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 Reed Business
Information®

February 2010

PACKAGING DIGEST®

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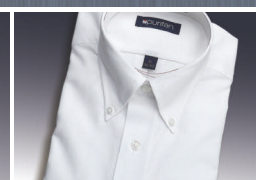
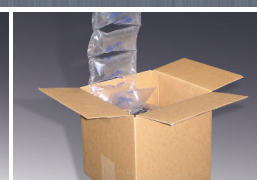
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Void-Fill Air Pillow
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CORRECTIONS: The "Trends for 2010" article in our January issue mistakenly stated that Coca-Cola's PlantBottle has 25 percent PLA content; the bottle is actually made with what Coke states is "up to 30 percent plant-based materials." In the same article, PTIS was misidentified as Plastics Technology Integrated Solutions. The correct name is Packaging and Technology Integrated Solutions.



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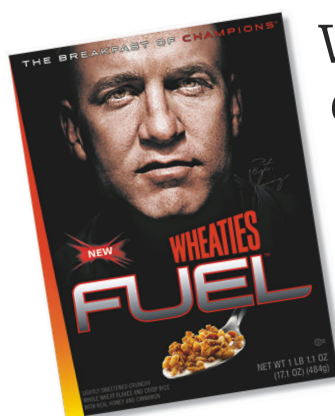
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packaging concepts



'Egg' jar breaks new ground for skincare

To develop this unique jar for France's Six skincare line, which includes six different beauty treatments, **Quadpack Group** (www.quadpack.net) worked closely to match a challenging set of objectives. Six wanted a custom egg-shaped container mold made from materials that are compatible with its various skincare formulas. Six also sought a weighted overcap or dome as well as an oriented cap and jar with an specially oriented label decoration, for six color-coded print designs corresponding to the six different product formulations. Quadpack developed a custom, substantially weighted and oriented egg-shaped jar with a matching domed cover, both in white. Six hopes the results will raise some "egg-citement" in the market.



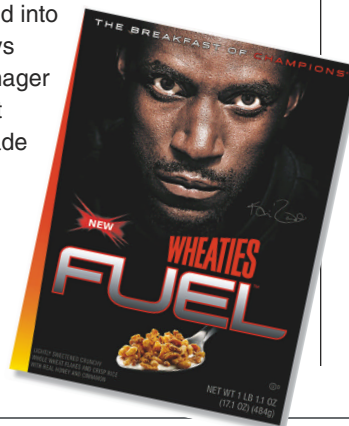
Wheaties new FUEL cereal box design is packed with punch

Just in time to jumpstart those fitness-related New Year's resolutions, new Wheaties FUEL cereal, created with the help of football great Peyton Manning, triathlete Hunter Kemper, basketball star

Kevin Garnett, gold medal-winning decathlete Bryan Clay, baseball star Albert Pujols and sports nutritionist Dr. John Ivy—is available in retail stores across the U.S. The package celebrates leading athletes, but its unique look differentiates it from the original brand. Wheaties FUEL wheat flakes have crispy rice and a touch of cinnamon and honey. It's the first-ever cereal designed to help meet the nutritional

needs of today's athletes. Wheaties FUEL features individual box covers of Garnett, Manning and Pujols. In addition, all five athletes are pictured on the back of the boxes along with Dr. Ivy. The three boxes each hold 17.1-oz.

"Developing the new evolution of Wheaties has been more than two years in the making, and we're excited to finally bring FUEL to retail and into the hands of consumers," says Dan Stangler, marketing manager for Wheaties. Announced last July, Wheaties FUEL was made available for purchase online only, where the collector's-edition cereal has been sold since last September.



Vodka bottle is eco-friendly

As a reflection of its commitment to lightening its carbon footprint on the planet, Philadelphia Distilling, Philadelphia, is using a glass bottle from **Saxco Intl.** (www.saxcointl.com) that is partially made from recycled glass, with labels from **Xode Inc.** (www.xode.com) that are made with organic inks and a biodegradable wood top from **TapiUSA** (www.tapiusa.com) for its newest product, Penn1681 rye vodka. Further enhancing its efforts, the company exchanges the spent grains from its alcohol production with local farmers when new deliveries of organic rye are made. The spent grains are used on the farms as feedstock and fertilizer. Also, throughout the distillery, there are innovative engineering systems and techniques that lower power use.

Philadelphia Distilling introduced the vodka in November 2008 in response to requests from its customers. "We had been asked over and over again for a vodka, especially in the Philly area," says a company representative. "Customers wanted to buy locally when it came to their spirits. We had so many requests, we felt that it made good sense. We make the vodka exclusively from organic rye, that is grown locally, and we are the only craft distillery in the area that is handcrafting a vodka. Consumers love its character and smooth finish." Penn 1681 vodka sells for \$20 to \$23 per bottle.



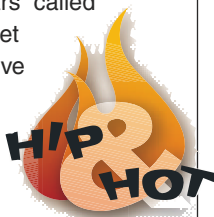
Launch pad

New Product of the Month

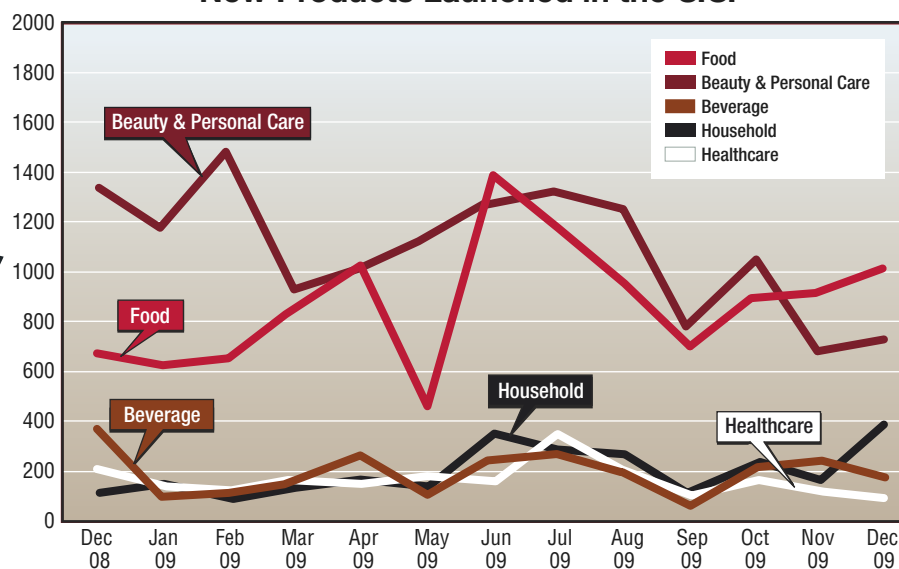
'Balmshell' of a smear campaign

Direct from Canada, lip and cheek gel "smears" called Balmshell can be applied effortlessly and they set perfectly, according to the manufacturer. They give cheeks a bright glow and lips a sultry stain. The smears are applied using a sponge applicator wand that blend the tints without staining hands. The cosmetics are formulated with white tea extract, chamomile and rose water, and are available in a shade called Gossip Greta.

Balmshell smears are packed in an attention-getting, injection-molded, flexo-printed tube with a foam-tipped applicator. The top end of the tube contains 4 g of product. The reverse end reveals a stubby applicator used for smoothing and blending the color. The tube and instructions are placed in an offset-printed, white-lined carton with a hand-locking base and a tied top.



New Products Launched in the U.S.



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packaging concepts

Brew your coffee in its own cup



Steeped in brewing-innovation, Solobrew Corp. has launched a new product on the single-serve, gourmet-coffee market called the "French Press To-Go." Dubbed the first of its kind, The French-Press To-Go uses freshly ground, premium-quality coffee beans that are

ready to brew in a spring-action plunger cartridge. Just add water, and in 2 to 4 min, enjoy a freshly brewed cup of coffee. Although it uses the same plunger concept as a French press, the French Press To-Go is a much simpler product that provides consumers with high-quality, freshly-brewed coffee steeped directly in the cup. Environmentally friendly, each plunger uses 1/3 oz of coffee and filter paper. The cup comes in a disposable or reusable style, with inexpensive refill cartridges. The disposable version includes a paper cup and a thermoformed PE lid. The reusable Brew-in-Cup is made from PP.

The easy-to-use design allows the user to dispose of the plunger after consumption. No cleaning is required, as with a traditional French press. This also allows consumers to take the French Press To-Go anywhere and eliminates the long lines and high prices of coffee-house drinks or the freeze-dried taste of instant coffee.

"We envision that our patented, innovative, ready-to-brew technology will redefine and transform the way consumers prepare and drink gourmet coffee," says Robert Vu, SoloBrew Corp. founder and CEO. The French Press To-Go four-pack with a reusable cup and four plunger cartridges retails for less than \$4.50, while the single-serve disposable cup sells for less than \$1.50. Extra cartridges are 60 cents.

Hammer wins nine international print awards

Hammer Packaging (www.hammerpackaging.com) won

nine awards in the 35th International Gallery of Superb Printing competition, produced by the International Assn. of Printing House Craftsmen (IAPHC). The IAPHC awards are recognized globally as one of the highest honors given in the graphic design and print industry. Hammer received the following awards: Gold: Fruitopia; JoJo Energy; and Chadwick Bay Grape Juice; Silver: Ovaltine, Cell-Nique and Nika Water; Bronze: Snapple Tea; and Honorable Mention: XO Energy; and Arctic Power.

Shrink sleeve labels brought in more than half of the awards for Hammer, including gold winner Chadwick Bay and silver winner Ovaltine, both of which featured Hammer's variable-sleeve offset printing (VSOP) technology. JoJo Energy, XO Energy and Cellnique labels, as well as Nika Water's p-s label, were printed on a Nilpeter USA Inc. (www.nilpeter.com) flexo press. Fruitopia's and Snapple Tea's cut-and-stack labels and Arctic Power's in-mold labels were printed on a Heidelberg USA (www.us.heidelberg.com) press. Says Kevin Keane, president of IAPHC: "Our event has been the beneficiary of seeing the growth of Hammer Packaging in terms of technical execution, range of product and services. Label printing has become high art as presented by their entries."



A fragrance splash from Lolita Lempicka

The international launch of designer Lolita Lempicka's latest fragrance, Si Lolita, features a clever bottle design from Rexam (www.rexam.com). The new glass bottle in a snazzy flower shape is topped with Rexam's XD-11 fine-mist pump, an intricate closure development. The fragrance also comes in a sampler size of Rexam's Minimist®, which highlights the growing importance of mini-size packaging in global product introductions. For the full-size perfume bottle, the ultra-low profile XD-11, a crimpless pump, is designed for the high-end market segment. The pump's ergonomically advanced actuator is available in metal or plastic, and in classic or smoothly sculpted designer versions, and combines with the reduced diameter of the nozzle to enhance the pump's aesthetic and tactile appeal. The closure includes an injection-molded gold metalized ring and a gold, galvanized ABS collar.



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comment

John Kalkowski, Editorial Director

Tight credit slowly chokes equipment purchases



Industry is now nearly two years into one of the worst recessions of all time. Within the last year, the federal government has poured nearly one trillion dollars into the capital markets to stabilize Wall Street and the big banks, keeping credit available so that the economy doesn't seize up entirely.

However, the billions in To Assist and Repair Profits (TARP) funds somehow never trickled down to small- and medium-sized businesses supposed to be the drivers reviving the economy. After all, it's estimated that small businesses have created two-thirds of the net payroll growth in the U.S. since 1990.

So, packagers and their equipment suppliers remain strapped with cash constraints, tight capital budgets and few places to turn for financing to make investments for the future. It's a Catch-22. If you can't buy the latest packaging technology, it's difficult to stay competitive.

Over the years, many packagers carefully planned their investments and funded capital purchases with cash from operations. Stagnant sales make that difficult today. Now, just when they need them the most, traditional sources of funding have dried up. Many packagers first would turn to their local banks and then consider loans from specialty firms. Suppliers are often being asked to share the burden through creative, extended terms, but they are

also facing cash-flow problems that limit their ability to help. Equipment leasing is another option for about 5 percent of the packaging market.

Today, financing is not that expensive; it's just tough to get, as lenders increasingly are unwilling to make risky bets on startups and small businesses. The application process is becoming more difficult and time-consuming. One industry insider says new businesses especially are getting clobbered, as lenders want to see long, clean credit histories. Even then, some contract packagers who plan to install lines to gain new business are being asked for financial cross-guarantees from their end-user customers.

One good source for financing is the Small Business Administration, which can guarantee up to 90 percent of a loan's amount. However, SBA loan volume also dropped in 2009, partially due to the complicated process and banks' reluctance to participate in the program. The federal government must do more to help all small businesses, including those in packaging. This should come from streamlined processes, financing guarantees and extensions of tax credits. It's time to let your government representatives know they must act now, or we'll all pay later.

John Kalkowski

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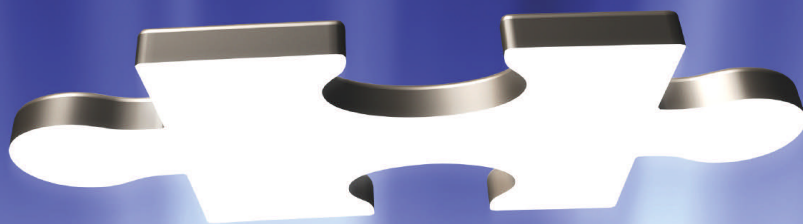
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Monitoring system SmartArm,™ a new wireless performance-monitoring system for Iso-Flo® vibratory conveyors, enables users to monitor asset or equipment shaker condition at any computer workstation. Measures and reports speed and stroke to provide real-time analysis of shaker function, line-flow conditions and trends at a glance; the system client also shows an alert when speed or stroke is out of tolerance. Empowering the shift from traditional time-based preventive maintenance to condition-based predictive maintenance, the system not only prevents downtime and reduces labor, it also provides the opportunity to improve process efficiencies, the co. states.

Key Technology, 509/529-2161. www.key.net

Light curtains

Compact (32x37-mm) Type 2 and Type 4 light curtains offer finger and hand protection or presence control with an operating distance up to 19 m and controlled heights from 150 to 1,800 mm. Designed for safety, the light curtains feature integrated functions including test/restart and auto/manual restart. Type 4 light curtains are designed for operating point protection on equipment, such as paper-cutting machines or presses. Available in hand- and finger-control versions, the light curtains can be aligned using a 7-segment display on either the emitter or receiver. The co.'s Type 2 series can be used in automated warehouses, to prevent machine restarts and for use in robotic manufacturing. Two models include a basic and an extended model.

IDEC Corp., 800/262-4332. www.idec-ds.com



Robots

VM-Series six-axis articulated, Class 100 cleanroom robots feature reaches from 1,000 to 1,300 mm, standard cycle times of 0.89 to 0.95 sec, repeatability from ± 0.050 to ± 0.070 mm and a payload capacity of 10 kg. Applications include material handling as well as secondary operations in the medical, pharmaceutical and electronics industries. The long, slim arms of the robots can reach around peripheral equipment, extending the application range. High maximum allowable moment of inertia (0.36 kgm^2 at J4 and J5 and 0.064 kgm^2 at J6) allows a wider choice of end effectors. The robots can be mounted upright or inverted, without additional tooling.

Denso Robotics, 888/476-2689.
www.densorobotics.com



Palletizer The co. says it's now collaborating with FANUC Robotics to create the TRP3000 robotic palletizing system, which it says is engineered for high-speed/high-payload operation, user-friendly setup and maximum reliability. The TRP 3000 equipment features a fast cycle time and a high payload, high-performance motion and the flexibility to service multiple production lines. Minimal programming and maintenance are required and the unit is said to offer a quick payback, according to the co.

Taylor Products Div., Magnum Systems,
800/748-7000.
www.taylorproducts.com

Heavy-duty conveyor The co.'s heavy-duty 2,500-lb-capacity powered roller conveyor features a simple design with clean lines and few components for cost-effectiveness. The conveyor can be supplied in different lengths, widths, heights and speeds, with or without controls. The roller conveyor features a 3-year warranty on the conveyor and nonproprietary parts, easy-to-integrate controls and advisory service for complex conveyor lines.

Wulftec, 877/985-3832.

www.wulftec.com



Feeding system The Gemini-System adds efficiency to any dual-lane packaging line as it combines the output of two tablet fillers on a single packaging line, mitigating tablet-filling bottlenecks. Operates at speeds up to 150-bottles/min. The system is PLC-controlled with built-in start, backup and gating systems that allow for fluid operation and smooth integration with tablet-filling. The system also features raised-bed conveyors and a sanitary stainless-steel construction, which the co. says facilitates cleaning and minimizes product entrapment.

