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The new normal

It appears the industry is beginning to adapt to the ‘new normal’ in society caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. At Bell Publishing, it’s very much business as normal and we’re all in good spirits and adapting to our new working environment.

From 30 April 2020, we changed over email providers for our newsletters. If you are already subscribed, you do not have to do anything, but please be informed that the next time you receive your weekly email updates, it will be from the following email address: newsletters@bellpublishing.com.

The ‘from’ name will still be the name of the magazine editors. If you do not receive our most recent newsletter, please first check your junk folder. If for any other reason you do not receive the newsletters you’ve signed up to, please do not hesitate to contact us, by emailing arivers@bellpublishing.com

As well as this, we have successfully opened up content on our *CanTech International* website, to allow the industry to keep abreast of the latest developments during this important time.

In a period where everything revolves around discussing the Covid-19 pandemic, it’s easy to take our eye off the ball on other matters. One issue that has gone under the radar was vote on regulation in Scotland to do with the introduction of a national deposit return scheme (DRS).

On 29 April, the Environment, Climate Change

and Land Reform Committee voted through Scotland’s proposed introduction of a national deposit return scheme (DRS). The regulations will now be subject to a vote in the Scottish Parliament, after which the scheme will become law.

In comment, Rick Hindley, executive director at Alupro, said: “While we are obviously disappointed that the scheme has been voted through in its current format, we were hugely encouraged by the clear concerns raised again by the Committee regarding the adverse impact of rolling-out a flat 20p deposit fee. We believe that the Scottish Government has buried its head in the sand with the proposed DRS, by failing to consider the valuable views of its constituents, its own Environment Committee and the packaging industry as a whole. With the real threat of unintended environmental and economic consequences, which could undermine the benefits of a well-designed scheme, the idea of a flat deposit fee is short sighted at best.”

Unfortunately this shows the global challenges involved with implementing DRS; done well and it has potential in tackling pollution and increase recycling, but it’s potentially damaging and divisive. Let’s hope the 20p flat deposit fee is a gamechanger for this particular scheme...

Alex Fordham,
Editor, *CanTech International*



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CanTech INTERNATIONAL

Editorial Director
Sarah McRitchie
sarah@bellpublishing.com

Editor
Alex Fordham
alex@bellpublishing.com

Art Editor
Sue Burke
prepress@bellpublishing.com

Group Sales Manager
Mark Neilson
mark@bellpublishing.com

Events Manager
Megan Freeman
megan@bellpublishing.com

Assistant Events Manager
Kyra O’Sheen
kyraosheen@bellpublishing.com

Accounts
Yee Yau
accounts@bellpublishing.com

Publisher
Neil McRitchie
neil@bellpublishing.com

Follow @Bell_Publishing on Twitter or LinkedIn for regular snapshots from all of our magazines.



Editorial & Sales Office:
57 Bath Street, Gravesend Kent DA11 0DF, UK
Tel: +44 1474 532 202 Fax: +44 1474 532 203

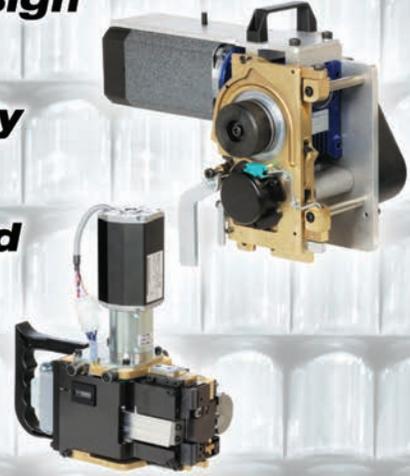
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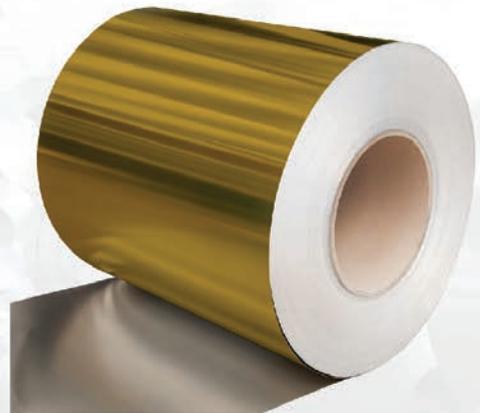
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INX UNIVERSITY OFFERS ONLINE METAL DECORATING COURSES

INX International Ink Co is offering professional development for the industry with the introduction of free online courses for its customers and partners through INX University.



Seven courses featuring expert instruction for its reasingly popular 2-Piece Metal Decorating programme are available for the benefit of marketers, designers, converters and production personnel.

INX University is designed to serve as an educational resource for the graphic arts industry and the eLearning platform is accessible via desktop computer or mobile device, .

Dave Waller, vice president of sales – North America Rigid Packaging, says the decision to offer the metal decorating courses stem from the interest generated by the highly successful INX Colour Perfection programme.

“As the market leader in metal decorat-

ing inks and colour management technologies, we have been able to leverage our leadership in the category,” he said. “Developing these courses and sharing our knowledge with brand owners, designers and others will help with multiple cost-saving advantages that will improve the overall design-to-market process.”

The seven courses available match INX’s philosophy to share access to technical material, diagnostic information and professional developmental training. Four Colour Series courses cover topics as measurement, instrumentation, tolerance, and an explanation of why it is important to measure. Three Production Series courses include Ink 101, Deco set-up and troubleshooting.

“One of the essential things we want to accomplish with INX University is to educate the industry,” continued Waller. “The majority of the instruction for the metal decorating

courses is information that is not readily available. Given INX’s long history in metal decorating, we are able to provide resources and information to assist our colleagues in the industry.

“We recognise your time is valuable so we’ve made learning the material as flexible as possible. You can learn at your own pace either as an individual or as a group.”

Scotland’s DRS scheme voted through

On 29 April, the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee voted through

Scotland’s proposed introduction of a national deposit return scheme (DRS). The regulations will now be subject to a vote in the Scottish Parliament, after which the scheme will become law.



In comment, Rick Hindley (pictured), executive director at Alupro, said: “While we are obviously disappointed that the scheme has been voted through in its current format, we were hugely encouraged by the clear concerns raised again by the committee regarding the adverse impact of rolling-out a flat 20p deposit fee.

“We believe that the Scottish Government has buried its head in the sand with the proposed DRS, by failing to consider the valuable views of its constituents, its own Environment Committee and the packaging industry as a whole.

“With the real threat of unintended environmental and economic consequences, which could undermine the benefits of a well-designed scheme, the idea of a flat deposit fee is short sighted at best.

“It was, however, reassuring to hear the Cabinet Secretary’s acknowledgement of our concerns, as well as how the variable deposit could form part of a full review. Furthermore, the understanding that a variable deposit could be introduced via a negative statutory instrument was yet another positive take-out.

“A well-designed DRS could prove fundamental in tackling plastic pollution, increasing recycling rates, improving recycle quality and minimising litter across Scotland. However, a flat deposit fee plays no part in a successful scheme and would result in a number of hugely negative implications.”

Ball Corporation’s aluminium cup recognised in Fast Company’s 2020 World Changing Ideas Awards

Ball Corporation’s aluminium cup has been recognised in Fast Company’s 2020 World Changing Ideas Awards with an honourable mention in the consumer products category. Now in its fourth year, Fast Company’s World Changing Ideas Awards honour products, concepts, companies, policies and designs that are pursuing innovation for the good of society and the planet.



“We are honoured that Fast Company recognised the Ball Aluminium Cup as a world changing idea,” said Daniel W Fisher, senior vice president and chief operating officer, Global Beverage Packaging.

“We designed the cup to provide consumers with a better, more sustainable way to enjoy their favorite beverages while helping to alleviate pollution associated with single-use plastic cups. We look forward to ramping up production of the aluminium cup later this year and eventually expanding its adoption to bars, breweries and retail locations across the US.”

Ball, an established leader in sustainable aluminium packaging solutions for beverage,

personal care and household products, launched the US pilot of its infinitely recyclable aluminium cups in September 2019. In response to growing consumer demand for sustainable products, Ball identified an opportunity to create an innovative alternative to plastic cups. Just like an aluminium can (which has a global recycling rate of 69%), the aluminium cup can be recycled an infinite number of times without losing quality. About 75% of aluminium ever produced is still in use today. Lightweight, sturdy and cool to the touch, Ball’s aluminium cup offers consumers a better beverage drinking experience and, according to the company, is a game changer for major entertainment venues and concessionaires looking to be more sustainable.

A limited supply of aluminium cups are being produced through 2020 for use in areas where plastic cups are common. The aluminium cup has been available to consumers at venues across the US, including the Pepsi Center, Mercedes Benz Stadium and Hard Rock Stadium. In October 2019, Ball broke ground on its first dedicated aluminium cups manufacturing facility in Rome, GA.

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Ball announces winning manufacturing plants for sustainability award

Ball Corporation has announced the five aluminium packaging plants with the most significant operational and social sustainability improvements in 2019, including progress across the areas with the most significant sustainability impact across Ball's operations (safety, energy, water and waste), as well as the promotion of aluminium packaging's sustainability credentials and engagement in their local communities.

Ball is awarding one plant in each region of its Global Beverage Packaging and one plant in its Aerosol Packaging businesses with the 2019 R. David Hoover Sustainability Award.

The winners are as follows:

Global Beverage Packaging

Kapolei, Hawaii (Beverage Packaging North & Central America): The Kapolei plant set a plant record for electricity and gas efficiency in January 2019 and, during the year, saved Ball more than \$1 million through energy efficiency projects.

Buenos Aires, Argentina (Beverage Packaging South America): Buenos Aires



has continued to improve efficiency across Ball's Big 6 categories since 2014. Between 2018 and 2019, Buenos Aires reduced total waste 15%, increased recycling 4% and decreased water usage by more than 3% in 2019.

Gelsenkirchen, Germany (Beverage Packaging EMEA): The Gelsenkirchen plant improved across Ball's Big 6 categories, achieving zero total recordable incidents, improving electricity efficiency by nearly 5%, natural gas efficiency by 12% and water efficiency by 6% in 2019.

Yangon, Myanmar (Beverage Packaging Asia Pacific): The Yangon plant has consistently improved its electricity efficiency since 2016, improving by nearly 23% in 2019 by implementing several energy efficiency projects.

Aerosol Packaging

San Luis Potosí, Mexico: The San Luis Potosí plant attained zero total recordable incidents for the year. As Ball's most electricity efficient aerosol plant in 2018, San Luis Potosí reduced its electricity intensity by another almost 5% in 2019.

Actega expands production capabilities for overprint varnishes

Actega, manufacturer of specialty coatings, inks, adhesives and sealing compounds with a focus on the packaging and printing industry, is significantly expanding its production capacities for water-based and UV overprint varnishes.



As a result, Actega's global production output increases to more than 150,000 tons per year. Around €2 million have been invested in a new integrated site in Brazil, where, in future, a total of 180 employees will be located to support the business. "Production and warehousing will occupy most of the 12,000 square meter facility with new high efficiency equipment installed to produce overprint varnishes," explained Andrei Sotkeviciene, managing director at Actega in Brazil.

"Research and development activities will take place in an ultra-modern, 500-square-metre research laboratory set up for this purpose." Moreover, Actega is seeing a significant increase in production capacities, especially for UV coatings, due to the inte-

gration of Schmid Rhyner AG. This company, based in Adliswil, Switzerland, with almost 80 employees and a turnover of around €50 million, specialises in solutions for print finishing and digital printing.

"Actega consists of 11 companies with worldwide production facilities and sales offices", said Andreas Gipp, senior vice president of Global Business Line Paper and Board. "Due to our production sites in Europe, North and South America as well as in China, we can not only better serve internationally operating printing groups and be closer to our customers, but also proactively support them in their growth."

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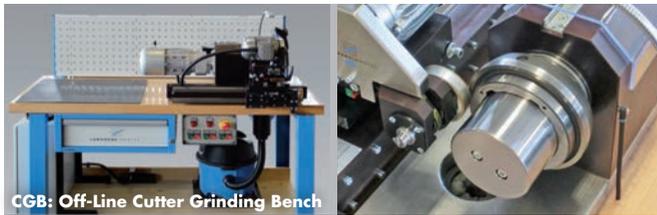
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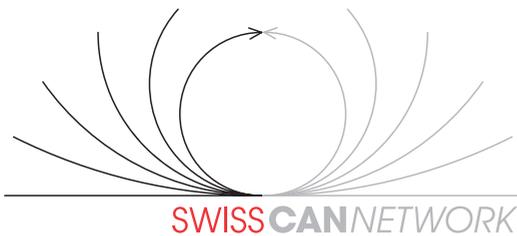
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South Africa's metal packaging industry blighted by lockdown

Prior to the nationwide Covid-19 lockdown in South Africa, started on 27 March 2020, the country's collection and recovery rate of post-consumer metal packaging (aluminium and tinplate) was estimated at 75.8%, as reported by BMi Research.

However, the national five-week lockdown constrained the usual material recovery processes, and MetPac-SA has projected that this will impact on the recovery rates, not only of metal packaging, but of post-consumer packaging material in general, in the 2020 manufacturing year.

MetPac-SA and its members heeded the call to financially support the waste picker livelihood and in a matter of days, over three-quarters of a million rand (R785,000) was raised collectively by the Producer Responsibility Organisations (PRO's) and Packaging SA, in collaboration with the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF). The money was used to purchase electronic food vouchers for registered waste reclaimers.

"It is still too early to calculate the exact impact of the lockdown regulations on the metal packaging industry and we expect to have a more accurate picture of how our members were and will further be affected by the lockdown regulations, during the second half of 2020," said Singh.

In late March, with little warning, alcohol

sales were banned in South Africa. This resulted in a dramatic drop in the amount of beer and other alcoholic beverage cans being produced and placed thousands of jobs at stake. Moreover, can makers and fillers were left with excess raw materials and finished goods that could not be moved into the supply chain. Significant losses were suffered and resulted in some of them declaring 'force majeure'.

The current over-supply of recyclable materials that have been stockpiled by waste management companies and scrap merchants during the five-week quarantine period will now result in a saturation of the local market for the foreseeable future, says Singh.

"Unfortunately lost manufacturing time cannot be regained. Local can makers will not be buying more recovered material until at least July this year and if waste collectors cannot sell their materials, they will not be able to generate much-needed cash inflow for their businesses.

"In addition, much of this valuable resource, now surplus in South Africa, may end up as waste in landfills."

Although the export of metal packaging was originally disallowed under Level 4 restrictions, MetPac-SA reports that the industry was pleased when, on 6 May 2020, the International Trade Administration Commission of South Africa (ITAC) confirmed

that exports of collected aluminium cans to overseas markets would now be permissible. It is anticipated that this will help alleviate the current oversupply of recyclable materials and stimulate collection.

In light of recent events, and Section 18 of the Department of Environment, Forestry Fisheries (DEFF's) National Environmental Management: Waste Act, MetPac-SA will be reassessing its operational targets and may also need to adapt its funding and operational models.

BAMA cancels 2020 Innovation Day

The British Aerosol Manufacturers' Association (BAMA) has announced that its annual Innovation Day, which had already been rescheduled due coronavirus concerns, has been cancelled.

Patrick Heskins, chief executive of BAMA, said: "It is with great regret that the decision has been taken to cancel this year's Innovation day and I know many regular delegates as well as speakers from across the industry will be disappointed.

"BAMA remains indebted to all those who had prepared to participate as well as to the Royal Armouries for working so positively with us to help organise an alternative date, which unfortunately cannot now go ahead. We take the health and safety of our members and delegates extremely seriously, and, after discussions with the Royal Armouries, we have agreed that to have suitable social distancing measure in place, while still giving both delegates and presenters the chance to meet and interact, was not possible. It is in this context that we have taken the decision to cancel this year's event.

"We will be returning to the Royal Armouries on Wednesday 21 April 2021 and I have every confidence that next year's event will continue to build on the success of previous years. I look forward to welcoming the industry's most creative manufacturers and influential thought leaders once again."

BAMA has announced that it still hopes to offer some of the Innovation Day content and presentations through a series of innovation webinars during the coming months. Invitations will be sent out to BAMA Members after discussion with those who were due to present at the event in July.

Details of the innovation webinar will be issued in the coming weeks.

MPMA appoints new technical & regulatory affairs manager

Packaging technologist, Stuart Falconer, has joined the MPMA as technical & regulatory affairs manager to provide technical and legislative support to members, not least as the UK's exit from the European Union looms and a raft of packaging related regulations, including DRS, make their way through British government.

Falconer brings wide experience of packaging technologies, most recently as a senior development chemist with API group, where his role included customer-facing regulatory compliance issues, and quality and environmental systems auditing.

Other roles spanning quality and technical services and technical development included a period as metal decorating technologist with metal packaging company, Metalbox (now Crown Holdings) at Wantage in the late 1980s and 1990s.

"We are delighted to welcome Stuart to



MPMA. Working with various governmental, non-governmental and industry bodies, and communicating directly with and through MPMA committees to members, he will help forge a clear path ahead on what are complex and challenging issues for our sector," said Robert Fell, CEO and director of MPMA.

"Stuart brings a wealth of highly relevant experience at a time of unprecedented change, not solely down to the immediate implications of Covid-19, but also with the impact of new trading agreements being negotiated with our European partners, and new legislation relating to sustainability and climate change."

Falconer added: "The MPMA has a long reputation for supporting its members in good and more challenging times. I very much look forward to helping the sector navigate through these new and uncharted waters."



INX introduces sustainability in washable inks for label market

INX International Ink Co has introduced its newest significant solution for sustainability and recycling in the label industry – Genesis GS washable label inks.

