or www.productoftheyearusa.com/registration.aspx.

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The screenshot displays the 'Daily Packaging News' eNewsletter interface. It features a header with the title and a navigation bar. The main content area includes several articles with headlines and brief summaries, such as 'Heinz Baked Beans gets packaging makeover', 'Russia: PepsiCo was set to buy a 75 percent stake in Lubavsky', and 'The Good, The Bad, The Ugly: Sausage Food Packaging...?'. There are also sections for 'Product of the day' and 'Packaging Digest' articles. The interface is clean and professional, with a focus on providing timely industry news.

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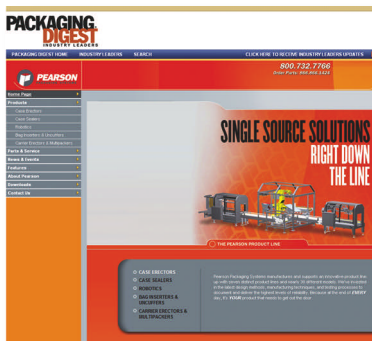
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1 Champagne gets Jay-Z's attention with good looks
Elegant packaging is helping the Armand de Brignac champagnes catch the attention of wine enthusiasts.

Armand de Brignac Blanc de Blancs is bottled in an elaborate silver bottle, and its Brut Gold is packaged in a gold-plated bottle. Rapper Jay-Z mentions the brut in his video, "Show Me What You Got," describing the opaque gold bottle with its two ace-of-spades pewter labels.

2 Ultrathin polymer made from nanocrystals
University of Konstanz scientists in Germany have successfully created an ultrathin polymer film using prefabricated nanocrystal building blocks.

3 Hannah Montana candy packaging triggers suit
Stating that it doesn't want the Glamour Shots name associated with candy packaging, Glamour Shots Licensing Inc., a franchiser of photo studios in shopping malls throughout the U.S., has filed a trademark-infringement lawsuit against the Walt Disney Co. The suit relates to Hannah Montana Disney Glamour Shots Candy, which is packaged in a picture frame with a photo of Hannah Montana, the Disney character played by actress Miley Cyrus. Glamour Shots asked the court to order the destruction of all candy packaging using the Glamour Shot mark and to order Disney to stop infringing activities.

4 New Coke bottles pair Chinese art with global music
Olympic sponsor Coca-Cola has rolled out WE8 (West meets East for the '08 Games,) a set of commemorative, aluminum bottles that pair Chinese art with music from around the world. The pairings include bottle design Uplifting Moments, which was created by Chinese artists Liu Zhi-zhi, Guang Yu and He Jun, and its corresponding song Happiness Factory Remixed, which is performed by Italian musician Benny Benassi.



industry happenings

Visit www.packagingdigest.com/toc-events to find a comprehensive list of industry events happening around the world.

RFID World 2008

Sept. 8-10, Las Vegas

HBA Global Expo & Educational Conference

Sept. 9-11, Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York

Labelexpo Americas 2008

Sept. 9-11, Rosemont, IL

Sustainable Packaging Forum

Sept. 9-11, Denver Marriott Tech Center

PABST™08 North America

Sept. 11-12, Chicago, IL

IoPP's Fundamentals of Packaging Technology Seminars

Sept. 15-19, Schaumburg, IL

IDTechEx RFID Europe 2008

Sept. 30–Oct. 1, Cambridge, England

Tokyo Pack 2008

Oct. 7-11, Tokyo Big Sight

InterBev 2008

Oct. 20-22, Las Vegas, NV

Graph Expo

Oct. 26-29, McCormick Place, Chicago

PACK EXPO International

Nov. 9-13, McCormick Place, Chicago

CPP Expo

Nov. 9-13, McCormick Place, Chicago

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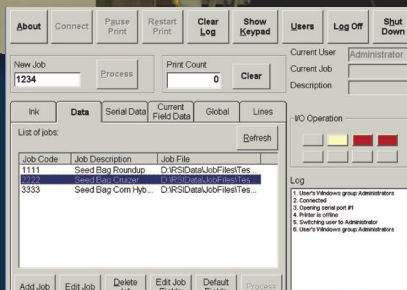
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