BellatRx Inc., 514/630-0939.

www.bellatrx.com



Harmonic drives VLT low-harmonic drives are able to perform real-time analysis while actively imposing currents, as needed, to restore and ensure high-quality sine waves from a power-supply grid. The harmonic drives are available in power ranges from 132 to 630 kw (high overload), 160 to 710 kw (normal overload) and voltage ranges of 380 to 480 AC, 50 to 60 Hz. They meet IEEE519 recommendations, are available in an IP 21/NEMA1 or IP 54 (hybrid) enclosure, are UL-, cUL- and Ctick-listed and carry the CE mark. The harmonic drives are suitable for installations that are generator-powered, or that have generator backup power, soft power grids and grids with a limited excess power capacity.

Danfoss, 800/432-6367.

www.danfossdrives.com

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Industrial controller The Productivity 3000 programmable controller combines the features of a PC-based control system with those of a PLC. The modular system of up to 116,000 I/O points has local, expansion and remote I/O bases and a lineup of discrete, analog and specialty I/O modules.

Automation Direct, 800-633-0405.
www.automationdirect.com

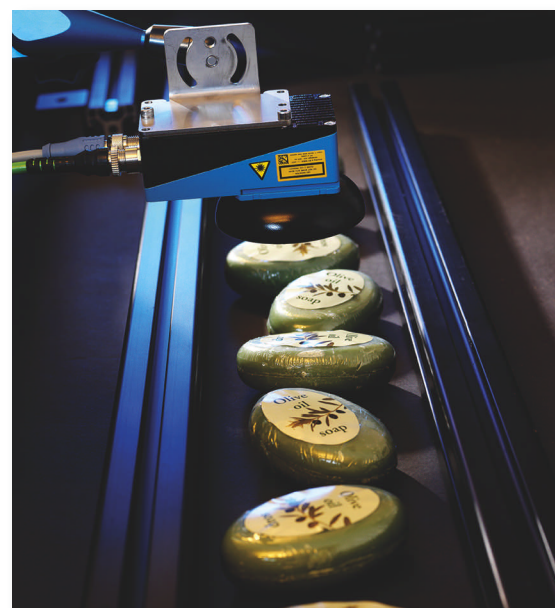
Vf/f/s bagmaker The "G3" twin-tube vf/f/s snackfood bagmaker features a welded tubular steel frame with a center-balanced profile that allows weighers and volumetric fillers to be directly mounted to the machine. Electrical cabinets are tucked inside the frame, allowing total access to the interior for ease of maintenance. The vf/f/s system can produce up to 240 bags/min with servo-motion controls. Produces a wide variety of bag styles: Pillow; pouch; block-bottom bags; perforated; string; promo strip; notching; hole punching and more.

Kliklok-Woodman, 770/981-5200.
www.kliklokwoodman.com



Shrinkbender The F-160 Evolution shrinkbender is a flexible system that applies shrinkbands around the lids of tapered and straight-walled tubs. Fully mechanical, the system uses no vacuum, pneumatics or spinning knives. The shrinkbender has dual servos for product handling and sleeve feeding. Compact components create a small machine footprint; the fully enclosed, stainless-steel version of the system can also be washed down. Applies tamper-evident bands 1- to 2.3-in.-high and 2.5- to 6.75-in. dia. Works with tubs and containers for dairy spreads, ice cream, oatmeal, prepackaged delicatessen foods, cultured products, yogurt and dessert toppings.

PDC Intl., 203/853-1516.
www.pdc-corp.com



Vision sensor The I40 FLEX vision sensor features fast inspection speeds that increase throughput and high resolution of 640x480 that enables the system to provide clear image quality. Also provides Ethernet IP connectivity, which gives detailed trend data about the efficiency of processes, and additional storage capabilities that allow users to save an unlimited number of images to an offline system or a server, making it easier to track and trace vision inspections.

SICK USA, 952/829-4728.
www.sickusa.com



Filling machine In November 2009, the co. supplied its 11th Contitherm filling and packaging line for yogurt production in Saudi Arabia. With an output of 30,000 cups/hr, the Contitherm 123 continuous-operation machine fills cups of yogurt and desserts. Also fills inoculated yogurt milk and transports it to sealing without spilling. Recontamination through ambient air is prevented by sterile excess air pressure in the entire filling area to the sealing station.

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www.OYSTAR.de



Panasonic ideas for life

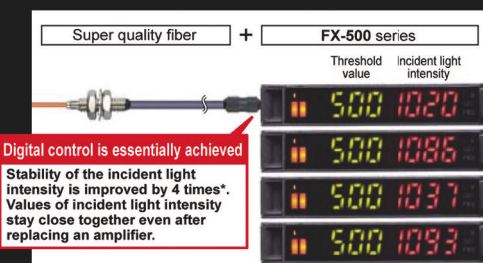
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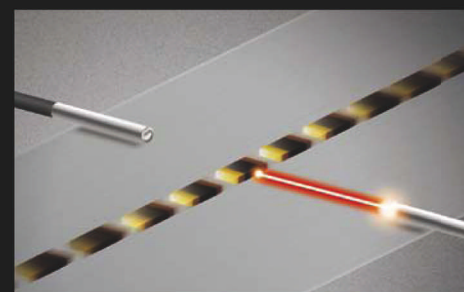


* Using a small diameter fiber (fiber core ø0.5 mm ø0.020 in). If using a standard fiber (fiber core ø1.0 mm ø0.039 in), the variation will be double of that of conventional models.

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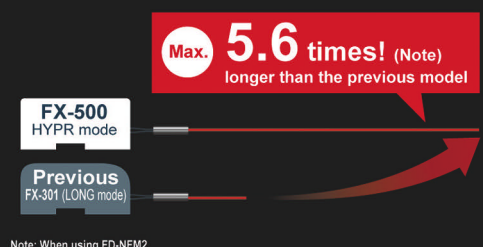
The **FX-500 series** improves productivity with its ultra-high response times.



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HYPR Mode Incorporated

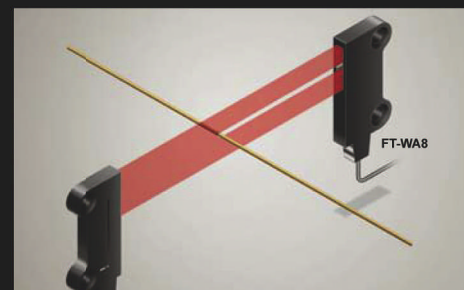
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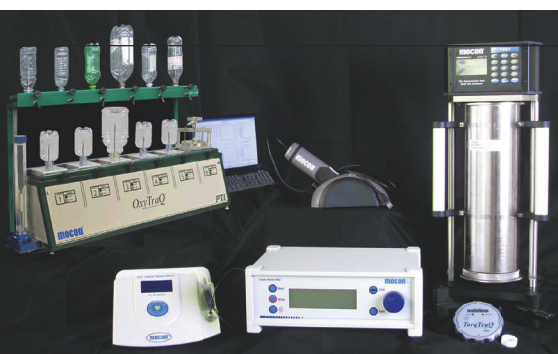
Pouchmaster ABS System™



Pouch sealer The ABS (Automatic Bar Seal) system is available as a standalone unit or integrated with a Pouchmaster and Pouch Series. The PLC-controlled system provides repeatable, Sigma 3 heat seals that can be validated and calibrated. It is governed by alarm limits and the system defaults to "cycle hold" in an alarm condition. The pouches are held in place until the alarm has been corrected and reset, which eliminates inspection.

About Packaging Robotics Inc., 303/449-2559.

www.aboutpackagingrobotics.com



Oxygen analyzer The OpTech-O2® Platinum oxygen analyzer uses a fluorescence-based system to measure total beverage package integrity. The platinum "fluoresces" in an amount that is directly related to the amount of oxygen present in a package. This fluorescence can be read optically, for nondestructive permeation analysis, headspace and dissolved-oxygen analysis and leak determination. Also measures oxygen stability in distribution.

Mocon Inc., 763/493-6370.

www.mocon.com

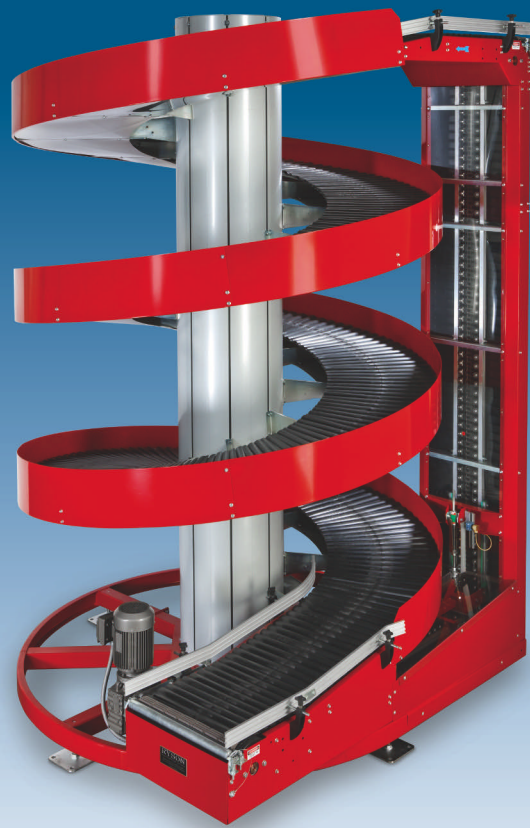
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Handled oblong, SAN jar The co.'s 60-oz handled HPDE oblong is fully recyclable. The container is suitable for household chemicals such as dishwashing detergent and floor cleaners, or can serve as a refill in the personal-care segment for products such as shower gels and hand soap. The handled oblong works well on high-speed filling lines and has a flat front and back panel that can be decorated with a p-s label or screen printing. Also released is a copolymer plastic SAN jar made of styrene and acrolonitrile resin. Advantages include heat-resistance above 200 deg F, high clarity, good general chemical-resistance, dimensional stability and cost-effectiveness, the co. says.

Continental Packaging Solutions, 888/676-5277.
www.continentalpackagingsolutions.com



Large bins New Super-Size AkroBins® come in two new sizes: a 24x11x7-in. and a 24x18.25x12-in. version. Suitable for large parts and other products, the new AkroBins feature optional width and length dividers that allow for more effective parts separation and versatility in organization. An optional clear window insert on the front of the 24-in.-long bins adds extra height to the hopper front, maximizing interior space usage and keeping contents visible when the bins are stacked. The bins can help to control inventories, shorten assembly times and minimize parts handling. The heavy-duty bins securely stack atop each other or sit on shelves or carts.

Akro-Mils, 800/253-2467.
www.akro-mils.com

Enviro-friendly, self-sealing package

ReVue high-visibility packaging can be used to replace corrugated, clear plastic inserts, clamshells and many blister-packs. The clear, self-sealing packaging for consumer products provides durability and security without being sealed using specialty tools. It can be easily assembled anywhere for products of most shapes and sizes.

ReVue uses soy-hybrid printing inks, and is made from 80-percent-recycled plastic and 60-percent-recycled corrugated board.

Smurfit-Stone Container Corp., 314/656-5300.
www.smurfit-stone.com



Metallized PET bottles

A line of metallized PET containers include bottles in tall and sleek shapes and jars with lower profiles. They have an upscale look without breakage concerns at an economical price, the co. reports.

TricorBraun, 800/325-7782.
www.tricorbraun.com

Rectangular HDPE container

A new lightweight, 4.25-gal rectangular plastic container, the 36BR, is designed to provide better cube efficiency and volume packaging of food, other consumer items and DIY products. Suitable for liquids as well as moist, dry and frozen goods, the rigid containers tolerate a wide temperature range. They also have good stacking strength. They "nest" closely to maximize the number of units/pallet and truckloads for fewer shipments. They offer an efficient use of plastic, the co. states. The pail is made of HDPE or PP. Hinged lids are available that easily reseal and feature a tamper-evident tearstrip.

Plastican Inc., 978/728-5000.
www.plastican.com





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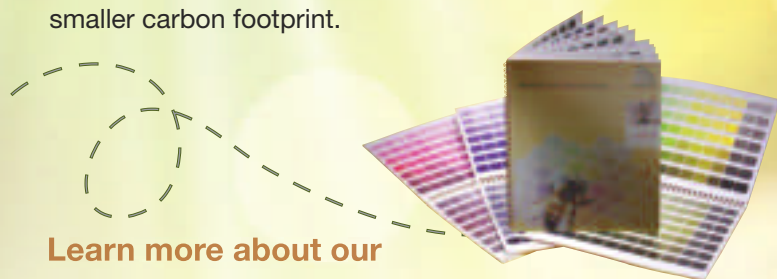


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PET jar The 250-mL Tarros PET jar has a 58/400 finish. The oval-shaped jar has two flat side panels for easy labeling and is available in clear and cobalt blue. The jar is lightweight, durable and offers high clarity. It's also designed for a variety of both liquid and solid products where store shelf presence is important, the co. states. Several closure options are available, as well as labeling and screen printing choices to enhance the final package.

O. Berk Co., 908/851-9500.
www.oberk.com



PET containers A new generation of hot-fill, wide-mouth PET containers, including stock and custom jars, is the first to offer sustained hot-fill performance at 205 deg F, making it suitable for viscous food items (apple and pasta sauces, jams and jellies, and tomato-based products) that tend to fill at higher temperatures. Typical container shrinkage following the thermal cycle ranges from 1.5 to 4 percent. Body dimensions tend to become compromised, affecting everything from finish/seal integrity to labeling, the co. says. Another benefit of the proprietary process is that it yields an incremental improvement in barrier properties.

Liquid Container, 630/231-0850.
www.liquidcontainer.com



Paperboard Kraftpak unbleached, uncoated virgin paperboard is described as a low-density product with strength and durability. The 2-ply board also has a consistent surface and an attractive, natural brown appearance and good printability, the co. says. The paperboard also features moisture-resistance and wet durability and works with many packaging applications.

Kapstone, 847/239-8800.
www.kapstonepaper.com



Sustainable packaging AgroResin® sustainable packaging is earth-friendly as it utilizes readily available renewable agricultural biomass fiber composites that would otherwise be discarded. This durable packaging is microwaveable, moisture-resistant and FDA-approved for direct food contact. The packaging is 100-percent degradable and compostable and is able to protect fresh produce with its stiff and durable structure.

PWP Industries, 877/700-0330.
www.pwpindustries.com

Custom boxes The co.'s Custom Tooling Boxes are constructed using a rigid paperboard that provides a burst strength of 150lb/in. sq, per Federal Spec. PPP-B-676-d and can incorporate foam or egg-crate-style interior cushioning. Targeting precision tooling, the boxes feature two wire tabs that protrude from the bottom half, fit through the top and fold over for a secure closure. Said to be stronger than folding boxes and mailing envelopes, the tooling boxes can be modified with reinforced rigid paperboard and nylon-reinforced tape. The wire tabs can be taped over to create a tamper-evident mailer. Reusable and stackable, the boxes can be supplied in assorted colors and can be printed inside and out.

Mason Box Co., 800/399-2708.
www.masonbox.com

Dispensing system The 100-percent-metal-free DrumQuik® PUR high-purity chemical-dispensing system provides safe, easy and economic extraction of high-purity chemicals from drums, jerry cans and intermediate bulk containers (IBCs) while reducing costly spills, containing hazardous fumes and enhancing workplace safety. The closed-system design features one integrated unit, a recyclable bung closure and diptube with a reusable quick disconnect coupler, ensuring that both sides are sealed from point-of-origin to point-of-use. This eliminates the need to clean a diptube to help counter fluid or vapor contacts, the co. states.

Colder Products Co., 612/455-1702.
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Bayer's bottles go cartonless

Standout bottles for Genuine Bayer aspirin and Aleve products are eye-catchers, made easier to grip and open with a special TPE material. Without the use of an outer carton, they are said to be **MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY.**



Lauren R. Hartman, Senior Editor

No other drug product enjoys such widespread use as aspirin. There are few other medicines with such a long history. Aspirin's status as wonder drug remains pretty much unchanged today, as the stress-filled world we live in grows more stressful.

Twice as many people choose aspirin over the personal computer as an invention they couldn't live without, in a national survey on inventions conducted by Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Aspirin's powerful pain-fighting qualities have been known since ancient times when the Greeks recorded the use of willow bark as a fever fighter. The leaves and bark of the willow tree contain a substance called salicin, a naturally occurring compound similar to acetylsalicylic acid, the chemical name for aspirin.

Today, Bayer Consumer Care is introducing its products in new packaging with several points of difference. Designed for Genuine Bayer® aspirin, Bayer Low Dose aspirin and Aleve® products, not only has the shape of the bottles been changed to a larger, sleek HDPE oval, the bottles are now topped with a newly designed, easy-open/easy-grip cap covered with a soft-touch, rubber-like thermoplastic elastomer (TPE), color-coded to match the graphics for each SKU. The TPE helps improve the user experience, according to Bayer. It's also an attractive feature for the aging population because the soft rubber-like material covering the outer part of the cap makes it easier to hold and remove.