INX's new inks represent an abundance of environmental, efficiency and print quality benefits. In March, the inks were recognised by the Association of Plastic

Recyclers (APR) for meeting or exceeding the group's strict testing protocol for washable and recyclable PET shrink sleeve applications.

Genesis GS maintains properties in accordance with APR guidelines required for shrink sleeve applications and reportedly exhibits excellent bleed resistance in caustic bath solutions. Since the ink is separated from the substrate and removed from the label material during the bath, a complete recyclable package is a real option, INX says.

Genesis GS can also be used for floatable roll-fed OPP labels so a customer is able to print multiple label types with one ink system. Floatable applications require the ink to remain on the substrate after exposure to the caustic bath solution. Genesis GS has reportedly demonstrated excellent results printing at high press speeds, displays fast drying capabilities at low temperatures, and adheres

well to several grades of flexible films.

"We are very pleased with the development of Genesis GS and making it a must-have solution for label providers," said Mark Hill, senior vice president R&D for INX International Ink Co.

"The environmental benefits are superb. With the ink cleanly removed from the cPET label or floatable with OPP labels, it allows clear bottles to be made through the circular reuse of recovered materials."

Hill indicated that INX's R&D staff was able to troubleshoot a PET concern that arose during the testing process.

"Most shrink sleeve bottles are made of PETG resin, which has a lower melting point than PET bottle flake," he said. "Given that, the film can turn into what is essentially a glue, clumping the PET bottle flakes and making the PET harder to utilise. Additionally, inks from PETG shrink sleeves can discolour the clear bottle flakes. Our new innovations address that issue."

APR informed INX on 19 March that all colours with and without white backing, and with inside overprint varnish on Bonpet BR1 crystallisable film, met or exceeded APR's PET-CG-02 Critical Guidance Protocol for Clear PET Articles with Labels and Closures (PDF). The recognition was based on the technical recyclability of the decorated label innovation with PET bottles and applies only to the decorated sleeve labels.

MACA provides flexible packaging solutions for can sleeves



Italian flexible packaging expert MACA, together with Comag, is offering can sleeve renovations in line with market demands.

MACA's shrink and stretch sleeves allow customers to create high quality and appealing visual effects, through the use of sophisticated printing and finishes such as satin.

MACA offers quick graphic change solutions and the company also has the capacity to create opaque sleeves in order to replace obsolete graphics.

On top of aluminium's recyclability, MACA's use of low-density polyethylene (LDPE) ensures it contributes to the circular economy of metal packaging, whilst also keeping costs and energy consumption low – MACA's packaging is applied without the use of glue or heat.

MACA said that all manufacturers of soft drinks, energy drinks, beer, aerosols, edible oils, etc are able to benefit from its packaging solutions for cans and tinplate. MACA and Comag offer customised solutions based on the requests of companies, in order to devise packaging solutions and improve the quality of products and production processes.

UK ALUMINIUM PACKAGING RECYCLING HITS RECORD RATE

The UK's aluminium packaging recycling rate has risen to 56%, its highest ever level, increasing year-on-year by 4% (from 52% in 2018), according to findings of the latest Environment Agency data, published on the National Packaging Waste Database (NPWD).

The aluminium packaging market grew by 8% (year-on-year), with 207,000 tonnes of aluminium packaging sold in the UK during 2019. A record 116,670 tonnes were recycled, including an estimated 76% of all aluminium beverage cans sold.

More than 102,944 tonnes of the collected aluminium packaging (88%) was recycled into new high quality products within Europe. Business recycling rate once again surpassed targets, reaching 63% (compared to 60% in 2018), while consumer-collected aluminium packaging recycling also rocketed by

20% year-on-year (from 74,595 in 2018 to 89,543 in 2019).

Alongside greater public awareness about the benefits of recycling, delivered through initiatives such as MetalMatters and Every Can Counts, the increase can be partly

attributed to the aluminium sector's continued investment into ensuring packaging it produces is recycled. The volume of aluminium packaging recovered from incinerator bottom ash (IBA) also increased, as a result of increasing volume of household residual waste being diverted to energy from waste plants (EFW) rather than going to landfill.



Rick Hindley, executive director at Alupro, commented: "The continuing increase in recycling rates is all the more significant given the increase in sales of aluminium packaging. Aluminium recycling is a true circular success story. Within 60 days, the aluminium packaging that consumers recycle could be back on supermarket shelves – a hugely powerful message that really seems to resonate."

"Since 2010, the UK's aluminium packaging recycling rate has increased by 15% (from 41% in 2010 to 56% in 2019). This demonstrates the desire of British consumers to step up and do their bit for the environment. Our goal is to achieve an aluminium packaging recycling rate close to 100%."

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Italian metal decoration printer drives forward digital possibilities in partnership with Fujifilm

STA s.r.l., based near Turin in northern Italy is a metal decoration printing specialist and wholly owned subsidiary company of Emmeti s.r.l, which is the supplier of ICAS Spa – the world's leading cap and wire manufacturer for sparkling wine and Champagne bottles. The 1.4 billion caps and wire cages the company produces annually, and exports all around the world, represents approximately 70% of total global market share.

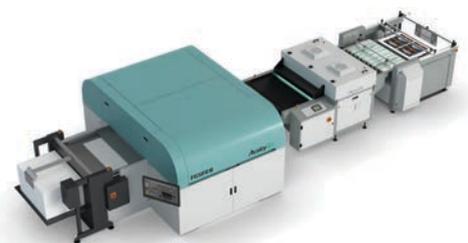
Until the founding of STA in the early 1990s, Emmeti had outsourced all printing work for its disc caps, but even as long ago as that, the market was beginning to demand more and more customisation and personalisation. Emmeti's lithographic print suppliers were unable to offer the levels of flexibility required by changing customer demands. The founding of STA as a lithographic metal decoration specialist was their answer.

"We began experimenting with digital technologies ten years ago," says director Marco Trotto Gatta. "There's a steady trend in the market for shorter runs and more customisation and personalisation – so we've been looking at the best ways to develop as a business in order to meet that demand for a long time. Our first digital press had some clear limitations: it was extremely slow, very dependent on manual processes, and the quality wasn't quite what we wanted. We were on the lookout for a high-quality digital press with offset-style and in-line architecture to make it easy to use.

"We already had a close working relationship with Fujifilm, which was a plates and pre-press supplier to us. Technicians and sales people from Fujifilm Italy were with us a lot – and it was through them that we first heard about the Acuity B1.

"This was not a machine that had been designed specifically to print to metal, but we quickly became convinced that it had that potential. After running some tests and seeing the machine in action at Fujifilm's facility in Broadstairs, UK, and after comparing it with all the alternatives we could find, we concluded that it offered the best combination of quality, in-line architecture and automation.

"There were some teething problems, but we were able to offer advice from our own substantial industry experience and, working closely with Fujifilm technicians and with technicians from Inca Digital, the manufacturer, we've made excellent progress in adapting the press for high-quality, short-run metal



decoration. Fujifilm has invested a lot of time into ensuring the machine does everything we need it to do.

"We're now printing between 100 and 120 sheets per hour on the Acuity B1, more than 10 times what our previous digital press could manage. This allows us to do short run jobs that would previously have had to be litho-printed, and importantly it has also allowed us to take on customised, high-value work. We're now able to deliver some jobs in a matter of days that would previously have taken us several weeks.

"For some of our smaller customers that would previously have had to settle for single colour caps, it provides a huge opportunity to order custom designs. And for our bigger customers, where previously we had to charge them for a single, litho-printed sample, we can now cost-effectively produce multiple samples in varying designs and colours so that they can get a full appreciation of the possibilities.

"The fact that the system is automated and the feeder and the stacker are all in-line as well, means that our operator is freed up to perform other tasks while the machine is printing. It's also very straightforward to use. This is important because unlike with offset print, where the level of quality you can achieve is very reliant on the level of skill of the operator, the Acuity B1 prints high levels of quality at the press of a button. Furthermore, it doesn't have the downtime of our litho presses, where colour changes typically take 30-40 minutes per colour.

"We've also seen significant improvements in the registration since installation – now reaching the very high standard we set ourselves of 0.1mm.

"Finally, though the cap and cage market for sparkling wine and Champagne very much remains our core focus, our digital print capability means that we have also been commissioned by other manufacturers – including can makers – which are intrigued by the possibilities for high quality, customised short run work."

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Metal adds a touch of class to the snacking world

Laetitia Durafour, marketing director at Crown Food Europe, looks at the significant rise in popularity of snacks and the benefits that metal packaging brings to this burgeoning sector

In a fast-paced world where time is of the essence, it is no wonder that the snacks market is booming. Everybody seems to be living life at 100 miles per hour, and snacks help fill the void between meals. There are also many snacking opportunities to enjoy when we are more at leisure – such as during parties or in your favourite bar with a drink – and the beauty of them is that there is something for every taste and for every occasion.

Evidence of the category's popularity can be seen in a recent report from Euromonitor (*Premiumisation in Snacks: A Framework for Growth*), the global snacking market is estimated to be valued at USD \$540 billion, and premiumisation has been identified as one of the key drivers of growth.

The report breaks premiumisation down into

three primary frontiers. The first is channel – where is the product being sold? The second is ingredients – what goes into a product? And the final element is packaging – what does the product look like on the shelf or in other retail environments?

Many elements of a package can push it towards the premium end of the spectrum. Metal, for example, conveys a premium feel in itself, being a solid and robust material that gives the impression that the contents within are worth protecting. It is also easy to decorate, and a wide range of effects and finishes can be applied to tailor a product to a specific market or consumption occasion. Many seasonal items are packaged in metal, for example, while special editions often receive the same treatment.

Functionality can also enhance the premium feel of a product, with consumers often happy to pay extra for elements such as recloseability, while portability – the ability to carry a product for convenience in a format that gives peace of mind that the product within will be protected from damage – has similar advantages where perceived value is concerned.

PREMIUMISATION

Sustainability, too, can help convey the premium nature of a brand, as consumers are increasingly more concerned about the impact they are having on the environment. We have spoken at length in about the sustainable credentials of metal, but the fact that they are inherent can never be underestimated in terms of appealing to the premium market.

There are many examples of metal packaging at the premium end of the snacking market, with Crown producing many solutions for a wide variety of products. Most recently, snacks to accompany great beer have been on our radar, the first of which was 'Made for Drink'.

The company has been working with Crown



Food Europe for close to a year, having launched an initial project in partnership with Blue Moon. The 23g bowl-shaped container features Crown's PeelSeam peelable end that ensures product freshness by creating an impenetrable barrier to both light and oxygen. Made for Drink invested in packaging that added value to its product, combining the premium look and feel of the metal bowl with the reclosability convenience of a lid.

COLLABORATING WITH BREWERIES

Another example can be seen in our collaboration with Sharps brewery, to pair snacks with beer in perfect harmony in a packaging format that eliminates the use of plastic and provides a container that can be reused for other things once the product has been enjoyed.

The Mangalitz Salami Chips – where slices of traditional Hungarian Salami, gently roasted until crisp, crunchy and intensely delicious – are paired with the crisp, clean citrus fruitiness of Sharp's Offshore Pilsner.

Bier Nuts also had a vision to produce nuts for beer in containers that were 100 per cent recyclable. The metal format was perfectly suited to its sustainability policy and was used for products

like its classic, crunchy coated peanuts and the Masala Curry and Jalapeño varieties.

Each has been decorated with a theme corresponding to the country of origin flavour-wise – with the original variety focusing on post-war Germany, Masala on India and Jalapeño on Mexico.

It is also worth exploring the healthy snack category. Healthy eating is important to so many consumers today, and when a wholesome snack is combined with metal packaging, it creates a format which is good for the body and good for the environment at the same time. This sustainable balance was front of mind for Satisfied Snacks when they decided to package their Salad (as) Crisps concept in our metal tins. Fresh ingredients are cut and mixed together, air dried and broken into crisps, making it easy for consumers to meet their “five-a-day” goal in an infinitely recyclable package, that is 100 per cent plastic-free and keeps the snacks fresh and tasty.

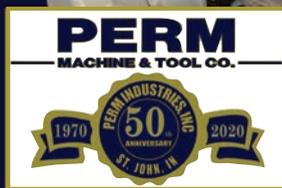
Whatever the occasion for snacking, there truly is something for everyone, and where both premium and sustainable packaging is required, brands need to look no further than metal to deliver that touch of class. [ci](#)

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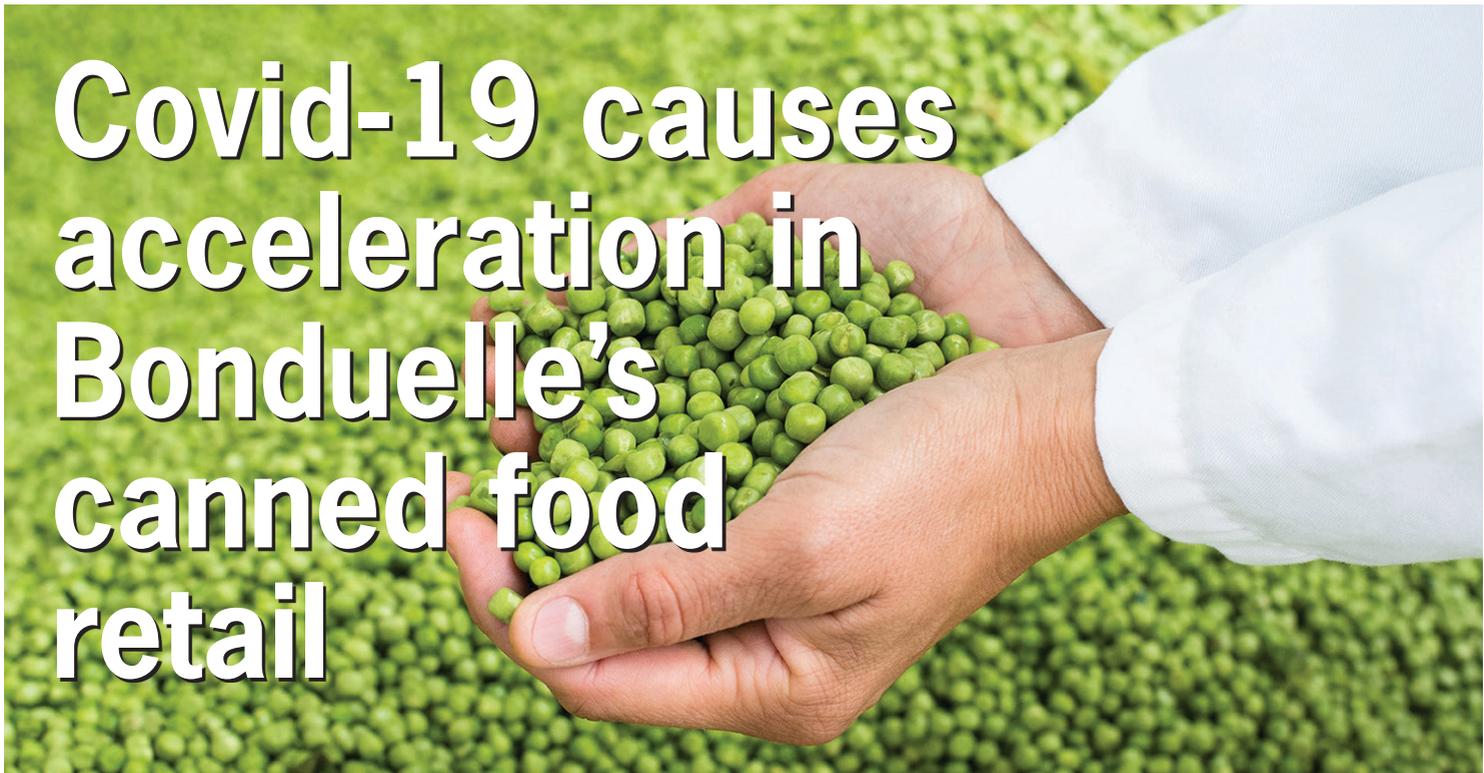
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Covid-19 causes acceleration in Bonduelle's canned food retail

One of the many lessons that consumers will remember from the Covid-19 crisis is that ready-to-eat vegetables have many virtues. Among interesting financial figures, Dominique Huret examines Bonduelle's canned food business

Packaging has become pervasive in our everyday lives. Without it, it would be impossible to transport food and beverages safely. Accordingly, it helps to protect not only products, but also resources. At the same time, the topic of food packaging is subject to some very emotional discussions in public with demands for bans or punitive tariffs being voiced at regular intervals. All the more important it is, therefore, for packaging manufacturers to do their bit and give top priority to sustainable action. But the same also applies for consumers, who are in fact quite open to such matters, as indicated by the latest studies.

Christophe Bonduelle, chairman, and Guillaume Debrosse, chief executive officer, of the Bonduelle Group, commented on the publication of the company's January to March 2020 revenue.

"The health crisis should not have been coupled with a food crisis; the premises of which have been measured at the start of containment, and which could have degenerated into a panic. Our employees were present in all of the group's plants, with flawless collaboration from employee representative

bodies to put in place appropriate health protection measures.

"Their main drivers of engagement have been responsibility and pride in assuming a rediscovered role as essential after years of food bashing against them; hoping, moreover, that this crisis will have been an opportunity for consumers to rediscover the quality, safety, diversity, accessibility and virtues of ready-to-eat vegetables."

NUMBERS SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES

The figures are shown on "a like for like basis" or at constant currency exchange rate and scope of consolidation basis with revenues in foreign currency over the given period translated into the rate of exchange for the comparable period.