Even more noteworthy for the product category, however, is what is described by Alexandra Borchard, associate communications manager

at Morristown, NJ-based Bayer Healthcare, Consumer Care: "This is Bayer Consumer Care's first venture into cartonless bottles in the analgesics category." Affirms Guido Schmitz, senior associate director, global innovation and new technology, Bayer Consumer Care Div., Bayer Healthcare, "We were inspired to develop a package that was worthy of our Wonder Drug™ that was different and more user-friendly than any other medicine bottle. There was also an opportunity to minimize packaging waste associated with cartons. At the same time, this was an opportunity for Aleve® to explore new packaging design options."

We were inspired to develop a package that was different and more user-friendly than any other medicine bottle and minimize packaging waste associated with cartons.

Bayer's main objective, Schmitz says, was to create an easy-open bottle for Aleve's core user, the arthritis sufferer. "This is a first for our category. It's very cool and different. In fact, it's now a sought-after concept by others in the category. We're very proud of the concept."

The packaging structure is identical for both Bayer aspirin and Aleve. Each bottle incorporates a raised Bayer (or Aleve) logo grip on opposing sides. Graphics, however, including color and text style,

are different for each brand. The Bayer aspirin bottle labels feature the brand's iconic bright yellow, red and brown or green colors and bright yellow bottles with yellow or green caps. The Aleve bottles are opaque white with a blue graphic scheme and blue and white caps.

The same container configuration is being used for Bayer Genuine 325-mg aspirin in 100-, 200- and 300-count bottles; Bayer Low Dose 81 in 120-, 200- and 300-count bottles; and Aleve in 40-, 100- and 200-count container sizes. Aleve's 40-count gelcap SKU is still being merchandised with an outer carton. "The smaller count bottle didn't work well outside of a carton, with the shelf-pushing trays used by the retailers," explains Schmitz. "Therefore, we needed to package it inside a carton."

Shipped into retail stores in April 2009, the bottles and closures are supplied by **Berry Plastics Corp.** The oval bottles feature resealable extended-content labels from **CCL Label** that present drug facts and consumer information.

The cartonless approach minimizes packaging waste and energy use while optimizing retail shelf space, says Schmitz. "The cartonless format gives us more flexibility for editing the drug facts and contact information on an as-needed basis," he says.

The time was right

Bayer's packaging staff worked for two years developing various concepts with the help of design firm **Berndt Group**. The large oval bottle design

is based on a new platform that Bayer says it can customize for its other products.

"These factors are all helping to differentiate Bayer Aspirin and Aleve products on shelf," Schmitz adds. The packaging team considered several key factors as we worked to design new bottles, that was right for the business and right for our consumers. One was consumer benefit—will it be functional and easy to use? Another was brand identity—how will the look and feel represent our brand? And another was point of sale—what impact will it have on-shelf? The final factor was sustainability—



It's very cool and different. It's now a sought-after concept by others.

eliminating the use of unnecessary packaging. Based on these, the team developed various concepts with Berndt Group, Schmitz says. "As a result of our new design, there is immediate impact on shelf," he adds.

Berry Plastics began working on the project in late 2007; the bottle design, development and project management took place at its Lancaster, PA facility, which is close to Bayer Healthcare's headquarters and manufacturing sites.

The three bottle sizes are all injection/blow-molded and flame-treated at Berry Plastic's Cranbury, NJ facility and the caps are made at its plant in Ahoskie, NC.

Capping it off

In Ahoskie, Berry produces the cap using a bi-injection-molding process with a rotating stack mold and PP and TPE materials. The cap was refined for manufacturability and child-resistance, according to Berry's Heather Moore, account executive, Health Care and Nutritional Sales. The outer TPE closure is made using a two-shot mold from MGS using a secondary injection unit, and the TPE material, which is made by GLS

Thermoplastic Elastomers.

The inner PP cap is a stock child-resistant CR-III closure in 33- and 45-mm sizes.

Debossed with the criss-cross Bayer logo that's imprinted on the aspirin tablets themselves, while the Aleve cap is

debossed with a single Aleve logo without criss-crossing. Tamper-evidence is provided to the bottle opening with a foil/pulp induction seal printed with "Bayer HealthCare" in black lettering. To dispense the tablets, the user first breaks the seal.

The filled bottles had to be designed to stack well on top of one another on retail shelves and the closure colors had to be repeatable and accurate.

"By managing the design of the bottle and the closure, we made some modifications to the overall design to better enhance the child-resistance," says Moore. "The second challenge was to handle the closures through secondary processes and into

shipping cases. Our internal automation engineers, plant personnel and secondary equipment

suppliers were critical to finding solutions."

Adds Schmitz, "We wanted to include our signature Bayer cross logo, and the top of the cap offered another opportunity to brand the bottle."

No carton, no problem

Foregoing the carton has its advantages, Schmitz emphasizes. Reduced packaging results in less material and lower costs overall. "By eliminating the carton, we have a more environmentally sustainable product and we're reducing energy that would otherwise be needed to carton the product," he says. "Retailers gain shelf space because the packaging is minimized. The orientation is shifted from horizontal to vertical [display], resulting in valuable space that can be utilized by the retailers. Most importantly, this is just the beginning for Bayer Consumer Care. We plan to apply this innovative packaging to some of our other consumer products going forward."

Without a carton Schmitz says that the company doesn't need to worry as much about carton supplies. "Because of the elimination of the carton (for most of the bottle sizes), we have a

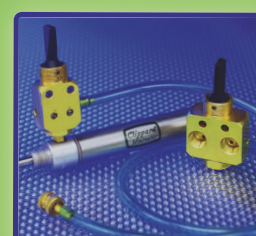
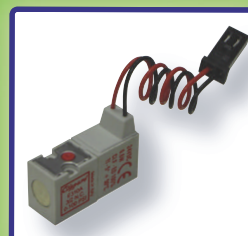
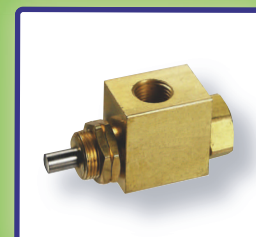
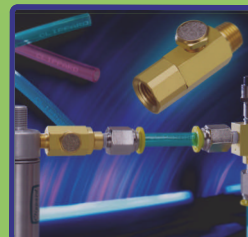
more environmentally sustainable product. The extended-text back-panel labels also provide (product-copy) flexibility."

Permanently affixed to the backs of each bottle, the multipanel labels include a large bar code on the front page and three additional pages of product details and Drug Facts. They can be opened and resealed to the bottles numerous times. The front-panel bottle labels are printed with an admonishment reading, "This package for households without young children."

New bottling line

The bottles are filled at Bayer Consumer Care's production facility in Myerstown, PA on a new packaging line that

Schmitz says was installed to
Continued on page 20



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replace an older line that would add more capacity. "Based on the projected volumes as a result of this initiative, we decided to dedicate the new line to the Aleve and Bayer Aspirin products."

Customized with new packaging equipment that can handle the oval bottles, the line was installed in December 2008. Bayer's packaging team also had to select equipment that could accommodate the TPE caps as well as cartonless and cartoned containers. At the head of the versatile line is an **Omega** unscrambler with an integrated desiccant feeder and an **Aylward** filler, followed by an **IMA Nova** cottoner, a capper from **Pneumatic Scale**, an **Enercon** induction sealer to seal the foil membrane from the cap to the mouth of the bottle, an **NJM/CLI** retorquing unit, a multipanel label applicator



from **Weiler** and an **Oystar** cartoner for the 40-count bottles requiring a carton. The bottles are grouped and shrink-bundled for shipment, so Bayer also installed a horizontal fifth-panel orienter and shrink-bundling systems from **Omega**, and a case packer from **Schneider Packaging Equipment**.

Easy pill to swallow

It's not a hard pill to swallow when the results of a packaging redesign go this well, says Matt Glenn, manager of customer marketing at Bayer Consumer Care. "Retailers are responding favorably. They have commented on Bayer's innovative approach to packaging and have even mentioned duplicating the packaging for their private-label bottles. In addition to being innovative, the packaging is differentiating our products on shelf."

Still, Glenn says, the company is presently testing the new, larger bottles with consumers to determine how consumers perceive the new packaging and cap.

"We're checking to see if they like it, if they think it's different from base packaging, etc.," he says. "But since the packaging was fully implemented in the market in July, it's still too early to discuss its impact on sales."

But it's allowing Bayer to use newer machines at higher throughput speeds with less production time, less warehouse stock and less carton

materials, says Schmitz.

"Collectively, these can help to positively impact our carbon footprint," he says.

More information is available:

Berndt Group, 410/889-5854.

<http://berndtgroup.com>

Berry Plastics Corp., 812/424-2904.

www.berryplastics.com

CCL Label, 203/926-1253. www.ccllabel.com

Aylward Enterprises LLC, 252/633-5757.

www.aylward-usa.com

Enercon Industries Corp., 262/255-6070.

www.enerconind.com

IMA Nova, 800/851-1518. www.imanova.com

GLS Thermoplastic Elastomers, 800/457-8777.

www.glstpes.com

MGS Mfg. Group, Inc., 262/255-5790. www.mgstech.com

NJM/CLI Packaging Systems Intl., 800/432-2990.

www.njmcli.com

Omega Design Corp., 800/346-0191.

www.omegadesign.com

Oystar USA Inc., 732/536-8770. www.oystarusa.com

Pneumatic Scale, 330/923 0491.

www.pneumaticscale.com

Schneider Packaging Equipment Co. Inc.,

315/676-3035. www.schneiderequip.com

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Given the popular consumer perception that packaging is wasteful, there is an intensive effort to improve packaging performance and recoverability, with manufacturers evaluating material and design alternatives to differentiate their packages on-shelf. Recycled content appeals to consumers and directly responds to concerns of packaging waste. Brand owners are testing ways to incorporate post-consumer-recycled (PCR) content into packaging where virgin material had been the norm.

Packaging developed with recycled polymers has

to the creation of a single package. The LCA methodology requires detailed data about all the processes that go into bringing a packaged product to market, not just the obvious ones.

Enterprising companies have made great strides in introducing packaging with a high percentage of PCR content, even for food contact applications that have stricter regulations. Many of these innovations can be attributed to leader companies that have set up unique relationships for material collection and conversion to produce a small set of products.

These companies have made significant investments and are paying higher prices to produce packaging with green

attributes. However, to accurately communicate what the environmental benefits are, manufacturers need to be able to quantify the specifics of the environmental advantages of using PCR content in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, material usage, water consumption and other environmental metrics.

Using LCA methodology to compare a recycled plastic package with a virgin one will allow companies to credibly quantify a package's

environmental savings, as well as justify the investment in PCR materials. Yet one needs life-cycle inventory (LCI) data, or the inputs and outputs for the entire life cycle for both materials, to make these calculations. LCI data are essential not only for assessing packaging applications, but also for all sorts of product development that uses the same commodity materials. The requisite LCI data for some virgin materials are publicly available, though some are outdated or incomplete, and we have a reasonable understanding of the various human and environmental impacts associated with their production and use. Unfortunately, the same kind of detailed and current data for most recycled forms of the commodity materials used in packaging are not yet publicly available. Efforts are underway to ensure the data for recycled materials become publically available. Until then, the lack of LCI data for many commodity materials is a serious impediment to measurable progress along sustainability goals.

The need for data grows as PCR content becomes more common

been particularly in demand. Increasing recycled content across the packaging spectrum is perceived to have enhanced environmental profiles over virgin-content counterparts. In many instances, this is true, particularly with plastics, but it's often hard to quantify these environmental benefits due to a lack of data for recycled materials.

Life-cycle assessment (LCA) methods can help quantify the benefits and illuminate tradeoffs of virgin and recycled materials. Yet a methodology is only as accurate as the data collected. There are hundreds of industrial processes that contribute

Minal T. Mistry is a project manager with the Sustainable Packaging Coalition, a project of GreenBlue. For additional information, email spcinfo@greenblue.org.

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Robot-In-A-Box is a simple and naturally integrated part of the Sara Lee Nordic streamlined packaging line. The robot's control system, which includes SOCOLogic self-programming software and PalletBuilder software for complex pallet patterns, is self-programming, thus eliminating the last element of manual intervention.

Robotic palletizing line in three weeks

A new robotic palletizer at Danish coffee manufacturer **MERRILD KAFFE A/S** was running product three weeks after agreeing to acquire the unit.

Edited by Jack Mans,
Plant Operations Editor

When Danish coffee manufacturer Merrild Kaffe A/S, part of Sara Lee Nordic, was contacted in midsummer 2009 by a new customer requiring handling of its products just after the summer holiday, a speedy solution was required. Either extra assistance had to be called in for manual palletizing or the company would have to obtain an automatic palletizer. According to Sara Lee Nordic factory manager Rune Engell-Hansen, working environment and finances were decisive factors for choosing automatic palletizing.

However, with two days left before the summer holiday, there was no time for engineering projects and tailored solutions, so Engell-Hansen contacted **Soco System Inc.** regarding their unique Robot-In-A-Box concept. Two days later, an agreement was concluded and Engell-Hansen went on holiday as planned. Three weeks later, when he returned to work, the robot was in place and in operation at Sara Lee Nordic.

Unpack, connect, operate

The concept of Robot-In-A-Box is that the purchase of a robot must be as easy as the

purchase of a mobile phone. No complex extra selections are required; everything is included in the standard model. The robot is equipped with a universal vacuum gripper head and a universal pallet-positioning device and will handle practically any case or pallet presented to it. It is even delivered with a foldable roller conveyor that can easily be connected to the plant's existing conveyor system.

The concept is in short: "Unpack, connect, operate." The commissioning time is reduced to the time it takes to unpack the Robot-In-A-Box. From the moment the robot is connected, everything is done intelligently and

robot, the dimensions of the case are scanned automatically, and the robot quickly calculates the optimum pallet pattern and starts palletizing. The preferences required behind the calculation are entered in the SOCOLogic software before the robot is put into operation. Preferences can be number of layers, pallet pattern type, layer pads, etc. It is possible to choose another pallet pattern or change the current pattern at any time. If the pallet pattern is already in the computer, it is easy to change to another pallet pattern. Thirty seconds after a new case arrives, palletizing has started, and the user has not even lifted a finger.

Another reason for the speedy decision to use the robot was that it could be leased instead of being purchased. In addition, the leasing price was just half of the wage costs for a new employee.

automatically. The robot's control system, which includes SOCOLogic self-programming software and PalletBuilder software for complex pallet patterns, is self-programming, thus eliminating the last element of manual intervention.

When a new shipping case arrives at the

"The simple handling is an important competitive parameter for us," says Engell-Hansen. "We are able to adjust to a new case size very quickly, which is very important, for instance, in connection with campaigns. This also means that the robot, unlike our existing

The robot is equipped with a universal vacuum gripper head and a universal pallet-positioning device and will handle practically any case or pallet presented to it. The unit does not take up much more space than a pallet so it is particularly suitable if space is limited.

palletizer, is perfect as buffer capacity from other packaging lines when the need arises."

The Robot-In-A-Box has also been well received by the employees, says Engell-Hansen, partly because it does not require constant monitoring and partly because it has eliminated repetitive work and heavy lifts.

Leasing cuts costs

Another reason for the speedy decision to use the Robot-in-a-Box was that it could be leased instead of having to be purchased. "The leasing agreement gave us the desired flexibility in the invested capital and, at the same time, a relatively simple and quick decision process," says Engell-Hansen.

"In addition, the leasing price was just half of the wage costs for a new employee, which meant that there was no hesitation as to the automation

The simple handling is an important competitive parameter for us. We are able to adjust to a new case size very quickly, which is very important.

solution. With this robot, the investment pays off from day one, and it operates day and night."

Engell-Hansen continues, "Another benefit regarding the leasing agreement is its flexibility. With the leasing agreement, we are not committed for a long period of time, which means that we can easily adjust our costs to the level of activity. Especially in connection with a new product, it is an advantage that we do not have to invest too much money in the project before we can see whether it will be a success."

Service agreement helps operations

An attractive feature of the leasing contract is the service agreement that was included. With this, Sara Lee Nordic does not have to plan and estimate the costs for service. More importantly, safe and reliable operation is in place because of regular service visits and quick intervention.

"Like everyone else, we have experienced the need for sudden assistance and Soco System has always been just around the corner in this



According to factory manager Rune Engell-Hansen, above, Robot-In-A-Box palletized more than 40,000 cases without a stop in only 2.5 weeks of operation.

connection," says Engell-Hansen. "This is of great value to a company like ours that works two shifts to cover a very large part of the consumption to a coffee-drinking population in Denmark and abroad."

More information is available:

Soco System Inc., 262/547-0777.
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Hybrid trend hits milk bottling

Organic dairy tests **POUCH-IN-BOTTLE** that aims to deliver sustainability benefits in an easy-pour package.

Straus Family Creamery, Marshall, CA, is currently market testing an eco-friendly, two-part paper bottle. The new package, which is supplied by **Ecologic Brands Inc.**, builds upon earlier bag-in-box formats, with an outer shell that has no plastic coatings and made of 100-percent-recycled and recyclable paper that is compostable and biodegradable. The inner PE pouch is made with 70-percent less plastic than traditional milk jugs.