The Bonduelle Group's revenue for Q3 of financial year 2019-2020 stands at € 761.2 million, an increase of +12.7 per cent on reported figures and +10.6 per cent after taking into account exchange rate variations, mainly the appreciation of the US and Canadian dollars and, to a lesser extent, the Russian rouble. No change in the group's scope of consolidation occurred over the quarter. Over the first nine months of this financial year, the revenue stands at €2,203.5 million, an increase of 5.8 per cent on reported figures and 3.8 per cent on a like-for-like basis, again as a result of favourable exchange rate movements.



SUDDEN RISE IN THE EUROPE ZONE

The revenue of the Europe Zone, which represents 44.9 per cent of the group's revenue over the first nine months, has recorded an overall aggregated growth of +3.6 per cent both on reported figures. Over quarter three, revenue rose +11.6 per cent on reported figures on a like for like basis. At the end of February 2020, ie over the first two months, third quarter revenue remained virtually stable compared with last year. This strong growth is therefore largely explained by the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and linked to precautionary purchases made in mass retail in March by consumers of canned and, to a lesser extent, frozen food.

For frozen food, the sudden shutdown of food service activities as of mid-March in many countries has started to weigh on the segment and should impact it more strongly in quarter four.

Q4 EFFECTS

Always on a like for like basis, the revenue of the non-Europe Zone, representing 55.1 per cent of the group's revenue, over the first nine months, recorded an overall growth of +4 per cent. Over quarter three revenue rose +9.9 per cent. At the end of February 2020, ie over the first two months, third quarter revenue was up by 4.7 per cent compared with last FY year.

This is due to precautionary purchases, particularly in canned food in Russia, Canada and the US in March, where a delayed effect of the Covid-19 pandemic was generally observed in countries outside Europe in which the Bonduelle Group operates. In Canada and the US, containment measures, which happened later on and are less strict than in Europe, had a more limited effect on the period, but expected to strengthen in quarter four, particularly for food service products. The group is already noticing the beginning of a downturn in Bonduelle Fresh Americas activities for the 'ready-to eat' (bowls and on the go offer,) phenomenon expected to increase in quarter four, depending on the containment measures implemented.

HIGHLIGHTS AND OUTLOOKS

Bonduelle has announced a new partnership with the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), the sovereign wealth fund of the Russian Federation, with a minority stake in the capital of Elementaree, a company that manufactures and delivers ready-to-cook meal kits. This operation, of a limited financial amount, illustrates the Bonduelle Group's ambitions to be the world reference in well-living through vegetable products, illustrated here via direct marketing to consumers through innovative channels.

2020 MODERATE

As mentioned, in early April, The Bonduelle group's business trends varied from one business segment to the next. The strong demand in canned and frozen food retailing, the high volatility of the fresh segment, collapse of the food service business activity, as well as variations in geographical areas, will lead to additional costs, some of which cannot be passed on. Given the uncertainties generated by the Covid-19 health crisis, the lack of visibility on its evolution, and therefore the inability to anticipate its impacts, the Bonduelle Group suspended on that date the objectives indicated on the occasion of the publication of the 2019-2020 half-year results.

The group took immediate action to limit the adverse economic impact of the Covid-19 crisis, it also took steps to ensure the protection of its employees and business continuity, the scale and duration of the crisis is now likely to prevent the achievement of the annual objectives set, particularly in terms of profitability. The group reiterates its sound financial structure and its ongoing strategy of long-term, secured financing to enable it to cope with the potential consequences of the pandemic on its business.

Even while the current health crisis has put much of the global economy on the back burner, nature's cycle goes on. And so are the preparation for the 2020 crops. With no difficulties, the group looks forward with confidence. 

Activity by Geographic Region

Total consolidated revenue (in € millions)	9 months 2019-2020	9 months 2018-2019	Variation Reported figures	Variation Like for like basis*	3 rd quarter 2019-2020	3 rd quarter 2018-2019	Variation Reported figures	Variation Like for like basis*
Europe Zone	990.2	956.2	+3.6%	+3.6%	349.8	313.9	+11.5%	+11.6%
Non-Europe Zone	1,213.3	1,126.1	+7.7%	+4.-%	411.4	361.7	+13.7%	+9.9%
Total	2,203.5	2,082.2	+5.8%	+3.8%	761.2	675.6	+12.7%	+10.6%

Activity by Operating Segments

Total consolidated revenue (in € millions)	9 months 2019-2020	9 months 2018-2019	Variation Reported figures	Variation Like for like basis*	3 rd quarter 2019-2020	3 rd quarter 2018-2019	Variation Reported figures	Variation Like for like basis*
Canned	856.1	774.9	+10.5%	+9.1%	296.9	241.6	+22.9%	+21.3%
Frozen	538.3	497.5	+8.2%	+5.7%	198.-	175.-	+13.2%	+10.6%
Fresh processed	809.1	809.9	-0.1%	-2.4%	266.3	259.-	+2.8%	+0.8%
Total	2,203.5	2,082.2	+5.8%	+3.8%	761.2	675.6	+12.7%	+10.6%

Expansion plan for Shengxing Group

Shengxing Group Co, one of China's leading beverage can producers, is mid-way through an important expansion programme designed to increase production of beverage cans to supply the growing inland provincial markets in the country's populous southwest and far flung northwest regions. David Hayes reports

Shengxing opened its latest factory equipped with two Soudronic 800 cpm lines in Xian, Shaanxi Province in August 2019. It has also opened its Xian plant to reduce the cost of supplying Shaanxi and other provinces in Northwest China.

"We have many customers for our Xian plant," Wang Li Yu, vice president of Shengxing Group Co says. "Previously, we supplied them from our Zhengzhou plant in Fujian Province and before that from our Shandong factory, but freight cost is expensive; that's why we built the new Xian plant to be closer."

Originally established as a vegetable canning company, Shengxing installed its first can making line, a three-piece food can line in Fuzhou City, capital of southern Fujian Province in 1992. The firm later opening its second can plant in Beijing to serve northern China.

Now listed on Shenzhen Stock Exchange, Shengxing has expanded quickly during the past two decades as demand for beverage cans has continued to grow. Following the recent commissioning of the Xian plant's two new can lines, Shengxing now boasts 10 three-piece can plants equipped with 32 can making lines, in addition to five two-piece can factories that are installed with six can making lines.

Two of the two-piece lines are installed in the Wuhan plant in Hubei Province, central China; two other two-piece lines are located in Fujian Province in Shengxing's Quanzhou and Zhengzhou plants, another line is installed in the Chuzhou, Anhui Province plant, while the sixth two-piece line is in the company's Zhaoqing, Guangdong factory.

According to Wang, the new Xian can



Wang Li Yu, vice president of Shengxing Group Co

plant's facilities have boosted Shengxing's three-piece can capacity to 500 million cans per month; with the firm's present two-piece beverage can capacity standing at 400m cans a month, this adds up to a combined total capacity of 900m cans monthly, equivalent to 10 billion cans a year.

A LEADING CHINESE CAN MAKER

Shengxing is one of China's top four can makers, supplying almost 10 per cent of the domestic beverage can market, according to the company's estimates.

"There are no exact figures for China's beverage can market, but we estimate the market is from 100 to 130 billion cans a year. About 40 per cent of these are two-piece and around 60 per

cent are three-piece beverage cans,” Wang says. “In the next four to five years, we estimate about 40-50 per cent of the total market will be occupied by those companies, so overall market shares should not see big changes.

“The big possibility for market share changes, however, is for special shape cans and coffee drinks cans. Canned coffee consumption is increasing among the young people, those who have busy jobs; young people also are drinking energy drinks.

“The future trend for two-piece cans is sleek cans. Can body colour fashion is stable now, but in future we expect demand for more colours.”

China’s three-piece beverage can market grew about 10 per cent in 2019, according to Shengxing’s estimates, after slowing down due to public concern over soft drinks’ sugar content.

“People are more concerned about their health and carbonated drinks’ contents, as a lot of media channels are educating people that carbonated beverages affect their health, and the sugar content impacts health,” Wang says. “Some leading international brands have developed sugar-free carbonated drinks for China; sales of these increase yearly.

“Also, China’s consumption growth was very fast in the past, but now it’s not possible to grow as fast as that.”

BOTTLE CANS

Wang explains the company operates two two-piece bottle can lines in its Wenzhou plant in Zhejiang Province that produce 330ml bottle cans for Budweiser China and Qingdao Brewery, China’s most famous beer brand.

“Bottle cans are a growing market in China. They meet the high level presentation demands of night clubs and bars,” Wang comments.

Shengxing’s plans to expand two- and three-piece can production include opening a new factory in Kunming, Yunnan Province by the end of this year to serve customers in the growing Southwest China market. Plans currently call for a two-piece line to be commissioned at the Kunming plant by the end of 2020, though the actual start-up date will depend on market conditions closer the time.

As part of preparations to start two-piece can production in Kunming, Shengxing currently outsources aluminium can production to another local can maker under a joint cooperation agreement.

PRODUCTION OF THREE-PIECE CANS

“We now have two three-piece lines in a plant on rented land in Kunming, so we need a new plant that we own. We will move the existing lines to our new plant first,” Wang says, noting the first three-piece line is due to start up in the new fac-

tory in 2021.”

Shengxing’s new Kunming plant’s first two-piece line is expected to be capable of producing one billion cans a year.

“We are expanding production into Yunnan and Shaanxi provinces – in the past people there drank fewer of these types of drinks than in other provinces but now they are increasing,” Wang comments. “Yunnan and Shaanxi have large populations; our Shaanxi plant in Xian also supplies cans to Xinjiang, Gansu and Qinghai provinces, the most westerly parts of China.

“Our Kunming plant also will supply Guizhou and Sichuan provinces. These two provinces are in highland areas above sea level, so their beverage consumption growth should be faster than other areas.

“Consumption of functional drinks is growing faster in Guizhou and Sichuan than other areas because of highland living’s demands on peoples’ bodies.”

Shengxing’s current development of new plants in Xian and Kunming follow earlier recent production facility expansions in 2018. One was in Chengdu, Sichuan, where a new Soudronic 3-piece line was installed to make 250ml 206 cans for Red Bull.

In addition, Shengxing installed two Soudronic three-piece lines in its Zhongshan plant in Guangdong in 2018 – moving one existing line from its Beijing factory to meet customer demands, and installing a new Soudronic line to make 250ml 206 cans for Red Bull.

Each of the Soudronic lines is capable of producing 300 to 350 million cans a year.

“I am very optimistic for our company’s future for three reasons. Over the past 20 years Shengxing has developed large scale production to become a top group in China, with a stable market share,” Wang says. “The second reason is that China’s big population will support future growth. There will be more and more drinks consumption, so we have opportunities with smaller niche beverages. “Now there are more energy and tea drinks, but in future more beverage types will come along.”

Wang’s third reason for feeling confident is the possibility of consolidation among China’s many can makers in future.

“Shengxing has a big can market and customers trust our products,” Wang said. “In future we believe mid-size can manufacturers will be replaced by large can-making companies but small can companies will still survive.”





CANS WILL STILL HAVE A PLACE IN THE POST-PANDEMIC PANTRY, THE INS EDITORIAL TEAM REPORTS

The can making and filling sectors have become beneficiaries – at least in the short term – of consumers turning their kitchen cupboards into pandemic pantries, stockpiling canned food and other long-lasting products because they fear of food shortages because of Covid-19.

Euroonitor International’s senior consultant Karine Dussimon said metal canned-food comprising bakery, baby food, ready meals, frozen food, noodle, oil and snack bars, canned fruit and meat among many others saw worldwide sales declining to 57.49 billion units in 2018, from 57.8bn in 2017. And although these sales picked up slightly in 2019 to 57.57bn units, overall growth over the past three years has been insignificant.

This is now projected to change with the Euroonitor consultant saying that metal food cans unit volume sales set to grow through 2024, “gaining a few annual growth percentage points.” This contrasts with a January 2018 Euroonitor report, where it had forecast metal food can sales to decline globally between 2016-2021, saying “consumers are shifting away from canned to chilled and frozen food and other formats that offer added functionality.”

But pandemic stockpiling of canned food “will boost shelf stable food categories such as beans, tomatoes and meat, which are key to metal food cans sales,” with the can’s product preservation valued over convenience during the perceived uncertainty over food supplies while Covid-19 cases grow, the consultant added.

Chief operating officer of Decernis, a Washington DC-based food chain traceability technology company, Kevin Kenny, agreed that orders for shelf-stable canned foods – fruits and meats in particular, had risen worldwide.

In France, for example, another market research company, US-based Nielsen, noticed an atypical increase in supermarket sales linked to the government’s announcement on 28 February, saying the virus was rapidly spreading in the country. As a result, the following day sales of canned fish doubled from their usual rates, with canned vegetable sales increasing by 50 per cent compared to the average number of cans sold on previous Saturdays this year, Nielsen reports.

The market researcher further spotted that in the second half of March, French buyers were opting to buy more canned organic products. The sales of organic canned vegetables rose by 79 per cent com-

pared to pre-pandemic rates, with the increase in sales of canned conventional vegetables up by 64 per cent.

THE POSITION IN EUROPE

Potentially easing the strong demand for canned food, French processed vegetables company, Bonduelle, has said it intends to focus also on selling frozen food. However, Covid-19's unpredictability means that such big canners are struggling to plan ahead.

Moreover, the highly developed retail networks of France and elsewhere in Europe have been able to cope with these retail booms. "Once the initial panic buying and stockpiling reduced, supermarkets were able to restock quickly and avoid shortages," Robert Fell, director and chief executive of the Metal Packaging Manufacturers Association (MPMA) told *CanTech International*.

In Germany, a spokesperson for supermarket chain Lidl, Sonja Kling, confirmed that canned goods have been subject to increased demand, but deliveries are on the way to replace denuded stocks. Karima Ghozzi, an external communications manager at Delhaize, one of the biggest Belgian retailers, noted an important uplift for canned vegetables, tomatoes, fish and meat.

Pulses in a can, such as beans, chickpeas and lentils are currently especially popular amongst consumers in Belgium, she said.

GlobalData's Coronavirus Tracker Consumer Survey – run weekly across 11 countries worldwide, including China – has found the UK currently has the largest proportion of consumers in countries assessed who have changed their purchasing habits by buying more cans. In the third week of April, nine per cent of British respondents claimed to be buying more of these products.

This may not be sustained if the outbreak starts to subside; GlobalData's statisticians have observed "as the situation deteriorates or improves, the purchasing of canned items will likely change accordingly," noted Bassari.

In Italy, a country experiencing one of the worst outbreaks, only 20 per cent of consumers said they had not bought canned food since the disease struck, whereas 15 per cent said they are purchasing more canned food now compared to before the virus.

By contrast, in Sweden where Covid-19 containment rules have been looser than in other European countries, 46 per cent of the respondents said they were not currently purchasing canned food and do not intend to in future, while only one per cent stated they are purchasing more food in tins at present.

The popularity of canned food during the crisis has also forced producers look for creative strategies to remain open. "As a result of the

huge surge in demand in the UK for Heinz sauces, beans, soups and pasta and the ongoing challenges of maintaining supply across all parts of the trade, we have expanded our loading capacity and put on extra weekend shifts to make more deliveries to our retail and wholesale customers," Heinz Director, corporate & government affairs EMEA, Nigel Dickie explained. But compromises have had to be made and Dickie added that unprecedented demand for Heinz varieties has also resulted in a decision to concentrate on manufacturing their most popular products, meaning lower volume sellers might not be available for a few weeks.

Of course, not all markets are the same and the return to normal canned food purchases has been more marked in some than others.

Italy, a major European food market, is one good example. Analysing sales data culled by data analytics firm Nielson, the national association of metallic and metal-related packaging manufacturers (ANFIMA, Associazione Nazionale fra i Fabbricanti di Imballaggi Metallici e Affini) reported that in the first week (9-15 March) of Italy's national lockdown due to the Covid-19 health crisis, sales for foods with a long shelf life in the mass retail channel registered double-digit growth; canned and glass tomato preserves grew by 82.2 per cent, canned meat by 56 per cent and canned tuna in olive oil by 33.6 per cent, compared to the same period in 2019.

Despite this temporary "pantry stocking" hike, however, demand for canned food had largely normalised by 23-29 March, Nielsen data shows, albeit with steep rises in sales of tomato preserves in can and glass packs (up 52.9 per cent), and canned (plus to a lesser extent bottled) meat and fish preserves (up 16.7 per cent).

Lorenzo Bazzana, head of economics at Coldiretti, the Italian farmers' association, confirmed these trends, telling *CanTech International* of a substantial peak in sales of canned foods at the start of the crisis, with a dampening of demand for persevered and canned foods by early April, and a rebound in perishable food sales, such as fresh fruit and vegetables.

This could be bad news for the canning sector in Italy, he said, given "this temporary boost in mass retail sales of canned foods will not, in the long-term, counterbalance the negative effects of the shuttered food services channel (bars, restaurants and canteens), which is also an important consumer of canned foods."

This trend has been reflected elsewhere, noted Kenny: "The market for canned foods in food-services sizes has collapsed, simply because of closed restaurants, tourism and schools." That said, manufacturers, retailers and market researchers do generally seem to agree demand for food in cans will experience a long-term increase. 

How to combat bodymaker issues



In this article, Acumence looks specifically at short can issues on bodymakers

A can manufacturing plant is a complex system. It uses numerous machines in order to create each can. Some of these machines include cuppers, bodymakers, washers, printers, ovens, spray machines, neckers, testers, vision systems and palletisers.

All are essential to creating a successful batch of cans. However, the bodymaker may be one of the most essential machines in a plant as it creates the body of the can

HOW DOES A BODYMAKER WORK?