As of January 2010, Straus Family Creamery has been using the Ecologic bottle to distribute one SKU—nonfat milk—at the Whole Foods' store in Oakland. Straus' primary packaging is a half-gal, returnable, reusable glass bottle.

Extending branding

"In principal, Ecologic is a bag-in-bottle with the consumer interface being almost identical to standard packaging," says Julie Corbett, founder and CEO of Ecologic Brands, Inc. "The Ecologic bottle offers enhanced functionality [over bag-in-box formats] as it is easier to pour, hold and grip."

The companies have been working on the bottle design, which aims to resemble Straus' trademark glass bottles, since March 2009,

Keeping it simple

While the bottle's structural design is very detailed in its replication of Straus' glass bottle, the Ecologic container's materials were purposely kept as close to their natural states as possible. "The bottle is designed to keep all the materials in their simple and natural forms so that they can be reconverted and remanufactured into something else," says Corbett.

She adds that this further differentiates Ecologic bottles from other milk containers. "The current cardboard milk carton is a multi-laminated package where the materials are hard to separate from one another, which is why they are not recycled,"

Corbett explains.

The same plastic—LDPE—is used for the closure as the lightweight interior pouch. In much the same way as a hybrid car integrates its gas- and electric-motor technologies for high performance. The LDPE pouch is designed to work in concert with the bottle's paper shell to protect milk as well as milk cartons or HDPE and glass bottles do.

Decorating, filling, coding

For this test, the bottle branding and nutritional information, as well as its UPC bar code, are displayed on an applied label. Ecologic says it is investigating direct-to-container printing options. Straus also is working on developing effective filling processes for the package, especially as it plans to expand the test to other San Francisco Bay Area stores after the 12-week test.

Expiration dates are coded onto the Ecologic bottles using a **Domino A300** continuous ink-jet printer. Designed for coding in harsh environments, the A300 is housed in a 316-grade stainless-steel cabinet that is rated IP65. The coder also has a self-cleaning ink system with a large internal reservoir and nozzle seal. Electrically charged ink droplets are used to create high-quality characters based on a grid formation, which enables the printer to code a variety of substrates.

Planning wider adoption

Straus hopes that the Ecologic bottle will replace its HDPE bottles for retail stores that want to carry its organic milk but don't want to carry Straus' primary packaging. And Ecologic is looking closely at consumer adoption of the paper milk bottle. "Milk has the highest purchase frequency. It is important to understand repeat behavior versus novelty," Corbett remarks. "The test will hopefully demonstrate that consumers are ready for better and more sustainable packaging choices."



Environmentalism runs in the family

As a small, family-owned dairy farm, Straus Family Creamery, Marshall, CA, considers its most important responsibility to be stewardship of the land. This commitment can be traced back to the family farm matriarch, Ellen Straus, who became an environmental activist after reading Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, in the early 1960s.

In addition to working with several environmentally minded organizations, e.g., the Marin Conservation League, the Environmental Action Committee, the Greenbelt Alliance and the Environmental Forum, and being named 1998 Steward of the Land by the American Farmland Trust, she also passed along these values to her children.

In 1993, Albert Straus began converting the dairy to a certified organic dairy. The company boasts that its farm was the first certified organic dairy west of the Mississippi River. Today, all Straus Family dairy cows are raised to National Organic Standards and its land is certified organic. Family members are still involved in environmental and agricultural activism, and the company looks for new ways to incorporate these commitments through projects such as the market testing of Ecologic paper bottles.



More information is available:

Ecologic Brands Inc., 877/326-5642.
www.ecologicbrands.com
 Domino Amjet Inc., 847/244-2501.
www.dominoamjet.com



Eastgate Graphics' new shrink labeling system is a patented, mandrel-style machine that operates at speeds up to 300 containers/min. Pictured here are milkshake containers.

Sleeve labeling sets the pace

Contract packager/decorator Eastgate Graphics adds a **VERSATILE BUT HEAVY-DUTY** shrink-label applicator/shrink tunnel line to its flexible operation.

Lauren R. Hartman, Senior Editor

Eastgate Graphics, a Lebanon, OH contract packager/container decorator, is known for its dry-offset and screen-printing capabilities for rigid plastic bottles, cups, closures and trays.

Positioned as a foremost provider of shrink-sleeve labeling, Eastgate takes projects from concept, to design, consulting, implementation, decorating and fulfillment. It has also parlayed its technical expertise and project management with substrates, films and inks. Customers include

Most of our customers have high volumes and expectations to match.

Kraft Foods, L'Oreal, Procter & Gamble, PepsiCo, and many others that serve markets from laundry detergents, fertilizers and health and beauty aids to food, beverages, pharmaceuticals and petcare.

"They have high volumes and expectations to match," affirms Eastgate's vp Jesse Otterson. Like most customers, Eastgate's clients want

packaging with maximum shelf appeal, product protection and process repeatability, Otterson says. "They want the ability to evaluate materials and develop strategies for weight reduction, sustainability and lower waste volumes. So most of the time, we project-manage a team that includes the customer, the equipment vendor, the

converter, the container manufacturer and the shrink-sleeve decorator, which is our group."

Shrink-sleeve labeling is becoming a high growth business for Eastgate, as well as for the container-decorating market overall.

Commitments to sustainability are part of the reason why. "There's a great importance put on the distance a package travels, and that also counts on a scorecard," explains Otterson. "Customers want dynamic, lightweight packaging that can be

Continued on page 26



Two steam shrink tunnels added as part of Eastgate's ongoing expansion provide 160 in. each of live shrink area and sufficient dwell time for shrinking various label film types.



Shrink-sleeve labeling is a growing segment for Eastgate and for the container decorating market overall; the company operates two or three shifts/day, six days/week.

applied in a location that is relatively central to where it will be used.”

So Eastgate’s packaging operation has to be highly modular: On any given day, it can run 15 to 20 packaging lines and have 10 more ready to pull into service. As projects develop, the company configures the lines for as long as they’re needed. “Most companies have dedicated-use systems that aren’t mobile,” says Otterson. “Our approach has to be as flexible as possible, as the products we package vary from customer to customer.”

Within its equipment inventory, Eastgate has configured four shrink labelers and 10 shrink tunnels into shrink-sleeve application lines. A “dry” line incorporates convection and infrared heating while some of its other lines employ steam. Its most recent purchase was a permanently installed line featuring an R-300 shrink labeler from **PDC Intl.**, which it acquired as part of an ongoing contract decorating and packaging services expansion.

Eastgate also bought two inline KST 80 steam shrink tunnels, also from PDC. These tunnels provide 160 in. of live shrink area to accommodate the line speeds typically from 250 to 275 ppm. The tunnels provide sufficient dwell time for proper label film shrinking on the high-speed line.

“While we haven’t expanded the facility space recently, we reconfigured the entire production floor to increase efficiency and improve product flow,” says Otterson. “PDC has a good reputation for service and dependability. We chose their equipment because it best fit our requirements for both flexibility and reliability.”

Designed to apply shrink-sleeve labels in rugged environments to tapered or conical containers at speeds up to 300 containers/min, the R-300 is both a shrink labeler and a multipacker for individual products. The machine works with cartons, bottles and cans in special shapes and container capacities from 2 oz to 1 gal. The machine’s advantage of accommodating thin shrink-film gauges, from 1.5 to 2 mils, over extended periods has been a welcome bonus, given that down-gauging is common among flexible film users. Eastgate also likes the fact that the system easily works with PETG, PVC, LDPE, HDPE PS, PLA and freezer-grade container materials.

Rolls with the changes

Given the programs Eastgate is developing, it needs equipment that can operate continuously,

two or three shifts a day, six days a week, depending on the season, Otterson explains. The line runs 250 to 300 containers/min, so high speed was essential. That’s why they liked the PDC systems.

“We have been very pleased with the reliability and performance of the equipment and have enjoyed working with their knowledgeable technical staff,” Otterson states. “We change this line over to run different products as required. But operation on the line is continuous, so we needed the assurance of knowing we could get spare parts off-the-shelf, at a reasonable cost. We were looking for a high-speed sleeving system that could handle quick, frequent changeovers of single-product containers. We also wanted a sleeve applicator/tunnel combination with a robust construction and a good ‘fit and finish.’ We wanted to be able to switch mandrels, feedscrews and other change parts without the need for a toolbox.”

Patented as a mandrel-style shrink-sleeve labeler that allows users to open and form the shrink sleeve into a round, oval or square shape, the system has no spinning knives that could dull quickly. This impressed Eastgate, which has clear-cut preferences for certain system features, Otterson adds. “Based on our experience with the other labeling lines, we didn’t want rotary cutters, which are fairly standard and prone to wear. The R-300’s flat, serrated knife is more preferable. And thanks to servo motor control, the knife leaves the labeling web intact.”

The applicator was outfitted with customized sleeve decreaser assemblies and a sleeve tampdown unit to handle Eastgate’s specialized freezer-grade shrink film materials used to sleeve label frozen beverage containers.

Feeding, applying, inspecting

How containers are fed into the sleeve applying system depends on their characteristics. The R-300 can be outfitted with a special product-handling unit that groups and orients the containers into dual counter-rotating timing screws, and then moves them through to servo-controlled gripper belts. This allows precise product handling and optimum presentation of the packages for sleeving. In Eastgate’s case, however, most of the containers it packs ride on a linear conveyor from **Nercon**, equipped with a vacuum chain into the R-300; feedscrews then separate and space the containers before they move under the applicator head, while a roll of the sleeve label material feeds

through the machine. The R-300 accepts film rolls that measure up to 21 in. maximum outside dia. Photocells sense gaps between the label printing and perforate the web between the images, creating individual labels. The label web is fed over a mandrel that matches the package profile.

As the machine senses container position, a servo motor feeds the label stock onto rollers that mechanically separate a sleeve from the rest of the web. The sleeve is then mechanically fired onto the container by two urethane wheels. An inspection/ejection station is equipped with sensors that check for label presence and proper label seating. If not applied precisely as specified, the container is ejected by a pneumatic cylinder from the line onto a tray or bin. Otherwise, it moves through the two back-to-back KST 80 steam tunnels, which ensure the label film snugly fits onto the containers.

Adjustable manifolds on the tunnels provide an efficient way to supply steam to the sleeves. Each tunnel has six rows of steam tubes that are externally adjustable for steam flow and nozzle position. This allows Eastgate to highly focus the application of steam to specific points on a package, depending on the adhesive pattern and other factors. The tunnels also can be adjusted on-the-fly without cooling down or re-ramping.

Individually programmable, the KST 80 tunnels also feature dual temperature zones so that as the sleeve material shrinks onto a container, a subsequent hold-down belt and blow-off station eliminate any residual moisture.

The labeled containers are



then transferred downstream to a bottle unscrambler from **New England Machinery** or an accumulation table from **Garvey** or one of Eastgate's own equipment designs, depending on the specific package type running.

PDC also engineered and manufactured an optional inline quality-control system for Eastgate that incorporates a splicing detection sensor that detects a splice in the film roll. Mounted within the labeling head of the machine, the system also incorporates optical sensors from **Banner Eng.** that look for the top of each sleeve label. To support this line configuration, Eastgate supplied its own parts-handling equipment.

fREAL Foods, an Orinda, CA, frozen dairy products customer, has been working with Eastgate since its inception. Eastgate helped fREAL transition packaging for a line of milkshakes, frozen cappuccinos and smoothies from preprinted cups to custom, 20-oz HIPS cups decorated with shrink sleeves. "fREAL's founder contracted with us to print their first cups," recalls Otterson. "Later, they moved to a striking, 10-color shrink sleeve to meet their new custom container requirements."

fREAL's cups travel on the infeed conveyor to the shrink-sleeve applicator upside-down and are sleeved using dual timing screws.

The new fREAL sleeves are made of 2-mil PVC, and are designed to shrink around the tapered cup design. For the fREAL application, the machine was equipped with a dual reel unwind and splicing table to accommodate two rolls of film. "There is a lot of development work required for tapered containers," says Otterson. "Even more when they have to withstand the below-zero environment of a freezer. PDC's ability to engineer the optimum shrink attributes was key to the success of this program."

More specialized role

Eastgate uses the R-300 line (with

additional sets of changeparts) to label six products routinely, including all 20 of fREAL SKUs and a Pepsi energy shot beverage. fREAL, Kraft Foods and L'Oreal are notable projects for which Eastgate provided a fully integrated suite of services.

"Adding a dependable, high-speed shrink-sleeving line to our existing operation has been part of our strategic plan for some time," Otterson observes. "fREAL asked us

to look at options for upgrading their packaging, and we decided to look for a line that would accommodate their containers as well as many others we were running. Their (PDC's) technical expertise and continued support have proven invaluable for all of our applications," he adds. "We'd definitely consider acquiring more PDC equipment in the future and plan to continue adding capacity throughout the coming year."

More information is available:

PDC Intl. Corp., 203/853-1516.
www.pdc-corp.com
Banner Eng. Corp. 800/373-7667.
www.bannerengineering.com
Garvey Corp., 800/257-8581.
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The hub of the Robbinsville distribution center, and where the DC realizes its most profound efficiencies, is with its sortation and conveying systems, which reduce manual labor, top. The SortDirector® warehouse control system, above, integrates with the Robbinsville WMS and coordinates all product movement inside the DC.

Energy efficient distribution center boasts high reliability

LIFETIME BRANDS' newly upgraded 700,000 sq-foot Robbinsville, NJ distribution center, with its energy-efficient conveying and sortation equipment, stands as a model of DC energy conservation, boasting a substantial reduction in electrical power consumption while handling an average volume of 425,000 cases each month.

Edited by Jack Mans,
Plant Operations Editor

In 1999, Lifetime Brands Inc. began laying plans for a greenfield distribution center in New Jersey that would consolidate its three manual distribution operations into a single, highly efficient and very automated facility. In a staged approach over eight years, the company extended not only the distribution center's material-handling equipment, but also its physical size to accommodate its needs, expanding its total space to 700,000 sq ft.

Lifetime Brands brought in **Dematic Corp.** to engineer, build and install conveying, picking and sorting equipment that would optimize energy usage and maintain the highest possible uptime reliability.

Growth spurs expansion

Lifetime Brands is a leading designer, developer

and marketer of kitchen ware, cutlery and cutting boards, bakeware, cookware, pantry ware, tabletop, home decor, picture frames and bath accessories. The company markets its products under some of the industry's best-known brands, including KitchenAid®, Farberware®, Mikasa®, Cuisinart®, Calvin Klein® and Nautica®, as

Uptime is critical to an efficient DC, and the Robbinsville center is running more than 99 percent.

well as environmentally-friendly products such as EcoWorld®.

Lifetime Brands' products are distributed through almost every major retailer in the U.S. In 2007, the Garden City, NY-based company had net sales exceeding \$493 million, a 7.9-percent increase over the prior year. This growth has been influenced

by the company's vigorous brand acquisitions.

The company's newly-upgraded Robbinsville, NJ DC (near Trenton) handles Lifetime Brands' lines of kitchenware, distributing nationally some 7,600 SKUs of food-prep items including baking products, kitchen gadgets, dinner ware, barware, cutting boards and cutlery sets. The

original 550,000-sq-ft building was completed and operational in 2001.

Pick-tower equipment additions were made in 2004, and the building was expanded by 150,000 sq ft in 2006 to accommodate additional conveying and high-speed sortation equipment, another pick tower and additional very-narrow-



Lifetime Brands' DC can handle 45,000 shipping cases/day at a high accuracy rate, according to Craig Phillips, senior vp for distribution, above.

aisle (VNA), high-rise pallet racking to accommodate 100,000 pallets. The DC has 4.7 miles of VNA wire-guided aisles. Finally in July, 2007, a fifth pick tower was added, as were a third high-speed sorter and additional conveying equipment.

Energy-efficient systems

Ninety-five percent of Lifetime Brands' 7,600 SKUs come into the Robbinsville DC in containers, which are opened. The products are palletized, and then stored or used in current orders using a cross-dock operation.

A warehouse-management system (WMS) helps direct picking, as well as replenishment of the product, from the stored pallets. Batch waving is utilized through the picking and sortation process. Full cases make up the majority of the products handled.

The higher-volume items are selected directly onto conveyors in five multi-level pick towers using pick labels.

About 20 percent of the DC's products are split-case, manually picked and scanned to carts using radio-frequency scanning technology. These products are then inducted into the sortation at one of several induction points.

Split-case items include kitchen gadgets and food-preparation items, which are usually picked-and-packed for a specific store, rather than shipping bulk to wholesale. Normally, the DC ships in bulk, but split-case items are packed for each store and then consolidated for shipping.

The hub of the Robbinsville DC, and where it realizes its most profound efficiencies, is its sortation and conveying systems, which reduce manual labor.

"We have energy conservation built in throughout the entire conveyor and sortation material handling systems," says Dematic's Bob Poth. "Lifetime Brands is able to determine when product is moving through any part of the facility, and turns off a section

of the system automatically, when it is not in use, and then turns each section back on when the product volume comes back.