According to Integrated Packaging Solutions (IPS): “Starting at the infeed cam, the cup drops into the cup locator. The redraw sleeve enters the cup and the punch drives the cup through [a series of dies]. Formed cans drop into the discharge conveyer and head to the trimmer. Untrimmed cans are fed into the main star-wheel. Stripper pins support the can, keeping it round. Inner and outer knives engage to trim the can edge. Then down the discharge chute and off to the washer.”

If any part of this process is not working to its full potential, scrap may be created, short cans may occur, and production may even stop completely. Because the bodymaker is on the front end of the line, this can cause a significant loss in productivity.

CUSTOMER EXAMPLE OF TRACKING BODYMAKER ISSUES

A major can producer’s problem is keeping track of individual bodymaker’s performance, which is challenging in the thick of operations.

The front end of our beverage can plant is made up of dozens of identical bodymakers. For maximum efficiency, we need all the bodymakers working at full capacity. With so many components working together in each bodymaker, the machines are not always running as smoothly as we would hope.

Operators and maintenance personnel have a hard time remembering exactly which machine has been causing most of the problems because so much is going on and they all look similar. As a result, a bodymaker is usually not serviced until it becomes a significant operational nuisance. This leads to short cans, more scrap, less can output, and less profit.

When we have a bodymaker starting to degrade, the result is usually a higher-than-average number of short cans, usually a result of wear and tear on the progressive dies. This creates a significant cause of scrap and lost productivity if left unattended.

SOLUTION

The solution for us is to use the Acumence Real-time Client. It tracks the number of short cans and

presents the data in a simple color-coded graph.

The graph below shows us when and where short cans are being produced, by bodymaker and hour. This is a great tool to help us stop small issues before they become large issues. We have created custom alerts to let us know when the number of short cans per bodymaker has reached a threshold we set. If only a few short cans are created, this usually is not a huge cause for concern for us. However, if this number continues to grow, the bodymaker needs maintenance in order to avoid scrap, lost productivity, and lost revenue.

Using Acumence's Realtime Client allows our plant operators to track exact numbers. We set up actionable procedures around the different level of alerts. Trends can also be tracked using Acumence's Historical Reports. If patterns are noted, we can participate in preventative maintenance rather than rushing to solve a major problem.

ACUMENCE KEEPS TRACK IN YOUR PLANTS

With Acumence's high-resolution tracking, performance trends can be clearly identified before performance degrades to the point of major negative impact. Operators can view production efficiency for each bodymaker in the Acumence Client. It tells you exactly which bodymakers have higher-than-average scrap or downtime. Operators can drill down further and see if a certain bodymaker is showing an increasing frequency of short cans.

With this information, the plant can prepare new tooling, and service the machine before major operational impact occurs. The result is higher productivity from the bodymakers, reduction in scrap, and better production flow through the rest of the process.

Keeping track of all machine performance, and especially bodymaker performance is vital for any plant that wishes to operate at maximum efficiency.

WHAT IS ACUMENCE?

Acumence is a Manufacturing Business Intelligence Solution that provides actionable information through real-time views and historical metrics for the entire can manufacturing process. It helps manufacturers achieve high levels of operational excellence by detecting, analysing, and eliminating production losses.

Acumence is setup on a plant level but the software can be managed at a corporate level.

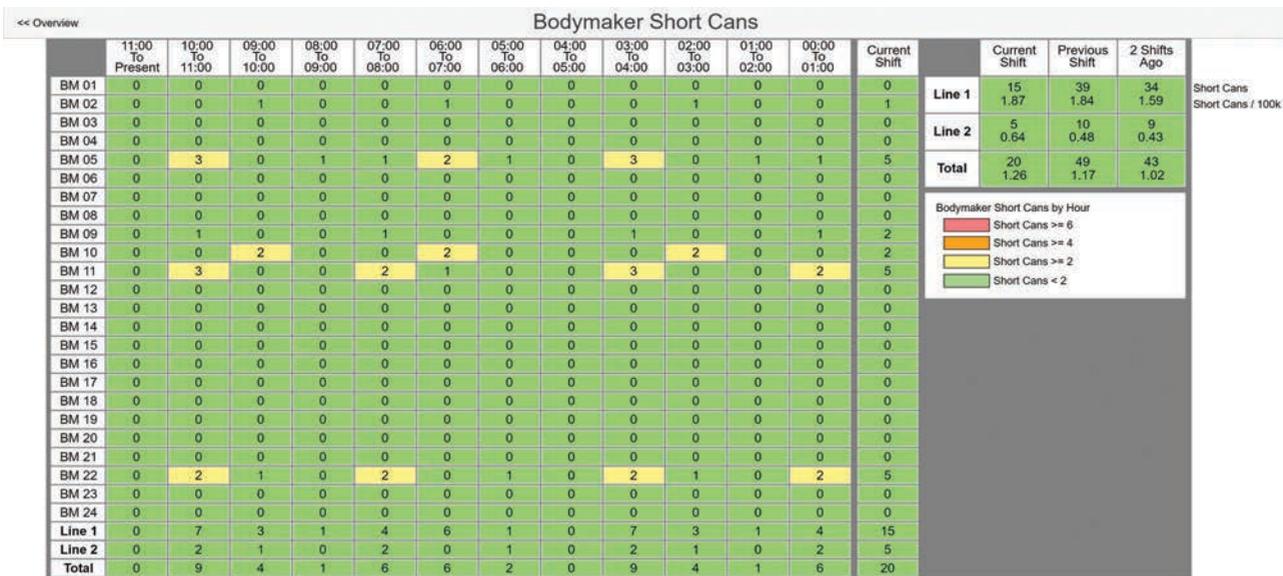
Acumence has seen efficiency increase by as much as five per cent within two months of deployment in a plant. Productivity improvement such as this could mean an annual production increase of over \$4 million in a typical can plant, creating over \$500,000 in profit.

Manufacturers using Acumence can identify and resolve bottlenecks promptly. This improved production efficiency saves companies millions of dollars each year.

Some features of Acumence include real-time plant status, real-time key performance indicators, downtime by fault and root cause, spoilage and scrap by defect and machine, configurable event alerts, historical data analysis, process consumables usage, bottleneck analysis, changeover tracking, and configurable technology.

It is the first software platform to provide analysis and reporting for both real-time operational data and historical transaction data optimised specifically for high speed manufacturing processes.

Acumence has been in service for over 16 years, is used in 21 countries, and is running in 40 plants worldwide. Empowered with the information that Acumence provides, management can make informed, intelligent decisions when operating their plant. Acumence is currently working on making the software more modern by making numerous updates and adding a web-based and app-based client. 





The importance of lubricants in can making

Evert van de Weg speaks to lubricant specialists, Quaker Houghton, on the essential importance of this market segment to can making

Since the breakthrough of the two-piece DWI can, in particular for beverages in the 1970s, there has been tremendous technical development of the process. The formulation of the various lubricants used in the cupping operation and the body making operation were continuously improved. The further development of DWI can production continued in the 1970s in the US, but soon, further research also took place on the other side in Europe too.

One company which has been heavily involved in the continuous research for ever better lubricants was the company Quaker Chemical Corporation in Conshohocken, US. In 2019 this company merged with the company Houghton International, which also had a strong market presence in the can and container market.

The merger got the approval of the US Federal Trade Commission and the European Commission after the divestiture of certain steel and aluminium product lines in North America and Europe and the new company Quaker Houghton doubled its size in comparison with the former Quaker Chemicals. A major shareholder of the newly formed group is the Indian Hinduja Group.

DEVELOPMENT IN LUBRICANTS

Laine Stewart, global R&D manager for containers of Quaker Houghton, tells us something about the history and current developments in this special market segment, important for the can making industry.

“Quaker and Houghton have been actively supplying the D&I can business since the 1970s and continue to be a key member of the container industry family,” comments Stewart.

Asked which companies contributed in the breakthrough of two-piece beverage cans in the US during the 1960/1970s and the use of lubricants, he explains: “Three of the major can makers in the early days were Reynolds, Continental Can and American Can. In terms of suppliers, originally the first lubricants were essentially emulsified mineral oils manufactured by major oil companies such as Mobil.

“Soon however, as the demands of the process increased, it became apparent that there was a requirement for more specialised lubricants; hence the likes of Quaker and Houghton entering the market. Other suppliers of lubricants at that time included Nalco, S H Mack and Cincinnati Milacron. Subsequently DA Stuart (Ironsides) entered the market who were eventually acquired by Houghton International in 2008.”

Looking at the can making market, there was a question of an overlap in the product portfolio of Quaker and Houghton. Stewart comments: “Quaker as well as Houghton both operated in the same market with broadly similar product portfolios – and some specific differences as they individually developed their mutual business – however geographical footprints were very complementary and a clear and natural fit for the combined Quaker Houghton company.

“Both companies already had unique development projects in place and innovation will be the cornerstone of future growth for the new company.”

Stewart has experience in the two-piece DWI can making market and overlooking the role of his company in that market.

“The history of the two piece D&I can making sector has been one of constant evolution of both process and materials, from metal selection to down gauging, speed ups, ever increasing size changes and tooling development, not to mention the ever increasing decoration demands on the back end of the process.

“All this achieved against a constantly changing backdrop of regulatory control and increasing awareness of health and safety. Quaker Houghton was one of the first companies to introduce specific lubricants for the emerging D&I sector and has gone on to produce some of the most widely used D&I can making lubricants in the world.

“Our technologies evolved from soluble oils to semi and fully synthetic emulsions, true solution technologies – and beyond – with our new coolant concepts now available.”

Quaker Houghton supplies all kinds of state-of-the-art lubricants for the production of steel and aluminium cans and therefore some common research with these sectors is quite logical. The company is a market leader supplying lubricants to both the steel rolling and aluminium rolling sectors. The company supplies the major metals companies, and can-makers, with lubricants for their pilot lines, and through the years there have been many projects to both develop new technologies and new processes.

When asked whether the company works closely together with suppliers of different types of can making machinery destined for deep drawing/wall-ironing metal to make cans. Stewart offers an unequivocal yes.

“Quaker Houghton maintains strong relationships with a variety of OEM’s from turnkey installers and machine builders to toolmakers and wastewater treatment companies,” he says.

“We discuss not only the nature of the business, upcoming market and regulation requirements and specific issues, but also how we can make the process ever more efficient particularly with the ever-changing requirements to conserve both energy and water. In many cases we now ensure reciprocal training to be able to provide a broader solution to our mutual end clients.

“As you would expect we often work alongside such companies during the installation of new lines and work in partnership with them to ensure the overall process is optimised for start-up and beyond.”

Food contact issues are generally an important

subject in the production of cans, so we wonder what the situation would be in the two-piece D&I production process regarding the application of lubricants.

“In general, there is no requirement for food contact status since the lubricants are fully washed from the can in the washer process and the can is subsequently sprayed internally to form a barrier between the beverage and the container,” Stewart says. “There are, however, specific areas such as tab lubricant or bottle can necking lubricants where the appropriate food contact approval is required.”

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is one of the main drivers to the industry and total cost of ownership is a hot topic. Reducing waste, utility costs and improving/adherence to health and safety protocols are of upmost importance according to Stewart.

“For example, we introduced a range of high-performance bactericide free lubricants to pre-empt forthcoming product label changes associated with the use of formaldehyde release biocide,” he says. “These materials have already been introduced and running with great success in many locations.

“Another primary topic concerns the reduction in use of fluoride in the washing process, both through new developments relating to the inherent chemistry of the formulas, and by the introduction of unique lubrication technology that presents an easier to clean can.” 





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A vibrant nighttime cityscape of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, featuring illuminated skyscrapers and a large display of red and white fireworks exploding in the dark sky. The city lights are reflected in the water in the foreground.

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David Deagle, Domino's North American Canning Sector development manager, discusses the increasing demand for aluminium and steel as plastic packaging alternatives and the options available for manufacturers on the journey towards sustainability

Recyclability and sustainability are often high priority areas when it comes to choosing the right packaging solution. Plastics, once renowned for their superior packaging qualities, are increasingly falling out of favour with some consumers, as issues with disposal and recycling have come to the forefront of public discussion.

A recent study by Geyer et al revealed that of the almost 6,300 million tonnes of plastic waste ever produced, just 9 per cent has ended up in waste recycling streams, up to 12 per cent has been incinerated, and 79 per cent has accumulated in landfills or the natural environment.

While a report produced by Kantar Worldpanel found that nearly half of consumers surveyed (48 per cent) saw manufacturers as being primarily responsible for tackling the plastic waste issue.

Today, materials which support moves towards a circular economy – where packaging can be reused or recycled infinitely within a closed loop system – are of increasing importance. This trend has seen some manufacturers going back to basics, with traditional, reliable, and highly recyclable packaging solutions in the form of aluminium and steel cans.

In recent years, we have seen increasing numbers of manufacturers making moves to adopt

metal as a plastic packaging alternative.

The beverage sector, and in particular bottled water, is perhaps the most notable example of this trend, having been hit particularly hard by campaigns to reduce single use plastics. In the US, Coca-Cola recently announced plans to produce Dasani water in cans, while in Europe Danone, producer of Volvic mineral water, launched L'mon – a new range of canned sparkling fruit water.

The switch is also particularly prevalent in the craft beer sector, which was once dominated by glass bottles, but has seen sales of aluminium cans increase. In 2018, according to research released by the UK trade body for drinks cans, the Can Makers, the craft can market grew by 59 per cent, while sales of glass bottles of craft beer declined by five per cent.

Size and weight may be the most notable advantage of cans in this market – a six pack of 330ml cans is not only lighter than the equivalent in bottles (84g in aluminium packaging versus 1.2kg in glass), but also smaller in physical size. Cans are therefore much more economical from a shipping perspective, and also much easier for a consumer to carry along to a BBQ or picnic.

Similarly, charitable efforts are on the rise, with the foundation of organisations such as

CannedWater4Kids.

“Not only are aluminium cans the single-most recycled beverage package in the United States, but they are also infinitely recyclable. Few containers can say that,” says Peter Gorman, CW4K board member and CMO.

TO CAN IS TO PROTECT

Product packaging provides a very valuable service to brands, to ensure compliance with legislation by displaying regulatory information, as well as batch, product, and supply codes which allow products to progress safely through supply chains.

It is also the advertising space on a shelf which protects a brand's image, and makes a product stand out against its competitors. Indeed, major international can manufacturer Crown advertises its canned solutions as providing a “360-degree billboard” for brand promotion.

Too often, though, debates surrounding sustainable packaging ignore another key role of product packaging – to protect its contents.

The Industry Council for Packaging and the Environment estimates that of all the energy used in producing the food contents of one person's weekly shop, only 6.5 per cent can be attributed to primary packaging and 51 per cent to food supply.

As an insurance product, aluminium and steel packaging are very effective. Both materials are robust and hardwearing enough to protect contents during transport, while providing an impenetrable barrier against light and oxygen. This allows canned products to be stored for years with little loss of quality.

Though there has been some misperception surrounding the quality of canned foodstuffs in the past, leading can manufacturers and food writers have begun speaking out about the benefits of canned food. Included in the mix is Jack Monroe, British food blogger and author of the newly released *Tin Can Cook: 75 simple store-cupboard recipes* – the first tinned food recipe book since 1939.

EXPLORING PLASTIC PACKAGING ALTERNATIVE

Today, both aluminium and steel are widely and easily recycled on a global level, so much so that a metal can purchased and recycled today could be back on the shelf within 60 days. In fact, it is suggested that as much as 75 per cent of all aluminium ever produced is still in circulation today. The result of these high recycling rates is less pollution and a steady supply of resources for the future – the very definition of sustainability.

By comparison, products made from plastic, including PET water bottles, are generally recycled a finite amount of times before they are destined for the municipal waste stream due to the limitations of current recycling practices. In their

report on plastic recycling Geyer et al estimated that of all plastic recycled to date only 10 per cent has been recycled more than once, due to material degradation, and contamination issues.

Contamination and degradation are not an issue when it comes to aluminium and steel, as recycling methods essentially restore the materials to their virgin state. When a can goes through a recycling process everything, including the label and any inks or coatings on the original can, is burned away prior to melting with no effect on the overall recyclability.

This ease of recycling can present an opportunity for manufacturers when it comes to thinking about a coding solution – particularly when coding with inks. While some new sustainable packaging materials in the form of recycled plastics, paper and compostables can prove challenging from a coding perspective, recycled food and beverage cans have been part of the equation for years.

Coding a metal surface is not the same as printing onto a plastic bottle, however, and does present a number of challenges that need to be considered, including metal finishes and curved surfaces.

Traditionally, continuous inkjet has been the technology of choice for coding onto aluminium and steel cans – it's fast, flexible, and gets the job done, and is still a favoured solution among many manufacturers. More recently, fibre laser solutions have emerged as a coding solution for non-ferrous aluminium cans that is energy efficient and removes the use of solvents, inks, and other consumables which carry storage safety requirements from production sites.

As global attitudes towards sustainability change, many organisations are already seeking to innovate beyond plastic packaging, setting ambitious targets to reduce virgin plastic use, and embracing the alternatives. Unilever, the multinational consumer goods company behind Dove and Surf, has made commitments to halve the use of new plastic within the next five years, and has also unveiled several reusable packaging innovations including a refillable deodorant stick made from stainless steel.

For some, a switch to recycled aluminium or steel could demonstrate a viable commitment to more environmentally friendly packaging, but it is important to understand the available options and determine the right solution to an organisation's individual needs.

As part of this, organisations must consider the other effects this could have on their production line. Considering coding and marking requirements early on will retain competitiveness without compromising on quality or value, allowing packaging to become part of the solution, rather than a challenge to sustainability. 