"This is achieved through Dematic's control system by using photo eyes strategically located throughout the conveyor equipment," Poth says. "This operates in conjunction with selectable timers, so the equipment

is only running at planned intervals. It is a very simple and very effective energy conservation module that we developed and integrated into the system for Lifetime Brands."

Two Dematic RS Series high-speed sliding-shoe sorters are utilized in the DC. The interleaving extruded aluminum slats in the sorters provide a wide, flat carrying

Continued on page 30

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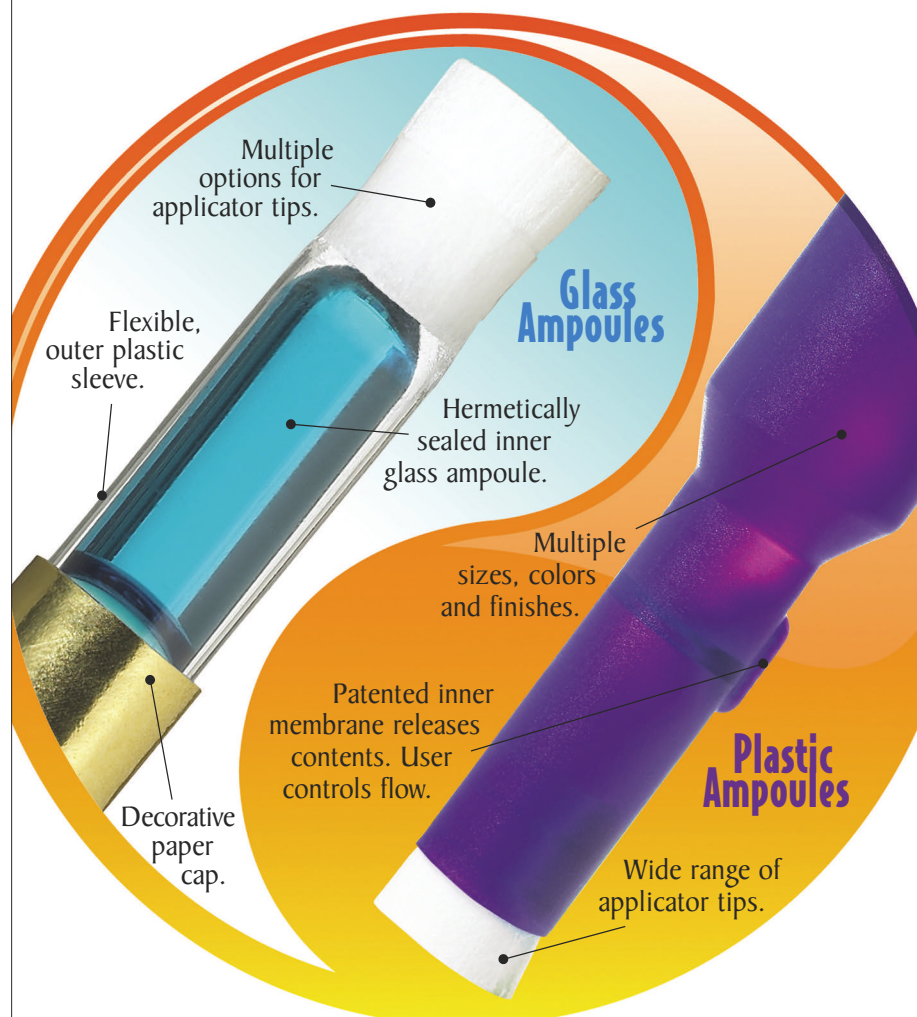
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surface that prevents jams. They allow the sorting of a wide range of product sizes and types with quiet and positive sortation and ultra-high throughput.

For cases coming in and out of the sorters, the DC utilizes zero-

**We have reduced
our distribution
expense by 3.75
percent over the
past five years.**

pressure accumulation conveyors to temporarily stop, hold and release material. They allow product accumulation along a line without pressure buildup.

The DC's energy-conservation module, conveyors and sortation are run under Dematic's SortDirector® warehouse control system (WCS), which integrates with the Robbinsville WMS and coordinates all product movement inside the DC.

SortDirector runs on a Windows-based Pentium PC using an SQL (structured query language) database. It uses modular components of code to

make it easily configurable. Providing graphic system monitoring for the entire conveying operation, it gives operators real-time control of product movement and real-time reporting.

Increased payout

By mid-year 2007, Lifetime Brands' Robbinsville DC had the capability of handling 45,000 cases/day at an extremely high accuracy rate. "The energy efficiencies at our New Jersey facility have helped cut our distribution operating costs," says Craig Phillips, senior vp for distribution at Lifetime Brands.

"We have reduced our distribution expenses as a percentage of sales, by 3.75 percent over the past five years.

"Uptime reliability is also critical to running an efficient DC," continues Phillips. "A key operational metric we look at is our system's uptime, and at Robbinsville, it is more than 99 percent. We also attribute much of our inventory and order accuracy to the systems we have in place."

More information is available:

Dematic Corp., 616/913-7287.
www.dematic.us



The Lifetime Brand's DC handles 7,600 SKUs of food-prep items, including baking products, kitchen gadgets, dinnerware, barware, cutting boards and cutlery sets.



Drug delivery with ease and comfort

Watson Pharmaceutical offers a new drug-delivery/injectable syringe device that improves
ADMINISTERING CONVENIENCE FOR USERS AND COMFORT FOR PROSTATE CANCER PATIENTS.

Lauren R. Hartman, Senior Editor

To preserve drug efficacy in shipment and storage, many biotechnology product manufacturer/marketers produce drugs as freeze-dried powders that require reconstitution at the point of use. While most patients leave this job to doctors or skilled nurses, it can be time consuming. And, many of these drugs are being distributed to the home market today.

One drug that must be reconstituted by physicians is marketed by Watson Pharmaceutical, a Corona, CA, specialty pharmaceutical company that develops, manufactures, markets and distributes brand and generic pharmaceutical products.

The mission of Watson Urology is to offer

products and services that improve the quality of patients' lives, and satisfy the needs of physicians who specialize in the diagnosis, management and treatment of urological disorders. Helping to make life more livable for prostate cancer patients, and less complicated for the medical industry, Watson now offers a special drug-delivery device for the freeze-dried drug Trelstar® (triptorelin pamoate for injectable suspension), a Swiss-made product from Debiopharm Group, sold worldwide.

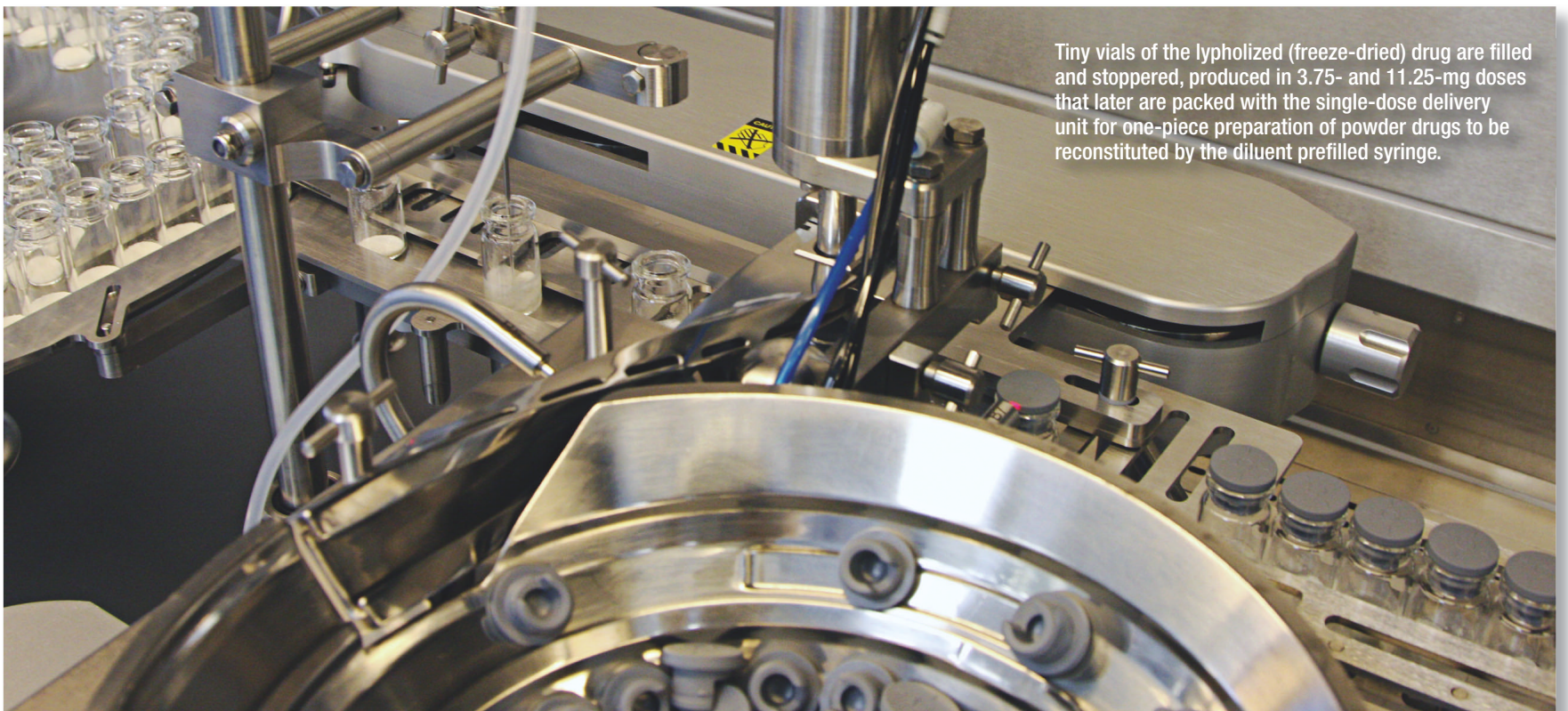
Watson describes the drug as primarily used in hormone-dependant prostate cancer treatment. To market Trelstar in the U.S., Watson formed a partnership with **West Pharmaceutical Services** in an effort to provide a safe and convenient delivery device for Trelstar.

West's MixJect™ drug-transfer device provides

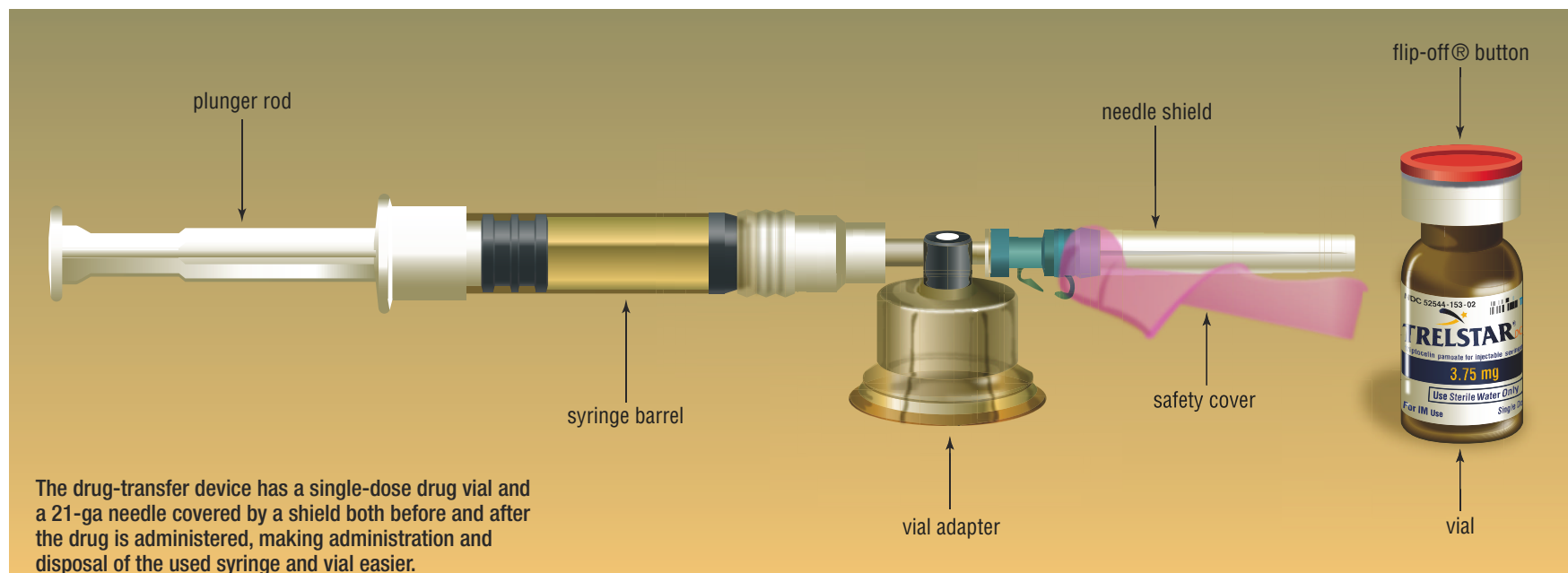
reconstitution by a diluent prior to an injection via a syringe, and is equipped with a single-dose drug vial and a 21-ga needle covered by a shield both before and after the drug is administered, making administration of Trelstar and disposal of the used syringe and glass vial significantly easier and safer for patients and caregivers. The system also includes a plunger rod, a syringe barrel, a vial adapter and the safety cover for the needle shield.

Produced in 3.75- and 11.25-mg doses, the single-dose delivery unit is available for immediate injection with the dry pre-attached needle once reconstituted. The Trelstar drug is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and carries European CE certification. Its delivery device works with existing drug vials, so there's no need for costly

Continued on page 32



Tiny vials of the lyophilized (freeze-dried) drug are filled and stoppered, produced in 3.75- and 11.25-mg doses that later are packed with the single-dose delivery unit for one-piece preparation of powder drugs to be reconstituted by the diluent prefilled syringe.



re-registration or capital investment.

In development about six months, MixJect was commercialized in 2003 and was developed by Medimop Medical Projects Ltd., a West Pharmaceutical Services company and market leader for the transfer, mixing and administration of injectable pharmaceuticals. While MixJect can be used for specialty prescriptions, homecare personnel, drugs for chronic conditions and for self-administered drugs, Debiopharm's Trelstar, which is marketed in the U.S. by Watson, is only administered by a physician.

At facilities in Israel, Medimop injection-molds the MixJect device components from medical-grade polycarbonate, with HDPE molded valves and a low-profile lock that reduces fluid path deadspace. It comes preassembled with a syringe needle specified by Watson.

Before handling the components with clean hands, the user is instructed to place the device, which is blister-packed by Medimop in a clear PVC thermoform with a peelable lid, on a clean, flat surface, remove a 20-mm PP Flip-Off® button (also produced by West) from the top of the drug vial and disinfect the injection site with an alcohol pad,

which is enclosed in the outer paperboard carton sourced through Sharp. Next, the user peels away a safety cover on the blister pack, and the device is placed on top of the vial (Debiopharm manufactures the product and ships the vials to the U.S.), using the blister-pack as a holder. The user then seats the device on the vial by pushing down until a spike

The product must be reconstituted, so the transfer device allows ease of reconstitution and drug administration.

penetrates a rubber stopper and the device snaps into place. The user then removes the blister-pack and discards it before connecting the diluent prefilled syringe to the MixJect device. Transfer of the diluent to the vial is next, by slowly pushing the plunger all the way in and gently swirling the vial to make sure the product is thoroughly mixed.

The vial can then be inverted as the plunger is

slowly pulled back to withdraw the mixed drug from the vial into the syringe. After the vial is removed from the MixJect assembly, the drug is ready for injection.

Easier to administer

"The transfer device allows ease of reconstitution and drug administration," says Glen Zimmerman, associate director of marketing for West. "Watson wanted a safety needle pre-attached to the device. Therefore, we had to consider all of the major active safety luer connection needles (a type of lock) to see which could lend itself to orientation during assembly. We found a configuration that made it possible to assemble the device without impacting the active safety system."

Watson began using the MixJect drug transfer device for Trelstar in June 2008. For U.S. distribution of Trelstar by Watson, West's manufacturing facility in Lititz, PA, receives the transfer device from Medimop in a Tyvek®-sealed, thermoformed blister-pack that's gamma-sterilized.

West assembles it into an administration kit containing MixJect, a BD Eclipse safety needle and a WFI diluent pre-filled syringe and ships

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the kit to contract-packager **Sharp Packaging Systems**, where it's loaded along with an active vial of Trelstar (from Debiopharm) and instructions into an outer paperboard carton.

Provided in two formulations, Trelstar LA (the larger-dose, longer-acting three-month formulation) and Trelstar Depot (the one-month formulation), the drug doesn't require refrigeration and can be stored at controlled room temperatures. The Trelstar formulations will soon include a 6-month version, Watson says. Debiopharm manufactures the

Watson is pleased with the acceptance of the MixJect delivery system, both by physician and nurse customers and patients.

drug within clean rooms. Trelstar is terminally sterilized to confer a high level of safety. The freeze-dried suspension of microgranules allows the best biodelivery.