A focus on sustainability

Altana's Marta Ochalek advises on how Provalin can benefit the metal packaging industry

Packaging has become pervasive in our everyday lives. Without it, it would be impossible to transport food and beverages safely. Accordingly, it helps to protect not only products but also resources. At the same time, the topic of food packaging is subject to some very emotional discussions in public with demands for bans or punitive tariffs being voiced at regular intervals. All the more important it is, therefore, for packaging manufacturers to do their bit and give top priority to sustainable action. But the same also applies for consumers who are in fact quite open to such matters, as indicated by the latest studies.

In accordance with new surveys by Trivium Packaging based in Amsterdam, almost three fourths (74 per cent) of consumers are willing to

pay more for sustainable packaging. Developed and implemented in collaboration with the Boston Consulting Group, the report surveyed 15,000 consumers in the US, Europe, and South America about their preferences in terms of sustainable packaging as well as their willingness to pay more for more environmentally-friendly packaging. Overall, two out of three consumers regard environmentally-friendly, reusable packaging as important. Of the 74 per cent indicating their willingness to pay more for sustainable packaging, almost one fourth are prepared to pay an additional ten percent or more.

Another survey can be viewed against this backdrop: one which was commissioned by the Friends of Glass and the European Container Glass Federation (FEVE) and carried out by the

market research agency InSites Consulting in late 2019. It was aligned toward 10,605 consumers aged 25–65 in 13 EU countries: Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, and Great Britain. Result: consumers are buying more glass than ever before. Specifically, more than half of European consumers. In Germany, this concerns almost half of all consumers, at 48 per cent. At the same time, eight out of ten Germans would recommend glass as the best packaging material to friends and family; this corresponds with an increase of six percent over comparable studies conducted in 2016.

These results are attributed to a growing awareness of the high recycling potential of glass and its environmental friendliness. Glass is 100 per cent recyclable, is manufactured almost exclusively from natural raw materials (sand, soda, lime), and can be recycled infinitely in a closed loop – making recycled glass the most important raw material for the new production of glass packaging.

In the light of the above and important sustainability targets such as promoting the increase in recycling rates for packaging made from aluminium, ferrous metals, paper, and glass by 2022 to 90 per cent, for plastics to 63 per cent, the manufacturers of metal packaging, bottle and jar caps have good reason to be optimistic about the future.

Also, metal packaging and lids are valuable secondary raw materials that are removed from the ground and processed for use as packaging. Afterwards, the material is put to use in other applications. Thus, it is not consumed, but merely used. Metal packaging and lids not only rank high in terms of recycling (for years now, metal packaging and lids have evidenced the highest recycling rates of all packaging materials at 74.7 percent in Europe and 90.8 percent in Germany), but have also mastered the transition to a recycling economy that is the keystone of European and national legislation. This offers packagers and merchandisers a high degree of planning reliability.

This especially holds true for users of metal lids with sealing rings that contain neither PVC nor plasticisers. For unlike PVC, which may contain up to 45 percent fat-soluble plasticisers that can

migrate into foods containing fats when it comes into contact with them, sealing solutions based on thermoplastic elastomere (TPE) evidence low rates of migration. With Provalin from Actega DS a sealant for all types of contents, filling processes and closure processes is available, that is free of PVC, phthalates and other plasticisers perceived to give cause for concern.

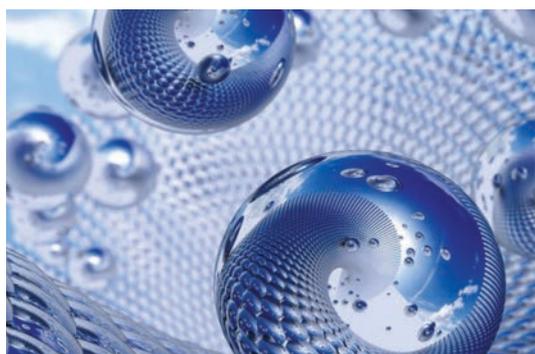
PROVALIN

Provalin – commercial since 2011 – was developed already because of corresponding EU regulations (including EU 10/2011 and PIM), merchandiser demand for solutions without PVC and plasticizers, and consumer demand for sustainable packaging materials. With now more than one billion twist-off lids per year in the European market, there is no alternative to this PVC-free solution.

With Provalin 1771 and 1741, solutions which satisfy both EU and FDA stipulations have been found for the highly-sensitive area of baby food and for particularly sensitive contents. Actega DS has been collaborating with various seal manufacturers on the difficult Press-on Twist Off (P/T) seal project since 2009. The now developed seal variants – commercial since 2018 – can be used for all contents which are heat-treated (pasteurisation and sterilisation) and for all different lid sizes. Extensive tests, including in terms of processing, storage, vacuum retention, opening properties and migration, are available with outstanding results.

Accordingly, Provalin not only sets the standard for low-migration applications in the area of packaging; it also meets the demands by consumers and food manufacturers and trade for sustainable packaging solutions.

The product range comprises sealing compounds for the food and beverage industry, oil- and water-based and UV printing inks, solvent- and water-based and UV varnishes, as well as solvent-based and solvent-free adhesives. This opens up the possibilities for perfect interplay. For example: the manufacture of all types of closures not only requires the appropriate sealing compound but also interior contact adhesives and exterior coatings, printing inks, and adhesives. Tin cans, aluminium bottles, tubes or other types of metal packaging require various varnishes, printing inks, sealants, and adhesives. The top priority is to offer the customer safe, reliable and sustainable solutions for these highly-regulated markets such as food or beverage packaging. The subsidiaries work hand in hand with their respective product portfolios. After all, both quality management and environmental management play a key role at Actega DS. Conserving resources, avoiding pollutive waste, reducing emissions, optimising processes, and saving time and money are important goals which are consistently implemented. 



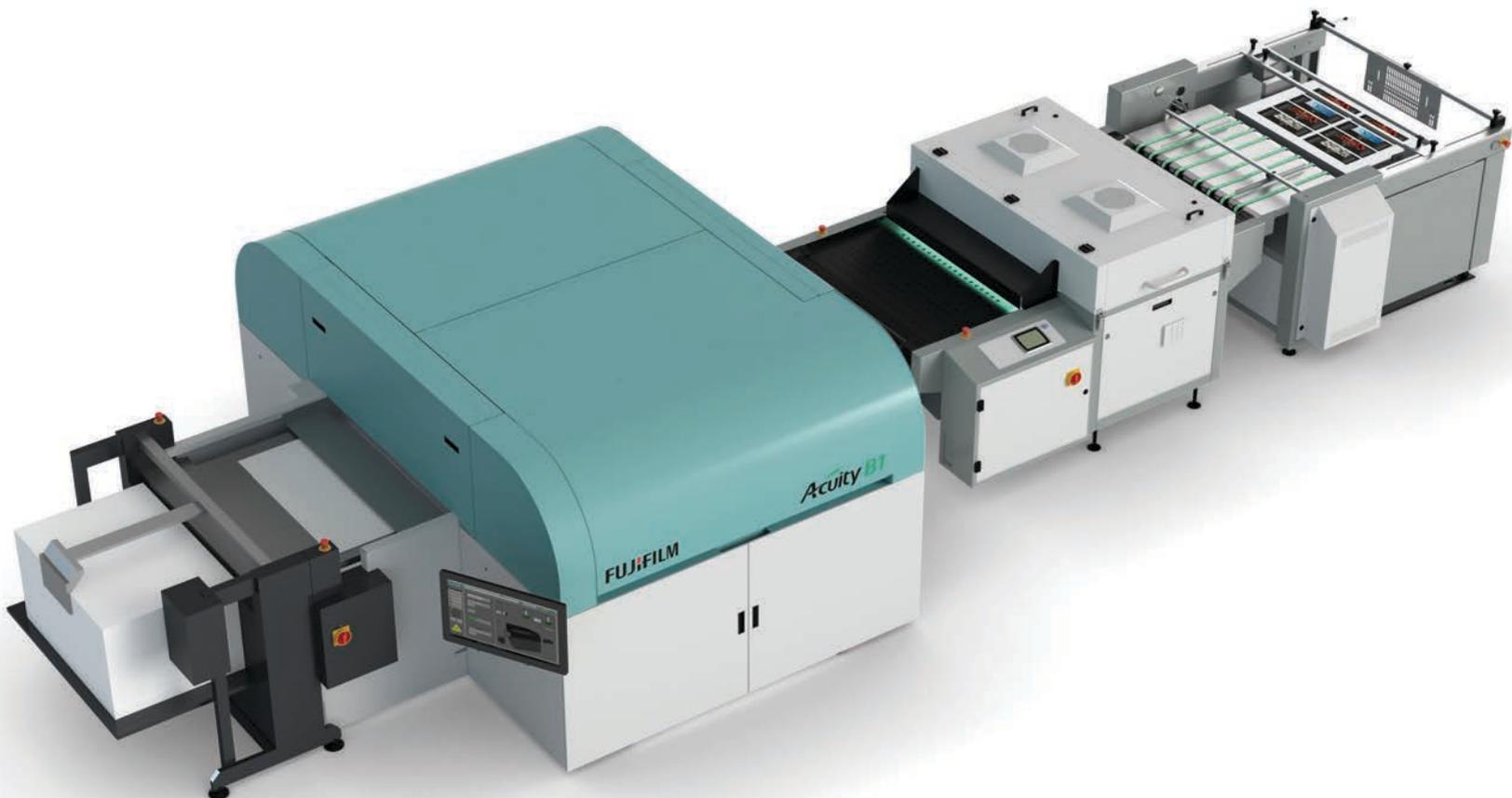
A partnership forged in INK

Fujifilm and Tinmasters have announced an inkjet metal decoration partnership. *CanTech* reports

Fujifilm's foray into metal decoration has been given a significant seal of approval as one of Europe's biggest independent metal packaging printers agrees to inkjet development partnership

Inkjet technology experts, Fujifilm, has agreed to an ongoing partnership with the UK's largest specialist metal packaging printing firm, Tinmasters. The agreement will see Tinmasters install a Fujifilm Acuity B1 UV inkjet printer at its premises based in south Wales.

The machine will be used for short run and customised commercial work and Fujifilm will retain access for customer demonstrations and ongoing development work. "Run lengths are coming down across the industry," says Tinmasters CEO Richard O'Neill. "We've long known that investing in a digital solution to respond to this was going to have to happen at some point. We just haven't seen anything out there, as an off-the-shelf product, which does everything that we would ideally want it to.



“We made a significant investment in 2018 in a highly automated litho press to try to meet the growing challenge posed by shorter run lengths – but the trend is accelerating and digital was going to have to start to play a significant role in our response to that at some point.

“It was the exceptional print quality and registration from the Acuity B1 that drew us initially to Fujifilm. However, the partnership angle of the agreement is crucial. Inkjet is completely new to us, and what we’re learning very quickly from Fujifilm is that it has the potential to be much more than simply a cost-effective way to print short runs. It also offers huge advantages in achieving colour consistency across jobs and in experimenting with creative applications and special effects, such as using ink layering to get textured finishes – something only possible with UV inkjet technology.

“At the same time, Fujifilm is new to metal decoration, so given we’ve been printing on metal since 1909, there’s a lot of expertise we can offer to help them to adapt their inkjet solution to better meet the needs of the industry.

“Ultimately, this partnership for us is about better serving the needs of our customers and we’re confident that we’ll immediately be able to present them with some innovative solutions to common problems and challenges. Already, we can see value in the Acuity B1 for very short run work of less than 500 sheets, and for sampling, customisation and special effects. In the longer term though, as we work with Fujifilm to increase the speed and improve the handling for metal, I think we could see digital used to take on work in the 500 to 5,000 sheet range.

So this for us really is a long term commitment, it’s not about the next year, or even the next few years, we’re thinking about the next decade and beyond. We think inkjet is going to be a big part of the future of metal dec, and by getting in early we want to help to shape what that future looks like, and become a real technology leader in the industry.”

Kevin Jenner, business manager, industrial at Fujifilm Speciality Ink Systems adds: “I think the transition from analogue to digital in metal dec is a couple of decades behind the graphics industry, where we’ve been developing and refining our inkjet technologies for 20 years. It’s quite a homogenous market, with all of the major players producing very similar applications with similar kit so it represents a unique opportunity.

“At Fujifilm, we know a thing or two about transitioning from analogue technologies. We’ve done it ourselves in our own business and we’ve worked with countless printers in the graphics sector who have moved, in whole or in part, away from litho and screen technologies to embrace the potential of digital.



Timmasters CEO Richard O'Neill



Kevin Jenner, business manager, industrial at Fujifilm Speciality Ink Systems

“Having said all of that, we recognise that we’re comparative newcomers to the metal dec sector and, though in the Acuity B1 we have an inkjet machine with enormous potential, we still have a lot to learn. So who better to learn from than a metal printer with more than a century of experience and heritage to draw on?

“Together, we want to fully exploit the technical capability of the current platform and, looking to the future, develop the machine into an even more exciting commercial proposition – increasing its speed, improving its handling ability and developing inks that will comply with the most stringent international food safety standards.

“There is in the industry, we believe, a tremendous latent demand for the short run work, creativity and customisation that inkjet allows, but in many cases neither the can makers nor designers know that those possibilities exist – so they’re not asking for them. When they do start asking – and they will – we’ll be ready, and together we look forward to shaping a future of possibilities even we haven’t dreamt of yet.” 

Tenzing adds to canned energy drinks range with “most powerful” flavour yet



As a result of the UK being on lockdown and the spike in people wanting to keep active, Tenzing has brought forward the launch of its new, “most powerful” plant-based canned energy drink, Tenzing Blackberry & Açai.

Tenzing’s new product comes in a 100% recyclable and BPA free can. The new flavour uses anti-oxidising berries and is the first blend to include natural, vegan BCAAs from corn to specifically increase stamina and aid sports recovery. The larger 330ml can includes 30% more caffeine than Tenzing’s previous two blends.

“Since lockdown, more people than ever have taken up a new sport, exercise regime

or fitness challenge, which made us think; people need this drink now more than ever,” said Huib van Bockel, founder of Tenzing.

“Somehow people have come to believe that energy from nature is not as strong as artificial energy drinks. This is of course far from the truth, as our natural range packs just the same punch. Now we’ve launched a drink that goes even further. We found a way to source BCAA from corn and are excited to launch the world’s first naturally energising drink with plant-based BCAAs.”

In advance of Tenzing’s new product launch, the company is becoming the first brand to launch a product on Strava, the fitness tracking platform.

Strava users that complete the ‘Tenzing Unleash Energy Challenge’ will be the first to experience the new Blackberry & Açai blend from 11 May, a week before the official launch (18 May).

Participants will be required to complete at least 20 minutes of any activity, four times a week, for two consecutive weeks from 27 April. They will be rewarded with a secret URL, providing them exclusive access to purchase Tenzing’s new drink, as well as the Tenzing Unleash Energy digital badge.

To inspire challengers, Tenzing will be hosting live workouts with some of the industry’s leading fitness studios and trainers during the two-week challenge. This includes Core Collective, Rowbots, Rathbone Boxing Gym and Digma Fitness.

Ventilator parts in production at Carnaud-Metalbox Engineering

CarnaudMetalbox Engineering (CMbE) has begun production in parts to help build ventilators to assist in the fight against Covid-19.

CMbE received a call from a fellow manufacturer, Altec Engineering Ltd, to help in the production of parts for portable ventilators. In a short time, the Engineering team were able to manufacture test component parts in the machine shop. These parts were delivered for validation to Altec and CMbE is now in full production.

The production of the portable ventilator with CMbE manufactured parts is now well underway, with 350 ventilator units shipped for assembly, and a further 5500 to follow.

Andrew Truelove, general manager at CMbE, commented: “We are extremely proud to be involved in this project, a truly worthy cause. All efforts are being led by our fantastic employees working from both at home and in the factory, an amazing example of how a company can pull together during very difficult times. We would like to thank the NHS for this opportunity and all of our key workers who are making this a success, we support you every step of the way and are bursting with pride to be playing our part.”



Bunting-DuBois provides custom magnets & magnetic assemblies for critical medical devices

While many vendors are currently struggling, Bunting-DuBois has reportedly not been negatively affected by supply chain disruptions as a result of Covid-19. The company makes sure to structure a diverse supply chain that does not rely on any singular source. This ensures that Bunting-DuBois is provided with raw materials for magnets that are then mixed, pressed, cured, painted, and assembled within its US manufacturing plant.

Throughout the Covid-19 crisis, Bunting has remained operational to manufacture essential products. These products include magnetic separation and metal detection equipment for the food and plastics industries to keep essential goods such as food and medical plastics products safe for consumers. Bunting-DuBois also manufactures custom magnets and magnetic assemblies that are part of critical medical devices. Bunting’s products are currently in extremely

high demand, and staff are reportedly working diligently to fulfill customers’ orders.

Ventilators are in particularly critical demand at the moment, and magnets from Bunting-DuBois are used in rotors for blower motors that are a key part of a ventilator’s construction. Bunting-DuBois magnets are also being used in hospital water filtration systems, virus testing equipment, and personal protective equipment (PPE).

“It’s a great feeling to know that we are providing products that are sustaining life and saving lives,” said Don Lindstrom, general manager at Bunting-DuBois. “During this critical time of need, we are able to support key manufacturers of critical care equipment as they ramp-up production. Our magnets and magnetic assemblies go into medical equipment that provides life-saving treatment of those who have been infected and helps to prevent the further spread of the virus.”

The Buyers Guide

A definitive guide to the suppliers of machinery, equipment, services, materials and solutions for the metal packaging industry.