The microgranules are produced and packaged with mostly customized equipment from suppliers such as **M&O Perry** and **Flexicon** (for the filling systems), **Bausch+Stroebel** (for the capping systems) and **GEA** (for the freeze dryer). Says Yves Galy, logistics and strategic planning director at Debio

Manufactured in clean rooms, the freeze-dried drug is packaged in Switzerland by Debiopharm. Marketing the drug here in the U.S., Watson says it's pleased with the acceptance of the MixJect delivery unit.

R.P. S.A., a Flexicon FP-50 liquid filler is used to add suspension media to create the suspension prior to freeze-drying the drug.

"Watson is pleased with the acceptance of the MixJect delivery system, both by physician and nurse customers and patients," says Joe Elliott, director of marketing-urology at Waton Pharmaceuticals.

"The response from patients and physicians has been very positive. The new drug-transfer device is easier to use, doctors tell us, and includes a smaller needle, so there's no insertion into a rubber stopper; the needle safety guard also helps us meet OSHA compliance requirements for disposal of biohazardous materials."

More information is available:

West Pharmaceutical Services, Inc., 610/594-2900.

www.westpharma.com

Bausch+Stroebel Maschinenfabrik Ilshofen GmbH & Co.

KG, +49 (0)7904-7010. www.bausch-stroebel.com

Flexicon Corp., 888/353-9426. www.flexicon.com

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Short-run labels deliver big branding



A small Texas liquor manufacturer uses **SHRINK LABELS** to launch its vodka brand with a bold look and a charitable mission.

Linda Casey, Associate Editor

Most Americans know the 21st Amendment best as the amendment that effectively ended prohibition in 1933. But the amendment also proffered great regulatory power over the distribution of alcohol to state governments, and it has been interpreted as giving states broad powers in liquor sales and distribution not only across borders but within.

When the 21st Amendment Enforcement Act, which was introduced on March 9, 1999 by Senator Orrin G. Hatch, was passed, it furthered strengthened the states' abilities to enforce these regulatory powers.

As a result of the amendment, a three-tier system developed that requires many liquor manufacturers to trade first through a wholesaler. It was this amendment that compelled Carlos Guillem to develop sophisticated packaging that would help his hand-crafted vodka get picked up by a wholesaler.

"The 21st Amendment requires us to only sell to a wholesaler, and the wholesaler sells to the liquor store," Guillem, founder of DeLos Vodka, Lewisville, TX. "To get a wholesaler to pick up the label, I designed the name and the black bottle and everything else."

Designing relationships

The liquor originally was distributed in clear glass bottles as gifts for Guillem's friend and family, who played major roles in the development of the brand.

"My wife came up with the idea doing a black bottle that would stand out," Guillem recalls. Clayton Arnold, a friend, used his drafting skills

as an architect to create the DeLos logo as a PhotoShop file.

Remembering the one major roadblock in the package design process, Guillem adds, "We looked at buying bottles that are already painted black, and they were just impossible to find." He began researching alternatives and suppliers that could help him explore those options. "I wanted to use somebody local because I knew this was going to be a process working on the details," he remarks.

Local support

One of these suppliers was **McDowell Label**, a full-service label and package converter that also happened to be a Texas-based business. "We listened to him in detail about his goals and objectives for positioning his brand uniquely independent of the entire category," recalls John McDowell, president of McDowell Label.

McDowell identified three top goals for the job: an overall eye-catching graphic reproduction to maximize shelf presence and branding; opaque, bold whites; and rich, dark blacks. They also discussed the type of decoration that would best help him reach these goals.

"His initial choice to achieve the design objectives was either painted glass or etching," McDowell recalls. "When he saw the very cost-prohibitive barriers of entry, the inability to achieve the richness in color, and the flexibility to provide velocity to market with various different sizes and various different campaigns, whether it be event marketing, seasonal marketing or adding new flavors to this line, he was very frustrated."

Guillem remarks: "Now we didn't order that much to start, but they treated me like I was putting in a multi-million dollar order. Their customer service is above and beyond anything I've ever seen before. They explained how shrink-labels work and the great things about shrink-labeling."

McDowell Labels also was upfront about some of the reproduction challenges of shrink-label printing. "Blacks have always traditionally been one of the most challenging colors to reproduce," McDowell explains.

"Especially with such a dramatic curve like you have from the base of the [DeLos] bottle all

the way through, up to the neck. So we did a lot of testing with different types of materials, different grids and actually walked Carlos through a kind of a cradle-to-grave lifecycle of how these materials would perform so that he could identify a bottle shape and size, and a sleeve material that coupled

Dave McDowell, chairman of the board of McDowell Label, and John McDowell, president, (left-to-right) examine printed labels fresh off the web, left. Further quality checks are done by Jay Luft, vp of operations at McDowell Label, while Jeff McDowell, quality control, looks on, and operator Willie Martinez tends to the combination press.

Three design goals for the DeLos packaging project:

- overall eye-catching graphic reproduction to maximize shelf presence and branding
- opaque, bold whites
- rich, dark blacks



with our printing capability would enable him to have the highest probability of predictability and reproductive success from run to run to run.”

The converter then created a prototype package made from **Eastman Embrace LV** copolymer and printed it using McDowell's proprietary high-density UV printing process. “The very first bottle that they showed me was perfect,” Guillem recalls. “The bottle that they presented—the prototype—and what we use today are identical. There have been no changes made.”

Material research

Designed to form around highly contoured or complex containers, Eastman Embrace LV copolymer is a halogen-free material that reaches higher early onset temperatures on curves versus those obtained with PVC or OPS while retaining good machine-direction (MD) growth attributes.

“You see companies like DeLos saying, ‘I want the glossiest possible label, I want the best print surface, I want a material that grows in the machine direction and I want something that is not frowned upon environmentally,’” Matt Dudas, market development manager at Eastman, remarks. “And you get all those things with Embrace LV.”

LV represents a research-and-development investment of two to three years in addition to the research Eastman Chemical had already made for Embrace resin, which launched in 1999. “Until then, people blended PET with PETG and some other materials,” Dudas explains. “A lot of people think of PETG film as, let's say, a scrambled egg and Embrace is like an omelet. There are multiple things in Embrace that make it much more valuable than a scrambled egg [PETG], and LV is like omelet supreme, with a more robust characteristic.

“The high shrinkage, up to 70 to 80 percent means not only that you can do high variances between the widest and the narrowest portions of the container but also if you're doing less than 70 to 80 percent, Embrace LV gives you a smoother laydown,” he adds. “The LV material also swells in the machine direction, so you use less film.” MD growth also helps eliminate smiles and frowns at the tops and bottoms of shrink body labels, he says.

Heart on its sleeve

McDowell uses its all-servo **MPS** presses with **ACTEGA** (formerly Water Ink Technology) ink systems to print the Embrace LV sleeve labels. Not only did McDowell Labels get the rich blacks and bold opaque whites that Guillem was looking for, the converter beautifully reproduced the one graphic element most dear to Guillem's heart—a gray ribbon that represents Guillem's family commitment to brain cancer research and support.

“Ten percent of all our profits go to a brain cancer foundation at Children's Medical Center in Dallas



Sleeves are placed over bottles as they enter the steam tunnel, top left. Carlos Guillem, founder of DeLos vodka, fills bottles with his vacuum-distilled vodka, top right. Labeled bottles, bottom right, exit a steam tunnel.

that's set up in my niece's name,” Guillem explains. “She passed away in 2004 of brain cancer. Her name was Crystal.”

Not just for the big guys

Guillem placed an order for 25,000 printed shrink-sleeve labels, of which 5,000 would be used immediately on clear 750-mL glass bottles with perforated metal caps, for distribution by **Republic National Distribution**. “For Carlos, being a hand-crafted boutique distillery at this point in time, he wanted to enter the marketplace with a very national brand look,” McDowell explains. “One of our value propositions is to be able to enable someone like Carlos, or perhaps even a larger brand owner who wants to do regional or event branding or introduce a new private brand underneath their umbrella for a family of product.”

In this spirit, McDowell Labels provided services beyond just delivering printed shrink labels. “We're a small company, and I didn't have the money to go out and buy a shrink tunnel,” Guillem recalls. “So I talked to McDowell, and they said, ‘you know, until you get larger volume, we'll be willing to shrink those for you.’”

Sweat equity

DeLos Vodka operators hand place shrink-labeled bottles into a **Mori** six-head filler, supplied by **TCW Equipment**. The vacuum-distilled vodka is gravity-fed into the bottles, which are hand-capped with tamper-evident closures. The emptied, plain cases in which the bottles arrive are sold to a local used paperboard company. Boldly printed cases supplied by Texas-based **Specialty Container Corp.** are used to transport filled bottles to the distributor. Case packing, palletizing and stretch wrapping also are done manually.

“People expect all this fancy equipment when they come to do a tour, but they just see a lot of sweat,” Guillem remarks.

Safe landings

According to Guillem, the shrink sleeves not only look good they also are very durable. “It's something we didn't think of when designing the



bottle,” he recalls. “It freezes well, and we've heard when a bottle is dropped that it doesn't shatter glass everywhere. The broken glass sticks to the label and makes it easier for the bartenders to clean up and throw away.” Armed with its boldly designed bottles, shippers and a small but new bottling line, DeLos and distributor Republic National Distribution have been selling the brand throughout northern Texas and plans to expand sales statewide soon.

More information is available:

Eastman Chemical Co., 800/327-8626.

www.eastman.com

McDowell Label, 800/275-6016.

www.mcdowelllabel.com

ACTEGA WIT, 800/426-4657. www.actega.com/wit

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www.rndc-usa.com

Specialty Container Corp., 877/777-3524.

www.specialtycontainer.com

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The robotic palletizing cells at Y&S pick cases from infeed conveyors fed by a main conveyor trunk line coming from the plant's packaging lines. Cases of the firm's candy products—Twizzlers, Nibs, etc.—range in size from 3.1x5.3x9.9 in. to 15.1x16.4x26.5 in. and weigh as much as 62.2 lb. Of the 149 active cases, 125 are column-stacked patterns and 24 have top layers rotated 180 deg to interlock the load.

Candy factory modernizes its robotic-palletizing

HERSHEY CO.'S Y&S Candies' licorice plant welcomes new palletizing robots, along with controls and simulation software, that handle 85 percent of the plant's palletizing requirements while also increasing productivity, flexibility and reliability.

Edited by Jack Mans, Plant Operations Editor

Since April 2009, the Y&S Candies plant in Lancaster, PA, home of the Twizzler, has been upgrading its four 20-yr-old robotic case-palletizing cells, replacing aging robots with new, state-of-the-art **Motoman Inc.** models designed for palletizing applications.

While the project originally was specified as a straight obsolete-equipment replacement for Y&S, a division of The Hershey Co., the robot upgrade has made several significant improvements to the plant's palletizing operations, including improved productivity.

We've seen an increase in speed of as much as 20 percent, with quicker acceleration. Also, dropped-case incidents now are few and far between.

"We've seen an increase in speed of as much as 20 percent, from eight cases/min to 10 cases/min," says Hershey senior packaging-systems engineer and project manager Alex Diaz.

"The new Motoman EPL160 four-axis robots execute their moves more quickly than did the older robots, with quicker acceleration. We get faster picks and drops and dropped-case incidents are few and far between now, thanks to a new end effector specified with the robots that handles our larger and heavier cases more reliably."

The four robots at Y&S are arranged in two groups of two each,

and each robot will handle cases from up to four packaging lines simultaneously, depending on the case sizes.

Fitting new robots into existing cells

Diaz belongs to a team of packaging-system engineers employed out of The Hershey Co. Global Operations Engineering Div. Diaz, along with Andrew Brighton, staff engineer at the Y&S plant, decided early in

2008 to replace the aging robots at Y&S with newer Motoman EPL models.

EPL160 robots (160-kg payload) offer a 124.4-in. horizontal reach and use through-arm cable routing to maximize cable life while serving multiple infeed conveyors and pallet stations. The robot's utilities-management package features 23 wires for communication and six internally routed



that is used by the robot to automatically calculate the build path. The software is stored on a central PC that serves all of the robots at Y&S and uploads the jobs to each robot when the robot requests a new pattern.

Using the software, Y&S engineers can quickly apply changes to box and pallet size,

as specified by the customer, allowing quick and automatic generation of a new pallet program. The box sizes that the robot uses to calculate the patterns are stored in each customer's SKU database. When the robot begins to run a new pattern, it downloads the box dimensions, instructions for layer rotation

and the location of slip sheets, as well as any special build instructions from the PC.

The download process takes six seconds/pattern. The software then can model interferences and run palletizing simulations to check for any interference or mistakes that may have

Continued on page 38

Y&S' palletizing software creates a new pallet-pattern algorithm that is used by the robot to automatically calculate the build path. The software is stored on a central PC that serves all of the robots.

air lines for end-of-arm tooling.

This setup eliminates pinch points and potential interference with other equipment in the workcell, improving flexibility and minimizing downtime. The robot's vertical reach is 119.1 in., and position repeatability is +/- 0.5 in.

The four robotic palletizing cells at Y&S pick cases from infeed conveyors fed by a main conveyor trunk line coming from the plant's packaging lines. Cases of the firm's candy products—Twizzlers, Nibs, etc.—range in size from 3.1x5.3x9.9 in. to 15.1x16.4x26.5 in. and weigh as much as 62.2 lb. Of the 149 active SKUs in use, 125 are column-stacked patterns and 24 have the top layer rotated 180 deg to interlock the load.

All receive a base slipsheet on each empty pallet, and 17 receive an intermediate slipsheet—all handled by the robots. Among the specifications Motoman received from Diaz was the requirement that the systems must be able to pick and place one to four cases, or a slip-sheet, in 8.5 to 9.0 sec.

Customized software

"The palletizing operation uses 52 different pallet patterns based on specific customer requirements,"

Diaz explains, "and the plant creates new patterns several times per year. "With the robot upgrade, we also integrated new offline palletizing-simulation software that allows the engineers to create a new pallet pattern in as little as 10 minutes.

"And, the operator can change from one palletizing pattern to the other in less than one minute by selecting a new SKU for each lane from the control panel," he adds.

One operator/shift oversees operation of all four of the robotic-palletizing cells, which run around the clock, and handle 85 percent of the Y&S plant's palletizing workload.

Motoman's palletizing software creates a new pallet-pattern algorithm

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The robots are outfitted with UniGripper universal, multipurpose end effectors. Specific vacuum areas of the tool are activated based on the required shape and location of the cases.

been made during the setup of a new pattern by the operator. If the simulation looks good, the customer is assured that the robot will run the pattern problem-free. The palletizing system can handle as many as 30 layers and approximately 100 cases/layer.

Motoman engineers Mark Gleadle and Greg Morgan developed the software for the plant's unique conveyor configuration. Says Diaz, "Our conveyors were designed to enter each palletizing cell at a 15-degree angle, rather than the standard cell layout, where the conveyors typically transfer at 90 degrees from the main conveyor. Also, the outfeed conveyors were only 12 inches apart, which did not allow much room to build the pattern."

"We challenged Motoman to make the robots work in our existing cells," adds Diaz, "and there were some challenges there. This required them to customize the programming and palletizing software and also to engineer a custom base for each of the robots.

"This new base allows the robots to sit on our standard pedestal within each cell and still reach where they need to in order to pick the cases and stack the pallets. Now, thanks to the custom software, we have more flexibility as to how we set up the end effector as well as the pick points and angles," he explains.

All 52 of the Y&S plant's existing pallet patterns already have been reprogrammed for use by the new Motoman NX100 robot controllers that direct each robot. Motoman converted 30 of the programs and Y&S engineers handled the rest. The NX100 controller features a Windows CE programming pendant, and offers as many as 100 user passwords in four security levels—user, editor,

maintenance and supervisor.

Engineers can set the passwords to restrict and log changes made to production programs.

It's all in the grip

The end effector Diaz specified for each of the four new robots is the UniGripper, a universal, multipurpose vacuum tool from Swedish supplier **Tepro Machine & Pac System**. Specific vacuum areas of the tool are activated, based on the required shape and location of the cases, as programmed into the software. This allows Y&S to use one end effector to handle all of its package sizes, picking up anywhere from one to four cases, depending on the pattern specified.