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Frei AG
Hofenstrasse 18
CH-9300 Wittenbach, Switzerland
Tel: +41 71 292 3434
Fax: +41 71 292 3400
Email: sales@frei-ag.com
Web: www.frei-ag.com

AEROSOL MANUFACTURING EQUIPMENT



Belvac Production Machinery Inc
237 Graves Mill Road
Lynchburg, VA 24502-4203, USA
Tel: +1 434 239 0358
Fax: +1 434 239 1964
Email: info@belvac.com
Web: www.belvac.com



Germann + Frei AG
Martinsbruggstrasse 92
CH-9016 St. Gallen, Switzerland
Tel: +41 71 282 16 40
Fax: +41 71 282 16 50
Email: info@germannfrei.ch
Web: www.germannfrei.ch



Rainer Naroska Engineering GmbH
Im Hengstfeld 19
32657 Lemgo
Germany
Tel: +49 5261 6606 0
Fax: +49 5261 6606 30
Email: sales@naroska.com
Web: www.naroska.com



Shin-I Machinery Works Co Ltd
No 43 Chung Cheng St
Chingshui, Taichung, Taiwan ROC
Tel: +886 4 2623 8181
Fax: +886 4 2623 2129
Email: contact@shinican.com.tw
Web: www.shinican.com

AIR COMPRESSORS



Pneumofore SpA
Via N. Bruno 34
10098 Rivoli, Italy
Tel: +39 011 950 40 30
Fax: +39 011 950 40 40
Email: info@pneumofore.com
Web: www.pneumofore.com

AUTOMATIC CAN MAKING LINES (USED)



Lacueva Can Making Machinery SL.
Pol.industrial El Roturo
Parcela 1, 26511 El Villar De Arnedo
La Rioja, Spain
Tel: +34 941 130918
Fax: +34 941 135113
Email: lacueva@maquinarialacueva.com
Web: www.maquinarialacueva.com

BASE REFORMING MACHINES



CarnaudMetalbox Engineering plc
Dockfield Road, Shipley
West Yorkshire BD17 7AY, UK
Tel: +44 1274 846 200
Fax: +44 1274 846 201
Email: marc.hoche@eur.crowncork.com
Web: www.cmbecanmaking.com

BEADING UNITS



CarnaudMetalbox Engineering plc
Dockfield Road, Shipley
West Yorkshire BD17 7AY, UK
Tel: +44 1274 846 200
Fax: +44 1274 846 201
Web: www.cmbecanmaking.com



Germann + Frei AG
Martinsbruggstrasse 92
CH-9016 St. Gallen, Switzerland
Tel: +41 71 282 16 40
Fax: +41 71 282 16 50
Email: info@germannfrei.ch
Web: www.germannfrei.ch

BEVERAGE / SANITARY END-MAKING SYSTEMS



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
Asia and ROW
1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,

Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn
SLAC Precision Equipment Corp
North and South America
2045 Lyons Road,
Miamisburg, Ohio 45342, USA.
Tel: +1 937 296 9226
Web: www.slacdayton.com
Email: administrator@slacdayton.com
Corima International Machinery Srl
EMEA
Via F Fellini 11/a
40051 Altedo di Malalbergo
Bologna, Italy
Tel: +39 0532 55345
Fax: +39 0532 54504
Web: www.corima.org
Email: info@corima.org



STOLLE MACHINERY
Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
6949 S. Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112, USA
Tel: +1 303 708 9044
Fax: +1 303 708 9045
Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
Web: www.stollemachinery.com

BODYMAKER COOLANT FILTRATION SYSTEMS



STOLLE MACHINERY
Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
6949 S. Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112, USA
Tel: +1 303 708 9044
Fax: +1 303 708 9045
Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
Web: www.stollemachinery.com

BODYMAKERS



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co Ltd

Asia and ROW

1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District, Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn

OKL Engineering Inc

11235 Sebring Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45240, USA
Tel: +1 513 825 1655
Web: www.oklcan.com
Email: sales@oklcan.com

BODYMAKERS D-I



Belvac Production Machinery Inc

237 Graves Mill Road
Lynchburg, VA 24502-4203, USA
Tel: +1 434 239 0358
Fax: +1 434 239 1964
Email: info@belvac.com
Web: www.belvac.com



CarnaudMetalbox Engineering plc

Dockfield Road, Shipley
W Yorkshire BD17 7AY, UK
Tel: +44 1274 846 200
Fax: +44 1274 846 201
Email: marc.hoche@eur.crowncork.com
Web: www.cmbecanmaking.com



STOLLE MACHINERY

Stolle Machinery Company, LLC

6949 S. Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112, USA
Tel: +1 303 708 9044
Fax: +1 303 708 9045
Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
Web: www.stollemachinery.com

BODYMAKER SPARE PARTS



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co Ltd

Asia and ROW

1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District, Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn

OKL Engineering Inc

11235 Sebring Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45240, USA
Tel: +1 513 825 1655
Web: www.oklcan.com
Email: sales@oklcan.com

Intercan Group Ltd

EMEA
38 Burners Lane, Kiln Farm
Milton Keynes MK11 3HB, UK
Tel: +44 1908 566015
Web: www.intercan.co.uk
Email: sales@intercan.co.uk

BODYMAKER TOOLING



LPT Lieb Precision Tool Inc

1819 S. Murray Blvd, Colorado Springs
CO 80916 USA
Tel: +1 719 355 2600
Fax: +1 719 596 3019
Web: wallram-lpt.com
Email: saleslpt@wallram.com

WALLRAM GmbH

Schuermannstrasse 40, 45136 Essen
Germany
Tel: +49 201 89636 0
Fax: +49 201 89636 30
Web: wallram-lpt.com
Email: saleslpt@wallram.com

BOTTLE CAN MANUFACTURING EQUIPMENT



Belvac Production Machinery Inc

237 Graves Mill Road
Lynchburg, VA 24502-4203, USA
Tel: +1 434 239 0358
Fax: +1 434 239 1964
Email: info@belvac.com
Web: www.belvac.com

BURNER, OVEN & GAS CONTROL SPARES

HEATING & OVEN TECHNOLOGY LTD

Heating & Oven Technology

Cranleigh, Surrey
GU6 7JX, UK
Tel: +44 7803 888331
Email: enquiries@heating-and-oven-technology.co.uk
Web: www.heating-and-oven-technology.co.uk

CAN CONVEYORS/ CONVEYING



Canline NL

Meerheide 216
5521 DW Eersel, The Netherlands
Tel: +31 497 53 11 00
Fax: +31 497 53 11 09
Email: info@canline.nl
Web: www.canline.com

Canline Systems USA

1807 Murry Rd SW, Suite P
Roanoke, VA 24018, USA
Tel: +31 497 53 11 00
Fax: +31 497 53 11 09
Email: info@canline.nl
Web: www.canline.com

CAN DECORATING EQUIPMENT



Belvac Production Machinery Inc

237 Graves Mill Road
Lynchburg, VA 24502-4203, USA
Tel: +1 434 239 0358
Fax: +1 434 239 1964
Email: info@belvac.com
Web: www.belvac.com



STOLLE MACHINERY

Stolle Machinery Company, LLC

6949 S. Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112, USA
Tel: +1 303 708 9044
Fax: +1 303 708 9045
Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
Web: www.stollemachinery.com

CAN & DOUBLE SEAM TESTING EQUIPMENT



Canned Instrument Group Ltd

No. 6, Longxing Road, Jindu Industry Agglomeration Base Phase Two, Jindu Town Gaoyao District, Zhaoqing City, Guangdong Province, PR China Zip code: 526108
Tel: +86 758 8522881
Fax: +86 758-8522863
Email: info@canned.com
Web: www.canned.com



METOP AB

Flygledaregatan 5
212 39 Malmö, Sweden
Tel: +46 40 16 32 35
Email: info@metop.se
Web: www.metop.se

CAN END DIES



-AMADOR VARAS SA-

Amador Varas SA

c/Montalegre 32
08915 Badalona, Barcelona, Spain
Tel: +34 933 952 954
Fax: +34 933 954 904
Email: varas@amador-varas.com
Web: www.amador-varas.com

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ENGINEERS • FABRICATORS • CONSTRUCTORS

Roeslein & Associates Inc

9200 Watson Road, Suite 200
St Louis, MO 63126-1528, USA
Tel: +1 314 729 0055
Fax: +1 314 729 0070
Email: sales@roeslein.com
Web: www.roeslein.com

CAN MAKING MACHINES AND COMPLETE LINES



Shin-I Machinery Works Co Ltd

No 43 Chung Cheng St
Chingshui, Taichung, Taiwan ROC
Tel: +886 4 2623 8181

Fax: +886 4 2623 2129
Email: contact@shinican.com.tw
Web: www.shinican.com



SWISSCAN Network
Muelisacker 221
CH-5705 Hallwil, Switzerland
Tel: +41 62 777 44 40
Fax: +41 62 777 44 41
Email: box@swisscan.net
Web: www.swisscan.net

CAN TESTING EQUIPMENT



BA.SCO srl
Via Borgognone 9
10090 Trana (Torino), Italy
Tel: +39 0119 33620
Fax: +39 0119 355 763
Email: sales@basco-testers.com
Web: www.basco-testers.com



Canned Instrument Group Ltd
No. 6, Longxing Road, Jindu Industry Agglomeration Base Phase Two, Jindu Town Gaoyao District, Zhaoqing City, Guangdong Province, PR China Zip code: 526108
Tel: +86 758 8522881
Fax: +86 758-8522863
Email: info@canned.com
Web: www.canned.com



InnoScan A/S
Sødalsparken 11
8220 Brabrand, Denmark
Tel +45 86 26 5677
Fax +45 86 26 5678
Email: innoscan@innoscan.dk
Web: www.innoscan.dk



METOP AB
Flygledaregatan 5, 212 39 Malmö, Sweden
Tel: +46 40 16 32 35
Email: info@metop.se
Web: www.metop.se



Sencon
North, Central & South America
Sencon Incorporated
6385 W 74th Street
Bedford Park, IL 60638, USA
Tel: +1 708 496 3100
Fax: +1 708 496 3105
Email: info@sencon.com
Europe, Middle East, Asia, Africa, Australasia
Sencon (UK) Ltd
Pointon Way
Stonebridge Cross Business Park
Droitwich WR9 0LW, UK
Tel: +44 1905 827800
Fax: +44 1905 795876
Email: info@sencon.co.uk
China, Hong Kong, South East Asia
Sencon (HK) Ltd
Unit 202, 2/F, Building 12W
No 12 Science Park West Avenue
Phase 3 Hong Kong Science Park
Pak Shek Kok, NT, Hong Kong
Tel: +852 397 33860
Fax: +852 302 06140
Email: info@sencon.hk
Web: www.sencon.com



Technology by SENSORY ANALYTICS

Sensory Analytics
The Sensory Building
405 Pomona Drive
Greensboro, NC 27407, USA
Tel: +1 336 315 6090
Fax: +1 336 315 6030
Email: info@specmetrix.com
Web: www.specmetrix.com



Bonfiglioli Engineering Srl
Via Amerigo Vespucci, 20
44124 Ferrara, Italy
Tel: +39 0532 715631
Fax: +39 0532 715625
Email: marketing@bonfiglioliengineering.com
Web: www.bonfiglioliengineering.com



Torus Measurement Systems
Nedge Hill Science Park
Telford TF3 3AJ, UK
Tel: +44 1952 210020
Fax: +44 1952 299804
Email: tms.sales@torus-group.com
Web: www.torus-group.com

CAN TOOLING



Belvac Production Machinery Inc
237 Graves Mill Road
Lynchburg, VA 24502-4203, USA
Tel: +1 434 239 0358
Fax: +1 434 239 1964
Email: info@belvac.com
Web: www.belvac.com



LPT Lieb Precision Tool Inc
1819 S. Murray Blvd, Colorado Springs
CO 80916 USA
Tel: +1 719 355 2600
Fax: +1 719 596 3019
Web: wallram-lpt.com
Email: saleslpt@wallram.com
WALLRAM GmbH
Schuermannstrasse 40, 45136 Essen
Germany
Tel: +49 201 89636 0
Fax: +49 201 89636 30
Web: wallram-lpt.com
Email: saleslpt@wallram.com

CAN TRIMMERS



Belvac Production Machinery Inc
237 Graves Mill Road
Lynchburg, VA 24502-4203, USA
Tel: +1 434 239 0358
Fax: +1 434 239 1964
Email: info@belvac.com
Web: www.belvac.com



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
Asia and ROW
1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn
SLAC Precision Equipment Corp
North and South America
2045 Lyons Road,
Miamisburg, Ohio 45342, USA.
Tel: +1 937 296 9226
Web: www.slacdayton.com
Email: administrator@slacdayton.com



STOLLE MACHINERY

Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
6949 S. Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112, USA
Tel: +1 303 708 9044
Fax: +1 303 708 9045
Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
Web: www.stollemachinery.com

CAN WASHERS/OVENS



VMI Holland BV
Gelriaweg 16
8161 RK Epe
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 578 679 111
Fax: +31 578 621 317
Email: sales@vmi-group.com
Web: www.vmi-group.com

CAP MAKING MACHINES



Rainer Naroska Engineering GmbH
Im Hengstfeld 19
32657 Lemgo, Germany
Tel: +49 5261 6606 0
Fax: +49 5261 6606 30
Email: sales@naroska.com
Web: www.naroska.com

CAPPING MACHINES



Sommetrade SL
Parque Tecnológico de Zamudio -
Edificio 301
48170 Zamudio (Vizcaya), Spain
Tel: +34 94 431 8611
Fax: +34 94 431 8200
Email: j.vivanco@sommetrade.com
Web: www.sommetrade.com

CLUTCH PARTS



Applied Power Solutions
1718 W. Armitage Court
Addison, IL 60101, USA
Tel: +1 630 599 3000
Tel: +1 888 277 9901
Email: sales@apscorp.com
Web: www.apscorp.com

COATER LITHO PRESS PARTS & SERVICES



Perm Machine & Tool Co
PO Box 660, 9660 Industrial Drive
St John, Indiana 46373, USA
Tel: +1 219 365 5000
Fax: +1 219 365 4847
Email: perm@permmachine.com
Skype: perm_machine
Web: www.permmachine.com

COATER PARTS



Perm Machine & Tool Co
PO Box 660, 9660 Industrial Drive
St John, Indiana 46373, USA
Tel: +1 219 365 5000
Fax: +1 219 365 4847
Email: perm@permmachine.com
Skype: perm_machine
Web: www.permmachine.com

COATING MACHINES



Fuji Kikai Kogyo Co Ltd
2-7-1 Iida, Hachihonmatsu,
Higashihiroshima-shi
Hiroshima Pref 739-0146, Japan
Metal Decorating Machinery Div
Metal Decorating Sales Dept
Tel: +81 82 428 2455
Fax: +81 82 428 8912
Email: primex@fujikikai.co.jp
Web: www.fujikikai.co.jp



Inghor, S.A (Ingenieria y Hornos, S.A.)
Edificio Albia
C/ San Vicente 8, Planta 9
48001 Bilbao, Spain
Tel: +34 944 411 012 / 313
Fax: +34 944 411 066
Email: inghor@inghor.es
Web: www.inghor.es

KOENIG & BAUER

Koenig & Bauer MetalPrint GmbH
Wernerstr. 119-129
D-70435 Stuttgart, Germany
Tel: +49 711 69971-0
Fax: +49 711 69971-670
E-mail: info-metalprint@koenig-bauer.com
Web: metalprint.koenig-bauer.com



Miotto Este spa
Via Talamoni, 4
I-20861 Brugherio (MB), Italy
Tel: +39 0392 878 284
Fax: +39 0398 84 594
Email: info@miottoeste.it
Web: www.miottoeste.it



Perm Machine & Tool Co
PO Box 660, 9660 Industrial Drive
St John, Indiana 46373, USA
Tel: +1 219 365 5000
Fax: +1 219 365 4847
Email: perm@permmachine.com
Skype: perm_machine
Web: www.permmachine.com



TEC Technology GmbH
Service for the metal decorating industry
Carl-Benz-Str.12
D-74366 Kirchheim am Neckar, Germany
Tel: +49 7143 9617280
Fax: +49 7143 9617281
E-mail: info@tec-technology.de
Web: www.tec-technology.de

COATING MACHINES BOTTOM RIM



Belvac Production Machinery Inc
237 Graves Mill Road
Lynchburg, VA 24502-4203, USA
Tel: +1 434 239 0358
Fax: +1 434 239 1964
Email: info@belvac.com
Web: www.belvac.com

COIL HANDLING SYSTEMS



Hengli CNC Technology Co, Ltd
265 Yixian Road, Wukang Town
Deqing County, Zhejiang Province
313200, China
Tel: +86 572 8832016
+86 572 8832000
Fax: +86 572 8832222
Email: sales@zjhlcnc.com
Web: www.zjhlcnc.com



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co Ltd
Asia and ROW
1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn

COIL HANDLING SYSTEMS



Nidec Minster Corporation
240 West Fifth Street
Minster, OH 45865-0120 U.S.A.
Tel: +1 419 628 2331
Fax: +1 419 628 4224
Email: sales@minster.com
Web: www.minster.com



Perfecto Industries, Inc
1729 W. High Street
Piqua, OH 45356, USA
Tel: +1 937 778 1900
Fax: +1 937 773 7332
Email: sales@perfectoindustries.com
Web: www.perfectoindustries.com

COMPLETE CAN LINES (THREE-PIECE)



Shin-I Machinery Works Co Ltd
No 43 Chung Cheng St
Chingshui, Taichung, Taiwan ROC
Tel: +886 4 2623 8181

Fax: +886 4 2623 2129
Email: contact@shinican.com.tw
Web: www.shinican.com

COMPLETE CAN LINES (THREE-PIECE)



SWISSCAN Network
Muelisacker 221
CH-5705 Hallwil, Switzerland
Tel: +41 62 777 44 40
Fax: +41 62 777 44 41
Email: box@swisscan.net
Web: www.swisscan.net

COMPLETE CAN LINES (TWO-PIECE)



Rainer Naroska Engineering GmbH
Im Hengstfeld 19
32657 Lemgo, Germany
Tel: +49 5261 6606 0
Fax: +49 5261 6606 30
Email: sales@naroska.com
Web: www.naroska.com



Roeslein & Associates Inc
9200 Watson Road, Suite 200
St Louis, MO 63126-1528, USA
Tel: +1 314 729 0055
Fax: +1 314 729 0070
Email: sales@roeslein.com
Web: www.roeslein.com

COMPLETE END-MAKING LINES



Rainer Naroska Engineering GmbH
Im Hengstfeld 19
32657 Lemgo
Germany
Tel: +49 5261 6606 0
Fax: +49 5261 6606 30
Email: sales@naroska.com
Web: www.naroska.com



Shin-I Machinery Works Co Ltd
No 43 Chung Cheng St
Chingshui, Taichung, Taiwan ROC
Tel: +886 4 2623 8181
Fax: +886 4 2623 2129
Email: contact@shinican.com.tw
Web: www.shinican.com

COMPOUND LINING EQUIPMENT



STOLLE MACHINERY
Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
6949 S. Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112, USA
Tel: +1 303 708 9044
Fax: +1 303 708 9045
Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
Web: www.stollemachinery.com

CONTAINER PRESSES



Ing Yu Precision Industries Co, Ltd
43-11 Sha-Tien Road, Sha-Lu District,
Taichung, Taiwan ROC
Tel: +886 4 2635 8569
Fax: +886 4 2635 3068
E-mail: info@ingyu.com
Web: www.ingyu.com



Nidec MINSTER
PRESS TECHNOLOGIES
Nidec Minster Corporation
240 West Fifth Street
Minster, OH 45865-0120, USA
Tel: +1 419 628 2331
Fax: +1 419 628 4224
Email: sales@minster.com
Web: www.minster.com

CONVEYOR BELTS FOR CAN WASHERS



Ashworth Bros, Inc
450 Armour Dale
Winchester, VA 22601, USA
Tel: +1 540 662 3494
Fax: +1 540 662 3150
Email: ashworth@ashworth.com
Web: www.ashworth.com

CONVEYOR COMPONENTS



Pride Conveyance Systems:
A Roeslein Company
9200 Watson Road, Suite 200 St Louis,
MO 63126-1528, USA
Tel: +1 314 729 0055
Fax: +1 314 729 0070
Email: sales@roeslein.com
Web: www.roeslein.com

CONVEYORS: MAGNETIC



Bunting-Newton
500 S Spencer Avenue
PO Box 468, Newton
KS 67114-0468, USA
Tel: +1 316 284 2020
Fax: +1 316 283 4975
Email: bmc@buntingmagnetics.com
Web: www.buntingmagnetics.com



Canline NL
Meerheide 216
5521 DW Eersel, The Netherlands
Tel: +31 497 53 11 00
Fax: +31 497 53 11 09
Email: info@canline.nl
Web: www.canline.com

Canline Systems USA
1807 Murry Rd SW, Suite P
Roanoke, VA 24018, USA
Tel: +31 497 53 11 00
Fax: +31 497 53 11 09
Web: www.canline.com
Email: info@canline.nl

CUPPING PRESS SYSTEMS



Belvac Production Machinery Inc
237 Graves Mill Road
Lynchburg, VA 24502-4203, USA
Tel: +1 434 239 0358
Fax: +1 434 239 1964
Email: info@belvac.com
Web: www.belvac.com



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
Asia and ROW
1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
Tel: +86 512 6693 9207

Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn
SLAC Precision Equipment Corp
North and South America
2045 Lyons Road,
Miamisburg, Ohio 45342, USA.
Tel: +1 937 296 9226
Web: www.slacdayton.com
Email: administrator@slacdayton.com



STOLLE MACHINERY
Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
6949 S. Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112, USA
Tel: +1 303 708 9044
Fax: +1 303 708 9045
Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
Web: www.stollemachinery.com

CUPPING/SHELL DIES



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
Asia and ROW
1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn

DECORATORS & BASECOATER FOR TWO-PIECE CANS



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
Asia and ROW
1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn
Intercan Group Ltd
EMEA
38 Burners Lane, Kiln Farm
Milton Keynes, MK11 3HB
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 1908 566015
Fax: +44 1908 560638
Web: www.intercan.co.uk
Email: sales@intercan.co.uk

DIGITAL DECORATORS FOR TWO-PIECE CANS



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
Asia and ROW
1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn
Intercan Group Ltd
EMEA
38 Burners Lane, Kiln Farm
Milton Keynes, MK11 3HB
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 1908 566015
Fax: +44 1908 560638
Web: www.intercan.co.uk
Email: sales@intercan.co.uk

DOMERS/BOTTOM FORMERS



Pride Engineering, LLC
10301 Xylon Avenue North, Suite 100
Minneapolis, MN 55445, USA
Email: customer@pridecan.com
Web: www.pridecan.com

DOMERS & DOME STATIONS



ENGINEERING
CarnaudMetalbox Engineering plc
Dockfield Road
Shipley, West Yorkshire BD17 7AY, UK
Tel: +44 1274 846 200
Fax: +44 1274 846 201
Email: marc.hoche@eur.crown Cork.com
Web: www.cmbecanmaking.com

DOUBLE SHEET DETECTION



Prime Controls, Inc.
World Headquarters:
4528 Gateway Circle
Dayton, OH 45440-1712, USA
Tel: +1 937 435 8659
Fax: +1 937 435 2091
Email: vip@primecontrols.com
Web: www.primcontrols.com

DRD CAN MAKING EQUIPMENT



Rainer Naroska Engineering GmbH
 Im Hengstfeld 19
 32657 Lemgo, Germany
 Tel: +49 5261 6606 0
 Fax: +49 5261 6606 30
 Email: sales@naroska.com
 Web: www.naroska.com



Shin-I Machinery Works Co Ltd
 No 43 Chung Cheng St
 Chingshui, Taichung, Taiwan ROC
 Tel: +886 4 2623 8181
 Fax: +886 4 2623 2129
 Email: contact@shinican.com.tw
 Web: www.shinican.com



STOLLE MACHINERY
Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
 6949 S. Potomac Street
 Centennial, CO 80112, USA
 Tel: +1 303 708 9044
 Fax: +1 303 708 9045
 Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
 Web: www.stollemachinery.com

DRYING OVENS



Industrias Peñalver SL
 Pol. Industrial El Tapiado
 C/ Albaricoque s/n
 Molina de Segura
 30500 Murcia, Spain
 Tel: + 34 968 38 90 88
 Fax: + 34 968 38 90 19
 Email: info@penalver.com
 Web: www.penalver.com



Inghor, S.A (Ingeniería y Hornos, S.A.)
 Edificio Albia
 C/ San Vicente 8, Planta 9
 48001 Bilbao,
 SPAIN
 Tel: +34 944 411 012 / 313
 Fax: +34 944 411 066
 Email: inghor@inghor.es
 Web: www.inghor.es

KOENIG & BAUER

Koenig & Bauer MetalPrint GmbH
 Wernerstr. 119-129
 D-70435 Stuttgart, Germany
 Tel: +49 711 69971-0
 Fax: +49 711 69971-670
 Email: info-metalprint@koenig-bauer.com
 Web: www.metalprint.koenig-bauer.com



Miotto Este spa
 Via Talamoni, 4
 I-20861 Brugherio (MB), Italy
 Tel: +39 0392 878 284
 Fax: +39 0398 84594
 Email: info@miottoeste.it
 Web: www.miottoeste.it



STOLLE MACHINERY

Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
 6949 S. Potomac Street
 Centennial, CO 80112, USA
 Tel: +1 303 708 9044
 Fax: +1 303 708 9045
 Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
 Web: www.stollemachinery.com



TEC Technology GmbH
Service for the metal decorating industry
 Carl-Benz-Str.12
 D-74366 Kirchheim am Neckar, Germany
 Tel: +49 7143 9617280
 Fax: +49 7143 9617281
 E-mail: info@tec-technology.de
 Web: www.tec-technology.de

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DRT Mfg. Co.
 618 Greenmount Blvd
 Dayton, OH 45419, USA
 Tel: +1 937 298 7391
 Fax: +1 937 298 7190
 Email: postoffice@drtdusa.com
 Web: www.drtdmfgco.com



GM Technologies
 Headquarters: Via Molinelle 113, 80045
 Pompei (NA), Italy
 Factory: Zona PIP – via Orto di Cioglia
 83045 Calitri (AV), Italy
 Tel: +39 081 850 34 14
 +39 081 388 30 893
 Fax: +39 081 365 24 73
 Email: info@gmtechs.it
 Web: www.gmtechs.it



Rainer Naroska Engineering GmbH
 Im Hengstfeld 19
 32657 Lemgo, Germany
 Tel: +49 5261 6606 0
 Fax: +49 5261 6606 30
 Email: sales@naroska.com
 Web: www.naroska.com



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
Asia and ROW
 1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
 Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
 Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
 Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
 Web: www.slac.com.cn
 E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn

SLAC Precision Equipment Corp
North and South America
 2045 Lyons Road,
 Miamisburg, Ohio 45342, USA
 Tel: +1 937 296 9226
 Web: www.slacdayton.com
 Email: administrator@slacdayton.com

Corima International Machinery Srl
EMEA
 Via F Fellini 11/a
 40051 Altedo di Malalbergo
 Bologna, Italy
 Tel: +39 0532 55345
 Fax: +39 0532 54504
 Web: www.corima.org
 Email: info@corima.org



STOLLE MACHINERY
Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
 6949 S. Potomac Street
 Centennial, CO 80112, USA
 Tel: +1 303 708 9044
 Fax: +1 303 708 9045
 Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
 Web: www.stollemachinery.com

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 Tel: +34 968 38 90 88
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 Email: info@penalver.com
 Web: www.penalver.com



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
Asia and ROW
 1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
 Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
 Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
 Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
 Web: www.slac.com.cn
 E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn

Corima International Machinery Srl
EMEA
 Via F Fellini 11/a
 40051 Altedo di Malalbergo
 Bologna, Italy
 Tel: +39 0532 55345
 Fax: +39 0532 54504
 Web: www.corima.org
 Email: info@corima.org

EASY OPEN END TESTING EQUIPMENT



InnoScan A/S
 Sødalsparken 11
 8220 Brabrand, Denmark
 Tel +45 86 26 5677
 Fax +45 86 26 5678
 Email: innoscan@innoscan.dk
 Web: www.innoscan.dk



Bonfiglioli Engineering Srl
 Via Amerigo Vespucci, 20
 44124 Ferrara, Italy
 Tel: +39 0532 715631
 Fax: +39 0532 715625
 Email: marketing@bonfiglioliengineering.com
 Web: www.bonfiglioliengineering.com

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Parliament International Ltd
Cervantes House, 5-9 Headstone Road
Harrow, Middlesex HA1 1PD, UK
Tel: +44 20 8861 3505
Fax: +44 20 8861 2025
Email: david.munk@parliament-group.co.uk
Web: www.parliament-group.co.uk

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Web: www.guolian-steel.com

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CarnaudMetalbox Engineering plc
Dockfield Road, Shipley
W Yorkshire BD17 7AY, UK
Tel: +44 1274 846 200
Fax: +44 1274 846 201
Email: marc.hoche@eur.crowncork.com
Web: www.cmbecanmaking.com

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TOOLING**



DRT Mfg. Co.
618 Greenmount Blvd
Dayton, OH 45419, USA
Tel: +1 937 298 7391
Fax: +1 937 298 7190
Email: postoffice@drtdusa.com
Web: www.drtdmfgco.com



DRT GmbH & Co KG
Hansestrasse 49
D-38112 Braunschweig, Germany
Tel: +49 531 231 620
Fax: +49 531 231 6244
Email: info@drtd-europe.de
Web: www.drtd-europe.de

END TESTING EQUIPMENT



Canneed Instrument Group Ltd
No. 6, Longxing Road, Jindu Industry Ag-
glomeration Base Phase Two, Jindu Town
Gaoyao District, Zhaoqing City, Guangdong
Province, PR China Zip code: 526108
Tel: +86 758 8522881
Fax: +86 758-8522863
Email: info@canneed.com
Web: www.canneed.com



InnoScan A/S
Sødalsparken 11
8220 Brabrand, Denmark
Tel: +45 86 26 5677
Fax: +45 86 26 5678
Email: innoscan@innoscan.dk
Web: www.innoscan.dk



METOP AB
Flygledaregatan 5
212 39 Malmö, Sweden
Tel: +46 40 16 32 35
Email: info@metop.se
Web: www.metop.se



Muehlbauer AG
Josef-Muehlbauer-Platz 1
93426 Roding, Germany
Tel: +49 9461 952 - 0
Fax: +49 9461 952 - 1101
Email: temavision@muehlbauer.de
Web: www.muehlbauer.de



Sencon
North, Central & South America
Sencon Incorporated
6385 W 74th Street
Bedford Park, IL 60638, USA
Tel: +1 708 496 3100
Fax: +1 708 496 3105
Email: info@sencon.com
**Europe, Middle East, Asia, Africa,
Australasia**
Sencon (UK) Ltd
Pointon Way, Stonebridge Cross Business Park
Droitwich WR9 0LW, UK
Tel: +44 1905 827800
Fax: +44 1905 795876
China, Hong Kong, South East Asia
Sencon (HK) Ltd
Unit 202, 2/F, Building 12W
No 12 Science Park West Avenue
Phase 3 Hong Kong Science Park
Pak Shek Kok, NT, Hong Kong

Tel: +852 397 33860
Fax: +852 302 06140
Email: info@sencon.hk
Web: www.sencon.com



Sensory Analytics
The Sensory Building
405 Pomona Drive
Greensboro, NC 27407, USA
Tel: +1 336 315 6090
Fax: +1 336 315 6030
Email: info@specmetrix.com
Web: www.specmetrix.com

**ENGINEERING &
INSTALLATION SERVICES**



Roeslein & Associates Inc
9200 Watson Road, Suite 200
St Louis, MO 63126-1528, USA
Tel: +1 314 729 0055
Fax: +1 314 729 0070
Email: sales@roeslein.com
Web: www.roeslein.com



STOLLE MACHINERY
Stolle Machinery Company
Chris McAlpine, VP – Global Solutions
6949 S. Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112-4036, USA
Tel: +1 303 708 5048
Mobile: +1 303 549 0253
Email: chris.mcalpine@stollemachinery.com
Web: www.stollemachinery.com

FILM WEIGHT CONTROL



Canneed Instrument Group Ltd
No. 6, Longxing Road, Jindu Industry Ag-
glomeration Base Phase Two, Jindu Town
Gaoyao District, Zhaoqing City, Guangdong
Province, PR China Zip code: 526108
Tel: +86 758 8522881
Fax: +86 758-8522863
Email: info@canneed.com
Web: www.canneed.com



Sencon
North, Central & South America
Sencon Incorporated
6385 W 74th Street
Bedford Park, IL 60638, USA
Tel: +1 708 496 3100
Fax: +1 708 496 3105
Email: info@sencon.com
**Europe, Middle East, Asia, Africa,
Australasia**
Sencon (UK) Ltd
Pointon Way, Stonebridge Cross Business
Park, Droitwich WR9 0LW, UK
Tel: +44 1905 827800
Fax: +44 1905 795876
Email: info@sencon.co.uk
China, Hong Kong, South East Asia
Sencon (HK) Ltd
Unit 202, 2/F, Building 12W
No 12 Science Park West Avenue
Phase 3 Hong Kong Science Park
Pak Shek Kok, NT, Hong Kong
Tel: +852 397 33860
Fax: +852 302 06140
Email: info@sencon.hk
Web: www.sencon.com



Sensory Analytics
The Sensory Building
405 Pomona Drive
Greensboro, NC 27407, USA
Tel: +1 336 315 6090
Fax: +1 336 315 6030
Email: info@specmetrix.com
Web: www.specmetrix.com

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Germann + Frei AG
Martinsbruggstrasse 92
CH-9016 St. Gallen, Switzerland
Tel: +41 71 282 16 40
Fax: +41 71 282 16 50
Email: info@germannfrei.ch
Web: www.germannfrei.ch

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CH-9300 Wittenbach, Switzerland
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Fax: +41 71 292 3400
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Web: www.frei-ag.com

INDUCTION CURING & DRYING SYSTEMS



Can Man Aktiengesellschaft

Mülisacker 221
CH-5705 Hallwil, Switzerland
Tel: +41 62 777 4440
Fax: +41 62 777 4441
Email: sales@canman.ch
Web: www.canman.ch
Member of SWISSCAN Network
Web: www.swisscan.net



Sprimag Spritzmaschinenbau GmbH & Co. KG

Henriettenstraße 90
73230 Kirchheim/Teck, Germany
Tel: +49 7021 579-0
Fax: +49 7021 579 - 48 238
Email: info@sprimag.de
Web: www.sprimag.de

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Intercan Group Ltd EMEA

38 Burners Lane, Kiln Farm
Milton Keynes, MK11 3HB
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 1908 566015
Web: www.intercan.co.uk
Email: sales@intercan.co.uk

INSIDE SPRAY CONTROL



Sensory Analytics

The Sensory Building
405 Pomona Drive
Greensboro, NC 27407, USA
Tel: +1 336 315 6090
Fax: +1 336 315 6030
Email: info@specmetrix.com
Web: www.specmetrix.com

INSIDE SPRAY EQUIPMENT



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd

Asia and ROW
1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
Suzhou, Jiangsu, China

Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn
Corima International Machinery Srl EMEA

Via F Fellini 11/a
40051 Altedo di Malalbergo
Bologna, Italy
Tel: +39 0532 55345
Fax: +39 0532 54504
Web: www.corima.org
Email: info@corima.org