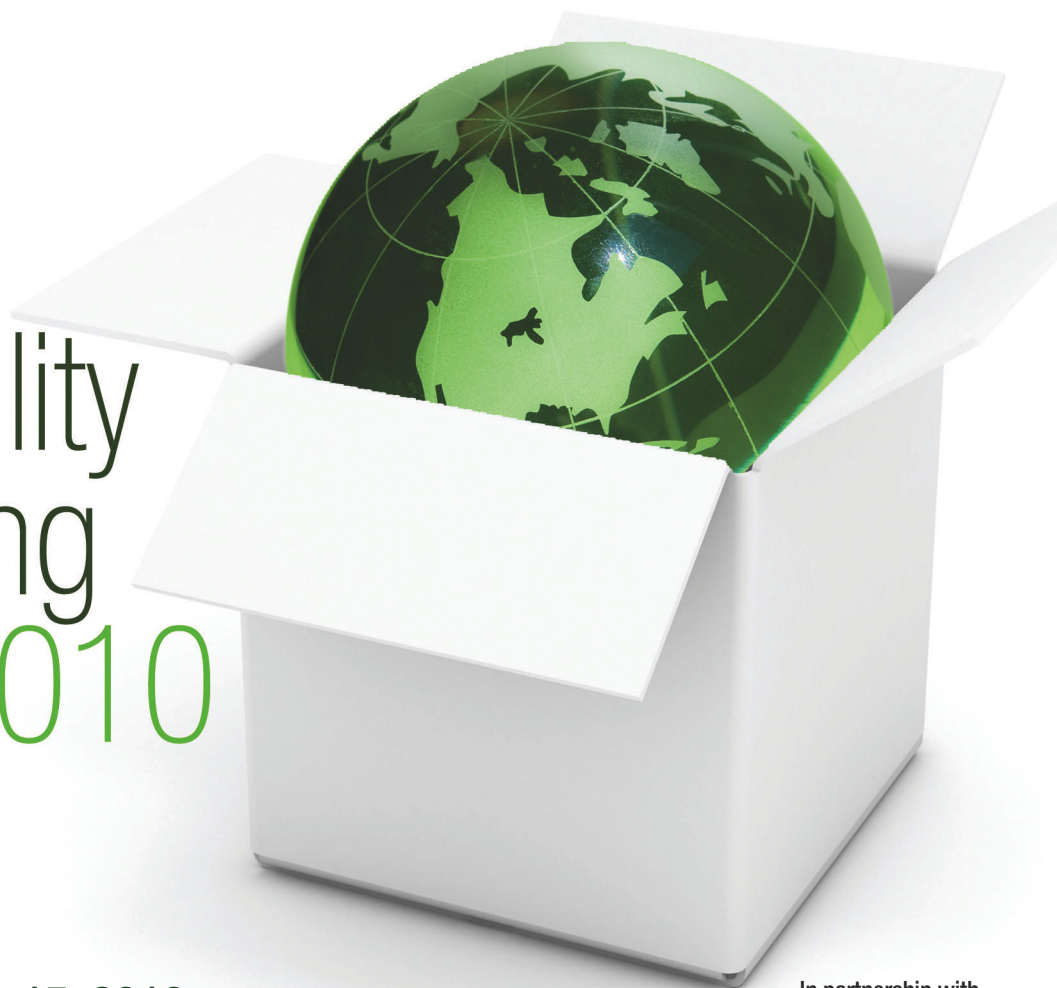
"Also, we find that the tool, which is one large, foam-covered plate, seals to the boxes much more effectively than did the suction-cup tooling used previously," says Diaz. "That allows the robots to more reliably handle the bigger and heavier cases without having to slow down, as they previously were required to do." The tool can pick up two or three of the plant's heaviest cases at one time. The previous vacuum-cup end effectors could only grab one case at a time.

Along with the new robots at Y&S came a new package of safety apparatus so that the robotic cells meet ANSI/RIA 15.06-1999 safety requirements. Each cell includes 10-ft-tall, woven-wire fencing, two access gates and two self-muting light curtains that guard the pallet-conveyor discharge locations.

More information is available:
Motoman Inc., 937/847-3200.
www.motoman.com
Tepro Machine & Pac System,
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sustainability in packaging 2010



Workshops – Monday, March 15, 2010

Conference – Tuesday, March 16 - Wednesday, March 17, 2010

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Strategies to keep sustainability sustainable

These days it seems that the word "sustainability" follows us from company meetings, to stores, to our homes, and is applied to everything from economics to product choices to agriculture. Looking through the buzz and media hype, it is undeniable that corporate social responsibility is inextricably linked to corporations' brand identity and reputations. When it comes to packaging, sustainability is an integral part of innovation, not a new and passing trend. Whether it is cost-cutting, capturing a new consumer trend, perfecting performance or building a brand, sustainability needs to be weaved into your packaging decisions.

Over the last three years, the **Sustainability in Packaging** conference has grown and continues to reflect and examine the current trends and provide the most up-to-date information. Since its inception, the conference has attracted a great diversity of companies and delegates representing the entire packaging supply chain. The structure of plenary sessions followed by topic specific tracks allows delegates to tailor the program to your needs, covering topics ranging from strategic sustainability goals, materials, innovative design solutions, supply chain synergies, waste management and recycling to brand image and communication with customers and partners.

The 4th annual **Sustainability in Packaging 2010** will be the forum to share ideas, learn from successes and challenges, get inspired, create partnerships and continue the dialogue with the industry colleagues about the collective sustainability challenge. Use this opportunity to create a custom agenda and learn from leaders in the industry, who will cover a wide breadth of topics and present real-life case studies.

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Coding a sweet future

Robustly manufactured **INK-JET CODERS** prove to be a healthy addition to PEZ Candy Inc.'s U.S. packaging operations, as the co. prepares for new and upcoming coding regulations.

Linda Casey, Associate Editor

While candy might not be the first thing you think of when looking to improve your health, confections have a long history of health-related uses. Examples of this can be easily found in today's pop culture. For example, the trainers of reality TV show, *Biggest Loser*, recommend chewing gum to help ward off cravings for unhealthy foods.

This is not an isolated incident. A new report—*Chewing Gum Market: A Growing Confectionery Segment: 2009 Edition*—offered by **Koncept Analytics**, found the practice of chewing gum as a health aid is resonating with modern consumers. Researchers concluded that the chewing gum segment is the fastest-growing segment of the confectionery industry, with a compound annual growth rate of approximately 7 percent for the past few years. This growth is driven by numerous health-related benefits. Koncept Analytics note that gum “is said to relieve stress, help in weight management, increase alertness and focus. All of these factors result in the increasing demand of chewing gum in people of every age group.”

The concept of confections as health aids is not something new. In 1927, Eduard Haas III developed PEZ. The compressed peppermint candies, with a name derived from the German

word for peppermint “PffErminZ,” were used as a smoking cessation aid. That is evident in the design of the first PEZ dispenser in 1950, which resembled a lighter, and the company's use of adult-oriented marketing with its PEZ girl illustrations.

It was when PEZ Candy Inc. introduced its product in the U.S. that the European confection found significant demand for its product as a candy for children and they began to place decorative heads on the dispensers. PEZ Candy now boasts that more than 3 billion PEZ candies are distributed in the U.S. annually.

Proactive approach to coding regulations

Just as PEZ Candy adapted the design of its candy dispenser in response to market conditions, the company recently adapted its ink-jet coding procedures to respond to new and pending regulations affecting the candy industry. “The new regulations are causing us to do additional coding and record keeping; there is a dramatic change in technology requirements, personnel training and general awareness of changing legislation,” says COO Mark Morrissey.

In consideration of these new and pending regulations, PEZ Candy, in spring 2009, decided to expand the number of products that receive lot

codes. “In the past, we coded the inner boxes and cartons,” says Morrissey. “We decided to complete the cycle and code each sellable unit, each roll of candy and ultimately the dispenser. This put us ahead of many new CPSIA [Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008] requirements and industry practices.”

Each roll of candy receives a lot number that corresponds to the number of the batch that it was produced from, as well as lots associated with raw materials. Each blister-card, film bag or overwrap package also would receive its own lot number, which could be used to track the different batches of candy as well as data about the wrapping material and dispenser.

Researching systems integrators

Morrissey contacted **Hitachi America, Ltd.**, through its website for more information. Hitachi passed along Morrissey's contact information to **NEcoding Inc. (New England Coding and Labeling)**, one of the systems integrators that distributes its products. The manufacturer also provided PEZ Candy with a list of references, many of whom took time to talk to the confectioner about their coding experiences.

James Narvaez, owner and lead systems

Individually wrapped rolls of candy with six-digit lot codes (right). Ink-jet coder uses acetone-based ink (center) to print onto film. Codes are printed onto foil wrappers, right.





integrator for NEcoding Inc. met with Morrissey and was shown all of the different coding applications that PEZ Candy wanted to implement. When Narvaez made his sales pitch, he also offered to bring in equipment for testing before purchasing.

Morrissey was upfront with Narvaez about wanting to make sure that PEZ was receiving the best price for the product before purchasing. "They decided to get quotes from other come editors to get the best price," recalls Narvaez.

It was only after the getting quotes from other competitors that PEZ Candy invited Narvaez back to the plant to install two test printers.

Rigorous testing precedes purchase

Narvaez installed two Hitachi coders as test printers. PEZ Candy rigorously tested the printers in its production environment, and the confectioner's maintenance manager fully evaluated the coders' performance before the purchasing department approved the order.

All 11 printers purchased by PEZ Candy were from Hitaachi's PXR series. The common user interface enables operators to move easily between coding applications.

The systems integrator recommended the PXR-H450W for PEZ Candy's five candy-wrapping lines. The printhead's 55-micron nozzle enables clear printing of very small character sizes. This enables PEZ Candy to place a six-digit lot code on the individually wrapped rolls of candies despite the package's small size. For the other packaging

lines, Narvaez recommended the PXR-D460w with its larger nozzle size of 65 microns.

Performance under pressure

Narvaez worked hand-in-hand with PEZ Candy's maintenance department to develop mounting hardware for the company's many different packing lines. Hitachi PXR Series printers are housed in RoHS-

All newly installed ink-jet coders are equipped with a 10.4-in. color, backlight LCD HMI designed for ease of operation.

compliant 304 SS IP55 enclosures, which enable the coders to be placed in harsh environments that have high levels of dust and moisture such as PEZ Candy's Inc.'s sugar room.

To further maximize uptime for
Continued on page 42



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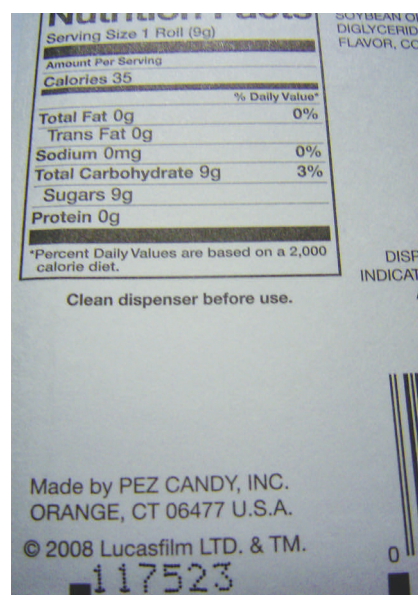
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Closeup of code printed on a blister-card by ink-jet printhead on transversing arm.

coding applications in PEZ Candy's sugar room, the integrator also pressurized the printheads to ensure that sugar would not clog the heads.

Pressurized air clears dust

The printheads already have connections for air, Narvaez explains. "We put 55 psi through hoses attached to these connections, and we cover every exit hole in the printheads except for those used to dispense the ink.

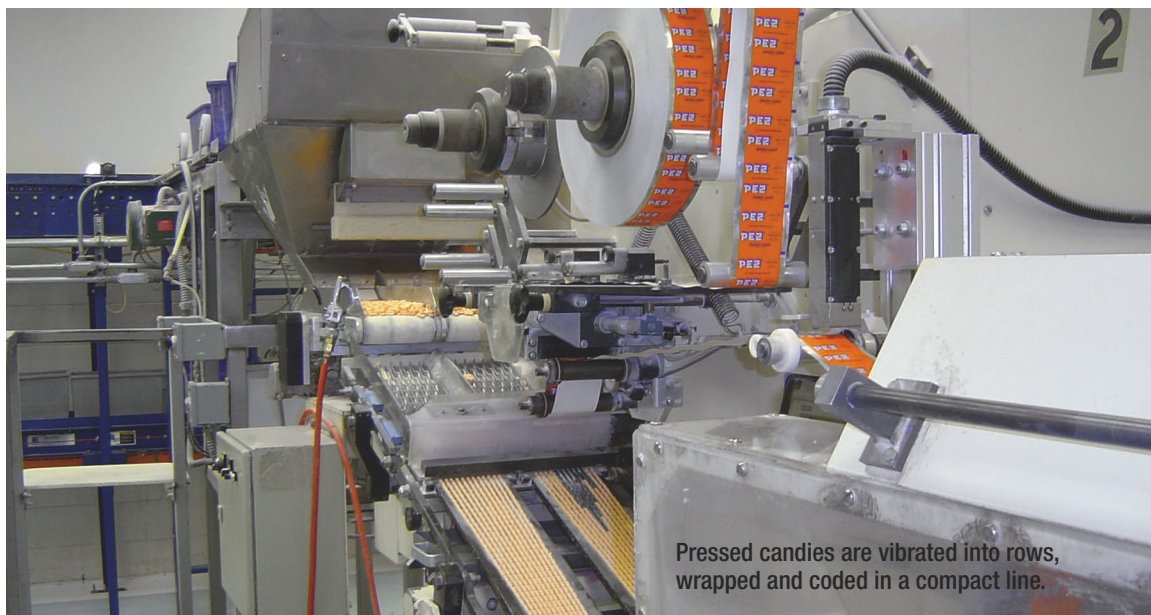
"Because of the candy, we have sugar dust," Morrissey explains. "We were concerned that it would affect the performance of the ink-jet system. Some of my maintenance people come from other companies, where they had lots of problems. But they were very surprised that we don't have any problems with these. Besides filling them with ink, there's usually very little that is required."

Additional alterations made by the systems integrator include a custom-manufactured traversing arm to travel the width of the blister pack lines conveyor. This enables the printhead to code six blister-packs in one roundtrip pass.

Containing consumables costs

Two different types of ink are being used by PEZ Candy for coding: A standard, general-purpose black ink; and an acetone-based, fast-drying ink.

The acetone-based ink enables PEZ to code on nonporous substrates, such as its film wrappers. Narvaez suggests that packaging operation managers don't immediately assume that coding with acetone-based inks is costly. "It's not that expensive," he remarks. "Our machines use very little ink."



Continuous investments

PEZ Candy's coding investment builds upon the company's continuous packaging investments. Approximately two years ago, the confectioner moved the candy-wrapping processes in a completely separate room from its other operations. Morrissey says the separation further improves the packaging operation's sanitary conditions.

In-house-manufactured conveyors move pressed candies into the candy-wrapping room. Another in-house-manufactured machine lifts 20-lb totes of candies into a **Sapal** Chewpac hopper. This tote handling machine is only designed for operator safety. An operator must press two buttons, one in each hand, to lift the tote. This prevents his or her hands from entering the hopper.

The Chewpac wrapper vibrates the candies into 12-piece rolls, which are wrapped by the single-track machine at speeds up to 350 rolls/min. With its new wrapping and coding in place, PEZ Candies can produce one million rolls daily.

More information is available:

Hitachi America, Ltd., 800/448-2244.

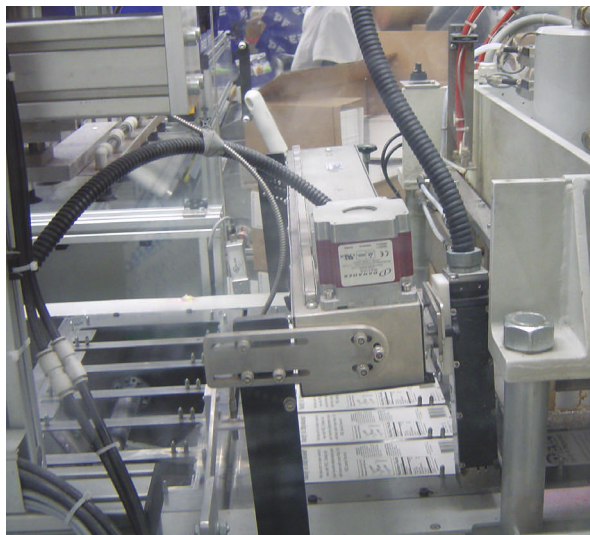
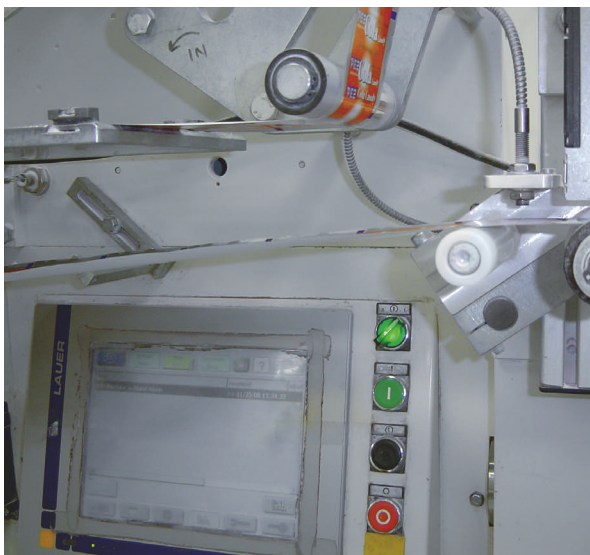
www.hitachi-america.us

NEcoding Inc. (New England Coding and Labeling), 845/661-0441. www.necoding.com

Koncept Analytics, +91 12-0-413-0959. www.konceptanalytics.com

Sapal SA, a Bosch Packaging Technology co., +41 21-633-5200.

www.boschpackaging.com/Sapal/eng/index.asp



Codes being printed on wrappers, top left. Foil web traveling through the candy wrapping machine (top center). PEZ dispensers often feature colorful heads of pop-culture characters (right). The coding equipment on the blister-packing line (bottom left) is mounted on a traversing arm. Closeup of coder, bottom center, mounted on the traversing arm.

engineers' outlook

The good news for packaging engineers is that most have become accustomed to a constantly changing work environment in an uncertain economy. Industries hard hit in 2009, such as automotive and consumer products, already have reduced their packaging departments to nominal levels. The people remaining on the job are absolutely essential to business continuity and should expect business to start looking up soon.