STOLLE MACHINERY

Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
6949 S. Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112, USA
Tel: +1 303 708 9044
Fax: +1 303 708 9045
Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
Web: www.stollemachinery.com

INSIDE/OUTSIDE SPRAY MACHINES



CarnaudMetalbox Engineering plc

Dockfield Road, Shipley
West Yorkshire BD17 7AY, UK
Tel: +44 1274 846 200
Fax: +44 1274 846 201
Email: marc.hoche@eur.crowncork.com
Web: www.cmbecanmaking.com



Sprimag Spritzmaschinenbau GmbH & Co. KG

Henriettenstraße 90
73230 Kirchheim/Teck, Germany
Tel: +49 7021 579-0
Fax: +49 7021 579 - 48 238
Email: info@sprimag.de
Web: www.sprimag.de

INSPECTION/AUDITS OVEN & OXIDIZER



Environmental Services & Technologies Inc Midwest Office

4941 41st Street Court
Moline, IL 61265, USA
Tel: +1 309 762 9551
Fax: +1 309 762 9561

West Coast Office
1155 South Milliken Avenue
Ontario, CA 91761, USA
Tel: +1 909 295 6255
Fax: +1 909 295 5531
Email: info@envsvr.com
Web: www.envsvr.com



Perm Machine & Tool Co
PO Box 660, 9660 Industrial Drive
St John, Indiana 46373, USA
Tel: +1 219 365 5000
Fax: +1 219 365 4847
Email: perm@permmachine.com
Skype: perm_machine
Web: www.permmachine.com

INSPECTION SYSTEMS

ALTEK

ALTEK Company
89 Commercial Boulevard
PO Box 1128, Torrington
CT 06790, USA
Tel: +1 860 482 7628
Fax: +1 860 496 0255
Email: tech@altekcompany.com
Web: www.altekcompany.com



Applied Vision Corporation
2020 Vision Lane,
Akron, OH 44223, USA
Tel: +1 330 926 2222
Fax: +1 330 926 2250
Email: sales@appliedvision.com
Web: www.appliedvision.com



Belvac Production Machinery Inc
237 Graves Mill Road
Lynchburg, VA 24502-4203, USA
Tel: +1 434 239 0358
Fax: +1 434 239 1964
Email: info@belvac.com
Web: www.belvac.com



Canned Instrument Group Ltd
No. 6, Longxing Road, Jindu Industry Agglomeration Base Phase Two, Jindu Town
Gaoyao District, Zhaoqing City, Guangdong Province, PR China Zip code: 526108

Tel: +86 758 8522881
Fax: +86 758-8522863
Email: info@canneed.com
Web: www.canneed.com



InnoScan A/S
Sødalsparken 11
8220 Brabrand, Denmark
Tel: +45 86 26 5677
Fax: +45 86 26 5678
Email: innoscan@innoscan.dk
Web: www.innoscan.dk



ISRA Vision AG
Industriestrasse 14
64297 Darmstadt, Germany
Tel: +49 6151 948 0
Fax: +49 6151 948 140
Email: info@isravision.com
Web: www.isravision.com



METOP AB
Flygledaregatan 5
212 39 Malmö, Sweden
Tel: +46 40 16 32 35
Email: info@metop.se
Web: www.metop.se



Muehlbauer AG
Josef-Muehlbauer-Platz 1
93426 Roding, Germany
Tel: +49 9461 952 - 0
Fax: +49 9461 952 - 1
Email: temavision@muehlbauer.de
Web: www.muehlbauer.de



Pressco Technology Inc
29200 Aurora Road
Cleveland, OH 44139, USA
Tel: +1 440 498 2600
Fax: +1 440 498 2615
Email: sales@pressco.com
Web: www.pressco.com



Prime Controls, Inc.
World Headquarters:
4528 Gateway Circle
Dayton, OH 45440-1712, USA
Tel: +1 937 435 8659
Fax: +1 937 435 2091
Email: vip@primecontrols.com
Web: www.primcontrols.com

SENCON

Sencon
North, Central & South America
 Sencon Incorporated
 6385 W 74th Street
 Bedford Park, IL 60638, USA
 Tel: +1 708 496 3100
 Fax: +1 708 496 3105
 Email: info@sencon.com
Europe, Middle East, Asia, Africa,
Australasia
 Sencon (UK) Ltd
 Pointon Way
 Stonebridge Cross Business Park
 Droitwich WR9 0LW, UK
 Tel: +44 1905 827800
 Fax: +44 1905 795876
 Email: info@sencon.co.uk
China, Hong Kong, South East Asia
 Sencon (HK) Ltd
 Unit 202, 2/F, Building 12W
 No 12 Science Park West Avenue
 Phase 3 Hong Kong Science Park
 Pak Shek Kok, NT, Hong Kong
 Tel: +852 397 33860
 Fax: +852 302 06140
 Email: info@sencon.hk
Web: www.sencon.com



Technology by SENSORY ANALYTICS

Sensory Analytics
 The Sensory Building
 405 Pomona Drive
 Greensboro, NC 27407, USA
 Tel: +1 336 315 6090
 Fax: +1 336 315 6030
 Email: info@specmetrix.com
 Web: www.specmetrix.com



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
Asia and ROW
 1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
 Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
 Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
 Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
 Web: www.slac.com.cn
 E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn
Corima International Machinery Srl
EMEA
 Via F Fellini 11/a
 40051 Altedo di Malalbergo
 Bologna, Italy
 Tel: +39 0532 55345
 Fax: +39 0532 54504
 Web: www.corima.org
 Email: info@corima.org

LEAK DETECTION



BA.SCO srl
 Via Borgognone 9
 10090 Trana (Torino), Italy
 Tel: +39 0119 33620
 Fax: +39 0119 355 763
 Email: sales@basco-testers.com
 Web: www.basco-testers.com



Bonfiglioli Engineering Srl
 Via Amerigo Vespucci, 20
 44124 Ferrara, Italy
 Tel: +39 0532 715631
 Fax: +39 0532 715625
 Email: marketing@bonfiglioliengineering.com
 Web: www.bonfiglioliengineering.com



InnoScan A/S
 Sødalsparken 11
 8220 Brabrand, Denmark
 Tel: +45 86 26 5677
 Fax: +45 86 26 5678
 Email: innoscan@innoscan.dk
 Web: www.innoscan.dk



Prime Controls, Inc.
World Headquarters:
 4528 Gateway Circle, Dayton,
 Ohio 45440-1712, USA
 Tel: +1 937 435 8659
 Fax: +1 937 435 2091
 Email: vip@primecontrols.com
 Web: www.primecontrols.com



Shantou Xinqing Cannery Machinery Co, Ltd
 B7 Jinxing Road, Jinyan Industrial Area,
 Shantou, China
 Tel: +86-754-82122088/82123088
 Fax: +86-754-82124088
 Email: xq@canning-machinery.cn
 Web: www.canning-machinery.cn

LEAK TESTERS



InnoScan A/S
 Sødalsparken 11, 8220 Brabrand
 Denmark
 Tel: +45 86 26 5677
 Fax: +45 86 26 5678
 Email: innoscan@innoscan.dk
 Web: www.innoscan.dk

LIGHT TESTERS



InnoScan A/S
 Sødalsparken 11
 8220 Brabrand, Denmark
 Tel: +45 86 26 5677
 Fax: +45 86 26 5678
 Email: innoscan@innoscan.dk
 Web: www.innoscan.dk



Sencon
North, Central & South America
 Sencon Incorporated
 6385 W 74th Street
 Bedford Park, IL 60638, USA
 Tel: +1 708 496 3100
 Fax: +1 708 496 3105
 Email: info@sencon.com
Europe, Middle East, Asia, Africa,
Australasia
 Sencon (UK) Ltd
 Pointon Way
 Stonebridge Cross Business Park
 Droitwich WR9 0LW, UK
 Tel: +44 1905 827800
 Fax: +44 1905 795876
 Email: info@sencon.co.uk

China, Hong Kong, South East Asia
 Sencon (HK) Ltd
 Unit 202, 2/F, Building 12W
 No 12 Science Park West Avenue
 Phase 3 Hong Kong Science Park
 Pak Shek Kok, NT, Hong Kong
 Tel: +852 397 33860
 Fax: +852 302 06140
 Email: info@sencon.hk
Web: www.sencon.com



STOLLE MACHINERY
Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
 6949 S. Potomac Street
 Centennial, CO 80112, USA
 Tel: +1 303 708 9044
 Fax: +1 303 708 9045
 Email: sales@stollemachinery.com
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 C/ Albaricoque s/n, Molina de Segura
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 Tel: +34 968 38 90 88
 Fax: +34 968 38 90 19
 Email: info@penalver.com
 Web: www.penalver.com

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Rainer Naroska Engineering GmbH
 Im Hengstfeld 19
 32657 Lemgo, Germany
 Tel: +49 5261 6606 0
 Fax: +49 5261 6606 30
 Email: sales@naroska.com
 Web: www.naroska.com



Shin-I Machinery Works Co Ltd
 No 43 Chung Cheng St
 Chingshui, Taichung, Taiwan ROC
 Tel: +886 4 2623 8181
 Fax: +886 4 2623 2129
 Email: contact@shinican.com.tw
 Web: www.shinican.com

MAGNETIC DECORATOR CYLINDERS



Bunting-Newton
500 S Spencer Avenue
PO Box 468, Newton
KS 67114-0468, USA
Tel: +1 316 284 2020
Fax: +1 316 283 4975
Email: bmc@buntingmagnetics.com
Web: www.buntingmagnetics.com



T. D. Wright Inc
292 Walnut Street
St Paul, MN 55102, USA
Tel: +1 651 227 1302
Fax: +1 651 227 4465
Email: office@tdwinc.com
Web: www.tdwright.com

METAL DECORATING EQUIPMENT



CarnaudMetalbox Engineering plc
Dockfield Road, Shipley
West Yorkshire BD17 7AY, UK
Tel: +44 1274 846 200
Fax: +44 1274 846 201
Email: marc.hoche@eur.crowncork.com
Web: www.cmbecanmaking.com



Fuji Kikai Kogyo Co Ltd
2-7-1 Iida, Hachihonmatsu,
Higashihiroshima-shi
Hiroshima Pref 739-0146, Japan
Metal Decorating Machinery Div
Metal Decorating Sales Dept
Tel: +81 82 428 2455
Fax: +81 82 428 8912
Email: primex@fujikikai.co.jp
Web: www.fujikikai.co.jp

HMD
HEBENSTREIT METAL DECORATING
Hebenstreit Metal Decorating GmbH
Gottlieb-Daimler-Strasse 15/2
74385 Pleidelsheim, Germany
Tel: +49 7144 88980-0
Fax: +49 7144 88980-50
Email: info@hebenstreit-gmbh.de
Web: www.hebenstreit-gmbh.de

KOENIG & BAUER

Koenig & Bauer MetalPrint GmbH
Wernerstr. 119-129
D-70435 Stuttgart, Germany
Tel: +49 711 69971-0
Fax: +49 711 69971-670
Email: info-metalprint@koenig-bauer.com
Web: www.metalprint.koenig-bauer.com



Miotto Este spa
Via Talamoni, 4
I-20861 Brugherio (MB), Italy
Tel: +39 0392 878 284
Fax: +39 0398 84 594
Email: info@miottoeste.it
Web: www.miottoeste.it



Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
Asia and ROW
1028 Sunwu Road, Wuzhong District,
Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
Tel: +86 512 6693 9207
Fax: +86 512 6624 8543
Web: www.slac.com.cn
E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn
Intercan Group Ltd
EMEA
38 Burners Lane, Kiln Farm
Milton Keynes, MK11 3HB
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 1908 566015
Fax: +44 1908 560638
Web: www.intercan.co.uk
Email: sales@intercan.co.uk



TEC Technology GmbH
Service for the metal decorating industry
TEC Technology GmbH
Carl-Benz-Str.12
D-74366 Kirchheim am Neckar, Germany
Tel: +49 7143 9617280
Fax: +49 7143 9617281
E-mail: info@tec-technology.de
Web: www.tec-technology.de

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Suzhou SLAC Precision Equipment Co, Ltd
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E-mail: slac@slac.com.cn



STOLLE MACHINERY
Stolle Machinery Company, LLC
6949 S. Potomac Street
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Perm Machine & Tool Co
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1155 South Milliken Avenue
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Perm Machine & Tool Co
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1155 South Milliken Avenue
Ontario, CA 91761, USA
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Fax: +1 909 295 5531
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Montajes Conserveros de Galicia (MCG)

Pl. A Granxa C/Ons Parcela 107-108
36475 O Porriño (Pontevedra), Spain
Tel: +34 986 48 83 47
Fax: +34 986 48 71 35
Email: mcg@mcg.com.es
Web: www.mcg.com.es



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Dayton, OH 45440-1712, USA
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The Sensory Building
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Email: info@sencon.co.uk
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Unit 202, 2/F, Building 12W
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Web: www.tec-technology.de

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265 Yixian Road, Wukang Town
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Hengli CNC Technology Co., Ltd
265 Yixian Road, Wukang Town
Deqing County, Zhejiang Province
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Carl-Benz-Str.12
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Web: www.hebenstreit-gmbh.de

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Koenig & Bauer MetalPrint GmbH
Wernerstr. 119-129
D-70435 Stuttgart, Germany
Tel: +49 711 69971-0
Fax: +49 711 69971-670
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Web: www.metalprint.koenig-bauer.com



Miotto Este spa
Via Talamoni 4
I-20861 Brugherio (MB), Italy
Tel: +39 0392 878 284
Fax: +39 0398 84 594
Email: info@miottoeste.it
Web: www.miottoeste.it



Perm Machine & Tool Co
PO Box 660, 9660 Industrial Drive
St John, Indiana 46373, USA
Tel: +1 219 365 5000
Fax: +1 219 365 4847
Email: perm@permmachine.com
Skype: perm_machine
Web: www.permmachine.com

TEC Technology GmbH
Service for the metal decorating industry

TEC Technology GmbH
Carl-Benz-Str.12
D-74366 Kirchheim am Neckar
Germany
Tel: +49 7143 9617280
Fax: +49 7143 9617281
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Web: www.tec-technology.de

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Web: www.stollemachinery.com



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 1155 South Milliken Avenue
 Ontario, CA 91761, USA
 Tel: +1 909 295 6255
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 Email: info@envsrv.com
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Perm Machine & Tool Co
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THE CAN MAN

A sideways look at the world of can making

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In a period where everything revolves around discussing the Covid-19 pandemic, it's easy to take our eye off the ball on other matters. One issue that went under the radar was the vote on regulation in Scotland to do with the introduction of a national deposit return scheme (DRS).

On the face of it, Scotland's approach is laudable – tackling plastic pollution, increasing recycling rates and minimising litter. However, the potential impact to metal packaging is great.

Alupro (The Aluminium Packaging Recycling Organisation) has conducted research and overwhelmingly concluded that the flat rate fee is both unfair and potentially damaging to issues such as single use plastic.

According to Alupro, under the proposed regulations, “a flat deposit fee of 20p will be applied to all sizes of container”. This could see customers charged an additional £4.80 upfront for a 24-can multipack, while only 80 pence for the same volume of drink packed in four large plastic bottles.

Independent research suggests that two thirds of consumers would be likely to opt for larger plastic alternatives, resulting in

the unnecessary production of 82 million additional plastic bottles.

If done well, DRS can be a fantastic concept, but when done badly, they can be very damaging. It's clear Scotland's current strategy is badly thought through, and let's hope with the work of our industry bodies, that the Scottish parliament will make some changes to its DRS policy. However, on 29 April, the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee voted through Scotland's proposed introduction of a national deposit return scheme (DRS). The regulations will now be subject to a vote in the Scottish Parliament, after which the scheme will become law.

In comment, Rick Hindley, executive director at Alupro, said: “While we are obviously disappointed that the scheme has been voted through in its current format, we were hugely encouraged by the clear concerns raised again by the committee regarding the adverse impact of rolling-out a flat 20p deposit fee.

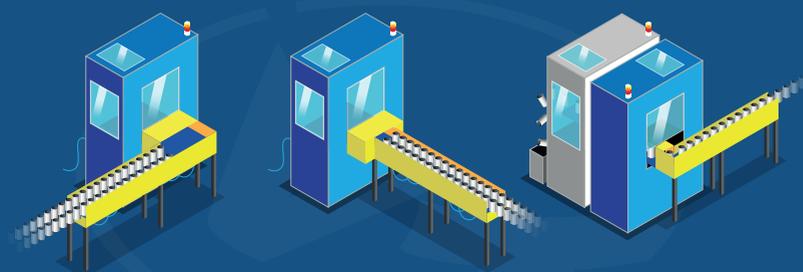
“We believe that the Scottish Government has buried its head in the sand with the proposed DRS, by failing to consider the valuable views of its constituents, its own Environment Committee and the

packaging industry as a whole. With the real threat of unintended environmental and economic consequences, which could undermine the benefits of a well-designed scheme, the idea of a flat deposit fee is short sighted at best.

“It was, however, reassuring to hear the Cabinet Secretary's acknowledgement of our concerns, as well as how the variable deposit could form part of a full review. Furthermore, the understanding that a variable deposit could be introduced via a negative statutory instrument was yet another positive take-out.

“A well-designed DRS could prove fundamental in tackling plastic pollution, increasing recycling rates, improving recycle quality and minimising litter across Scotland. However, a flat deposit fee plays no part in a successful scheme and would result in a number of hugely negative implications.”

Unfortunately, this shows the global challenges involved with implementing DRS; done well, it has potential in tackling pollution and increasing recycling, but it's potentially damaging and divisive. Let's hope the 20p flat deposit fee is a gamechanger for this particular scheme. 



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