This is vastly different from the situation at large pharmaceutical companies now facing integration of combined organizations as a result of the industry's consolidation last year. Wall Street is demanding lower operating costs, so packaging engineers at these companies should anticipate big changes. Most staffing decisions are made at a very high level. But be prepared and don't panic. The good news is that your skill sets are very transferable to biotechnology and medical devices, which remain among the few high-growth industries today. Companies in these sectors have been hiring aggressively from within the pharmaceutical packaging pool. However,

2010 should be a year of change, with opportunities in packaging

making this transition can require a lot of work and determination to perform in this fast-paced and innovative culture.

With most packaging engineers already supporting heavy workloads, look to your managers for flexibility. Managers should focus on their staff's productivity rather than their hours at the office, allowing them flexibility to work from home or to leave early if they get their work done. Today's young engineers are leading the work culture change toward one tailored for a packaging department of GenXers.

Fortunately, things may ease up in the second half of the year because new permanent positions are being advertised, and companies are expanding budgets for contract positions. With additional people, work and life should eventually fall back into balance. So, 2010 will be a building year for most in packaging. Focus on creating value through packaging development and on enjoying your time away from work.

Profiles in packaging

Kumar Nanavati is a name engineers should have on their contact lists. Always willing to offer a helping hand, his professional success and leadership style make him a model for aspiring packaging professionals.

Name: Kumar Nanavati

Current position: Worldwide director of package technology at Bristol Myers Squibb Co.

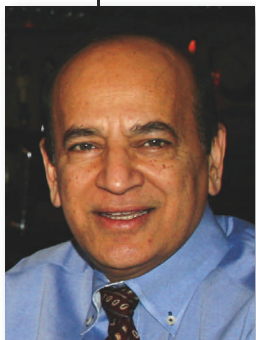
Past experience: Pfizer, Wyeth, Novartis and Revlon

Education: Master's of Science in industrial engineering from Rutgers. Attributes success to "Building long-term relationships with folks at all levels of an organization, not just above. It's those relationships that enable me to build and lead high-performing departments and deliver exceptional results for my company."

Keeps me motivated: "Enjoys interacting with people and considers them second family. Levels are on paper; I'm excited about each person's work and also about them as people. Enjoys developing people and seeing them grow and enjoys working on innovative projects. After 30-plus years, I now have an

instinct for innovative packaging technologies, materials and components."

Career advice: Develop a broad base of experience in materials, technologies, management and leadership. Try to become a subject-matter expert in one or more packaging areas. Be the best you can at your job, and be consistent in the value you deliver.



Prateek Lal, author of the new Engineers' Outlook column, is managing director of Adept Packaging, an international firm of consulting packaging engineers. For more information, email prateek.lal@adeptpkg.com.



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Package strikes a wooden note

The latest travel kit from Suki features an award-winning wooden package that balances **SUSTAINABILITY, ESTHETICS AND FUNCTIONALITY.**

Joseph Ogando, Contributing Editor

When toiletries go on the road nowadays, they usually travel in tiny tubes and clear plastic bags. Suki Inc., a maker of organic personal care products, recently took a far more stylish route with a new travel kit that features an award-winning packaging design.

Instead of plastic bags, the company chose to packaged its Suki To Go Executive Travel Kit, a collection of travel-sized personal care products, in a wooden tube. Measuring 10 x 2.5 in., the tube is formed from a veneer-like sheet of wood, wrapped around circular wooden end-caps and secured with adhesives. A flapped opening, created from cutouts and a living hinge in the thin wood body material, provide access to the tube. A decorative button-and-string closure secures the flap.

Wood is a less-than-common choice when it comes to personal care packaging. And the

designed with re-use in mind, which contributes to its sustainability from a life-cycle standpoint.

The package isn't all about sustainability, however. Its use of natural materials also imparts a high-end look and feel, which is something that impressed the NJPEC judges. "To call this package a 'wood tube' doesn't do it justice," says Gould, who said the judges gave the design high marks for its "elegant, hand-crafted looks."

Wood also did a good job when it came to balancing the sustainability and aesthetics with a host of functional requirements—such as surviving drop tests that simulate shipping, getting through airport security, fitting comfortably in a women's hand, and accommodating a product mix that may change over time.

Lefferts explains that she rejected a number of "obvious choices" as she set out to design a package that met all the design requirements. For example, clear vinyl bags, while certainly an airport-friendly solution, were deemed too ugly. Metal containers, while a possibility from an esthetic standpoint, were

ruled out because they were perceived to be less amenable to transportation-safety screening and did not have the warm feel of wood.

For all its benefits, wood did create a number of challenging design and manufacturing issues that Creative Packaging had to contend with during the year it took to develop this package. Lefferts first had to find the right color of wood, knot free and not highly figured. She also had to carefully select for thickness—too thin and the package wouldn't hold up, too thick and the flapped opening wouldn't work. She ended up with something—she won't name the species—that's roughly 0.45 mm thick.

Once the wood was selected, Lefferts had an even tougher design challenge to overcome in the design of the protective cushioning inside the tube. "Initially I thought we would use a

Wood also did a good job when it came to balancing sustainability and esthetics.

Suki To Go package, which was designed and manufactured by Creative Packaging Solutions, is the first wooden design to win the Package of the Year Award from the New Jersey Packaging Executives Club (NJPEC). "I can't think of any time a wood package has even come close to winning, with the possible exception of displays," says Peter Gould, a former executive director of the NJPEC and current chairperson of its awards program (see sidebar for a list of other NJPEC winners).

Yet there are good reasons why wood rose to the top of the pile in this case. "Suki wanted something made from an eco-friendly material, in keeping with its brand and philosophy," says Coni Lefferts, Creative Packaging's president and the chief designer of the travel kit packaging. Wood fit the bill on the sustainability score. The tube is also

Other winners include...

With top-shelf entries and judges representing some of the country's packaging elite, the annual awards program sponsored by the New Jersey Packaging Executives Club has influence that extends beyond New Jersey's boundaries. This year's diverse panel of judges are from Elizabeth Arden, Pfizer, Coty, Estee Lauder and Hartz Mountain. They picked the following top winners in the 2009 Competition:

- Personal care: Suki to Go Exclusive Getaway Travel Kit for Suki Inc. by Creative Packaging Solutions.
- Promotion: Avalon Spa Series for Somerset Entertainment by Tri-plex Packaging Corp.
- Food and Beverage: Legacy Truffles for Godiva by Fibermark.
- Color Cosmetics: Dior Addict Lipcolor for Parfum Christian Dior by Rexam Personal Care.
- Pharmaceutical: V Life Display and Patient Kit for Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals Inc. by Sunbelt Graphics Inc.
- Fragrance: Bijan for Five Star Fragrance by Piramal Glass & USA Inc.
- Graphics: American Eagle Pretty Plum for American Eagle by Pro-Motion Industries.
- Household Industrial: Odor Aid Sports Equipment Spray for KUE by Emsar Inc.
- Packaging Innovation: Suki to Go- Exclusive Getaway Travel Kit for Suki Inc. by Creative Packaging Solutions.
- Best use of Stock Packaging: Inspirations by Payard for Payard by Brad-Pak Enterprises Inc.
- Sustainability: Antoine Amrani Chocolates for Antoine Amrani Chocolates by Smith Design; Steri-bottle Luke Fisher for Steri-bottle Luke Fisher by Rexam Personal Care. and Infinite Glass for SGD North America by SGD North America.
- Marketing Impact: Black Magic Tire Shine for Shell Lubricants by Berry Plastics Corp.
- Visual Impact: Beautiful Ultimate Luxury Set for Estee Lauder Companies by Hampden Papers and Ferrero Pyramid for Ferrero USA by Package Development Co. Inc.
- Technical Merit: Avalon Spa Series for Somerset Entertainment by Tri-plex Packaging Corp.

biopolymer vacuum form inside the tube,” Lefferts recalls. She even went so far as to prototype a formed carrier that would fit inside the tube. From the prototype work, she discovered that the form factor of the tube and processing characteristics of biopolymers created insurmountable forming difficulties. “It just wasn’t

had to take out a license to import textiles—something it didn’t have before this project. And the cloth also upped the ante on the fit and finish of the tubes. “We couldn’t have any splinters or other defects that would snag on the loops of the washcloth,” she says.

As for manufacturing issues, Lefferts says she encountered

Cost wasn’t as much a concern as the **image of the product.**

working,” she admits. What’s more, a formed cushion would have made it difficult to adjust to changes in the product mix. “We didn’t know what the product mix would be, and we needed to be able to accommodate different combinations of tubes, glass bottles and even bars of soap,” Lefferts says.

Upping the ante

“After a lot of thought, we decided to use an embroidered, organic cotton washcloth to protect the product inside the tube,” she continues. That seemingly simple decision added some value to the travel kit, because the cloth can be used. At the same time, though, the cloth made the procurement process more complex. For example, Lefferts notes that her firm

problems, primarily with the printing of Suki’s logo onto the tubes. Excess humidity in the Chinese factory where the tubes are manufactured reduced print quality to the point that manufacturing yields suffered.

“We had our QA guy visit the factory every three days,” she says.

In all, Creative Packaging produced 30,000 of the tubes for Suki. Lefferts acknowledges that these relatively low volumes contributed to the economic viability of the package that’s largely assembled by hand in China. “Cost wasn’t as much of a concern here as the image of the product,” she explains. But she believes that natural materials will increasingly be used as a way to “make a statement.”



More information is available:

New Jersey Packaging Executives Club, 973/429-2177. www.njpec.com
 Berry Plastics Corp., 812/306-2000. www.berryplastics.com
 Brad-Pak Enterprises, 908/233-1234. www.brad-pak.com
 Creative Packaging Solutions, 732/335-3500. www.packaging-usa.com
 Emsar Inc., 203/377-8100. www.emsargroup.com
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newsmakers

MOVERS & SHAKERS



John Kuhn
New Marketing Director
Dorner Mfg. Corp.

Dorner Mfg. Corp. promotes John Kuhn to marketing director.

Flexicell, Inc. hires Geoff Parnell as engineering manager.

Alcoa hires

Nicholas Ashooh as vp of corp. affairs.

PMMI promotes Katie Bergmann to vp of administration and Maria Ferrante to vp of education & workforce development.

Ball Corp. names Michael L. Hranicka president, metal beverage packaging, Americas.

Curtis Packaging Corp. appoints Donald R. Droppo, Jr. president and CEO.

KUKA Roboter GmbH promotes Manfred Gundel to president and CEO.



Michael Hranicka
President, Metal Beverage
Packaging, Americas
Ball Corp.

Intelligrated hires Edward Puisis as CFO and promotes Jim Sharp to exec. vp.

Key Technology appoints Patrick Marmet area sales manager for France.

GROWING & GOING

OYSTAR Group completes a realignment plan that consolidates 17 individual companies into four business units—Food, Dairy, Consumer and Pharmaceutical.

Printpack opens Printpack (Suzhou) Packaging Co., Ltd. in Suzhou, China.

TAPPI forms multi-industry advisory board to deliver comprehensive BioPro Expo™ program. TAPPI also receives accreditation as a developer of American national standards through the Executive Standards Council of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

BUYING & ALLYING

Nordson Corp. acquires German distributor GLT mbH based in Pforzheim, Germany.

I.D. Systems Inc. acquires Asset Intelligence, LLC.

MeadWestvaco Corp. enters strategic alliance with 3C Packaging Inc., Clayton, NC.

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Miller Lite claim draws heat

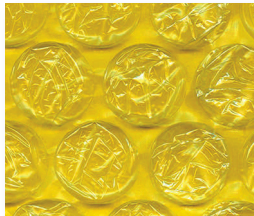
An advertising watchdog group said recently that Miller Lite ads about bottles and cans that have “special” seals could falsely lead consumers to believe that the company actually changed the packaging—which didn’t happen.
www.packagingdigest.com/millerlite

Was Tylenol recall too slow?

As McNeil Consumer Healthcare Products expanded its recall of various batches of Tylenol, Motrin and other over-the-counter products tainted by a chemical in wooden shipping pallets, the company came under fire from the Food and Drug Administration for dragging its feet in investigating the contamination and pulling goods from store shelves.
www.packagingdigest.com/tylenol

BPA scrutiny

The Obama administration will spend \$30 million on additional animal and human studies to determine if bisphenol A poses a health risk to babies and toddlers. William Corr, deputy secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services said further studies are part of the administration’s review of findings by the National Toxicology Program, which in 2008, had raised concerns about the effect of low doses of the chemical on laboratory animals.
www.packagingdigest.com/obamabpa



Bubble Wrap turns 50!

Bubble Wrap cushioning just celebrated 50 years of “popping up” with new ideas. To honor the anniversary, Sealed Air Corp. is making a limited run of golden Bubble Wrap protective cushioning.
www.packagingdigest.com/bubblewrap

Are nutrition labels accurate?

In a study published in the January 2010 issue of the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, researchers from Tufts University found that some commercially prepared foods contained more calories than indicated in nutritional labeling.
www.packagingdigest.com/calorielabel

Challenge inspires cities to recycle

The U.S. Conference of Mayors, Novelis Inc. and Keep America Beautiful Inc. announces the winners in the sixth annual Cans for Cash: City Recycling Challenge at the U.S. Conference of Mayors’ 78th Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C.
www.packagingdigest.com/canchallenge



Talk back!

Here’s what readers of packagingdigest.com are saying:

A good friend invented the Pull Tab Opening for the beer can at American Can’s tool shop in Newark, NJ. He got all of \$1 for the patent from American Can—the going rate for patents created in their facilities. I still complain to his son, that I had stepped and cut myself on the tabs at beaches. The tabs were tossed away when the can was opened.

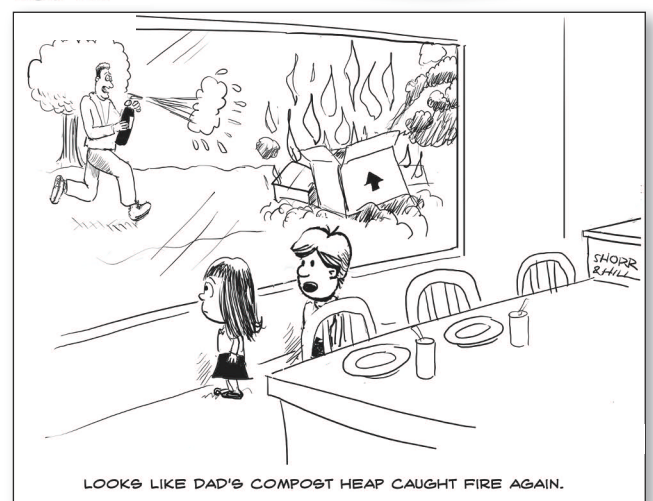
Arnold Quast, on “Happy 75th birthday to the beer can”

This is an incredible article! ... a great showcase of the creativity modern packaging producers must have ... *David Fox, on “Packing the Army’s guns & ammo”*

Adelle Abney Designs based out of Anchorage, Alaska actually designed the artwork on the 16 Mile bottles. Exal only developed the bottle. That has been a huge misconception ...

Amber Abney, on “16 Mile Brewing opts for aluminum bottle”

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Vol. 47 No. 2

A. Schulman sheds light on what separates them from other color suppliers.

A. Schulman, Inc. is known in the industry as a trusted, single source for compounds and resins. A. Schulman is also your best match for quality color solutions. However, the right match is not measured only by the color.

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With a dedicated team of problem solvers, chemists and engineers as well as a variety of technical resources, A. Schulman is prepared to support customers on a variety of color match opportunities – from standard color matches to customized technology, which are unique to each customer, application or process. When it comes to color and A. Schulman, it's more than black and white, especially in the way they treat their customers as partners and their commitment to delivering more than you would expect.

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- Greg Flasco,
Sales Manager,
A. Schulman Polybatch Color

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