

What Packaging?

PrintWeek

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against Covid-19

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Resolve.
Teamwork.
Agility.
Innovation.
Creativity.
Connection.
Compassion.
Prudence.
Perseverance.
Grit.
Hope.
Resilience.**

We appreciate our employees, customers, and suppliers for staying safe and standing strong in the face of COVID-19. And we are profoundly grateful to first responders and medical professionals everywhere.

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PrintWeek

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Design and Production Control Sujit Mandvikar

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Advertising Sales Coordinator Sonal Jain

Circulation Ganesh Jadhav

Production Manager Prasad Gangurde

Publisher Hormazd Sorabjee C/O A M News Agency
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Byculla (East), Mumbai 400 027, India.
Tel: +91 22 23787400

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Pause. Rethink. Remember to wash your hands

I recently read a post, which stated, "If you haven't read a book, picked up a new skill, or learnt a musical instrument, then you just lack discipline." This made me think – people have turned even their quarantine time into a race. As if we hadn't had enough of it.

While we were busy racing with our own selves building highly efficient, super-optimised economies at scale, we forgot that these very attributes made it extremely fragile. And while we were at it, one must think, we must have achieved great prosperity, right? But it depends on one's definition of prosperity.

As of now, even the most advanced nations lack emergency opex reserves or backup medical infrastructure to tackle the crisis that we are in. And remember, we also have climate change to deal with. And as if we were not aware of this, we needed a global pandemic to make all this apparent.

Amidst the crisis, brands and manufacturers, with the support from the packaging fraternity, are presenting the humblest acts of humanity, be it distributing food, money or using packaging to spread awareness. We are seeing tremendous resourcefulness where manufacturers are re-purposing facilities in quick time to produce more soaps and sanitisers, that too with reduced prices.

The world has witnessed the failings of a global clustered supply chain and it is likely that we may see manufacturers adopt new strategic directions to mitigate such fallout in future. The packaging industry, which forms the key ingredient of the modern supply chain, might also evolve. As an industry, we were just starting to adopt a mindset towards sustainability and many worry if the current crisis will put sustaina-



bility goals on a backseat.

This is the time to take the longer view. We need to think more than sustainability. It's not enough for humanity to merely sustain. We also need to endure.

So, pause, rethink and while you are at it, wash your hands regularly.

Stay safe, and take care.

Abhishek Muralidharan,
PrintWeek and WhatPackaging?



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WhatPackaging? magazine

PANDEMIC IMPACT

Packaging industry walks the walk to fight against the siege of Coronavirus

A WhatPackaging? report on the packaging industry's efforts against the Covid-19 outbreak and the shift of perspectives on packaging amidst the global pandemic

As the world tries to withstand the siege of Covid-19, the packaging industry is defending the important bridge that connects essential supplies to the world at large. Along with the brands, the packaging manufacturers and converters are showing tremendous resolve in their ingenuity and resourcefulness trying to repurpose their solutions to mitigate the current crisis while operating with very little resources and capacities.

Packaging as foot soldiers

Lamitube specialist, Essel Propack has introduced a ready-to-go tube packaging solution to cater to the rapid demand for hand sanitizers. The company has collaborated with various manufacturers and formulations to ensure that the products remain safe and fresh till end-use. "Our tubes are a suitable choice for sanitiser packaging. We have a variety of different solutions and packs available for respective formulations and usages, with faster turnaround times," the company said through their social media handle.

Global consumer product manufacturer, Colgate-Palmolive, has mobilised five of its plants in three continents to produce 25 million soaps. To be donated for free, these soaps will be specially packaged with instructions on proper hand washing to amplify the WHO



Bisleri has offered free packaged mineral water to recognise the efforts of the ongoing essential services

#SafeHands message.

In terms of re-purposing existing packaging, Haryana-based CG Foods India, the manufacturer of Wai Wai noodles, has dedicated an area on its packaging to provide information and spread awareness of WHO-led hand wash programme amidst the pandemic. The brand has printed and distributed about 500 million packets in India and two billion packets in South Asia with the hand hygiene message. The message has been printed both in English and Hindi to broaden its reach.

Meanwhile, in a view to replenish essential supplies to hospitals, health centres, pharmacies and screening and medical facilities during the Covid-19 pandemic, Mumbai-based Bizongo has created a digital platform to facilitate the supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) kits for healthcare professionals in India. "The services are available exclusively for hospitals, pharmacies, providers of essential goods or services, large public entities and NGOs," said Sachin Agrawal, COO and co-founder of Bizongo.

Brands gear up efforts

Bisleri has offered free packaged mineral water to recognise the efforts of doctors, nurses, policemen, paramedical staff, sanitation workers, government officials and other essential services. Free packs of bottles have already been distributed across hospitals, police stations and traffic signals in West Bengal, Maharashtra, Delhi, UP, Karnataka, Telangana,

Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. The company aims to cover more areas and distribute free water to people and other essential services as well.

Parle Biscuits has announced that the company will donate 10 million Parle-G biscuit packs every week during the current lockdown. The company is ready to join hands with the government of India to ease the difficulty of those who have lost their daily income. The

Parle-G biscuits will be released through state depots for free over a period of three weeks and company officials are working closely with the government on the most effective distribution channels.

Bengaluru-based iD Fresh Food launched a unique 'Store Finder' feature on its website to provide its customers with updated information on iD Fresh products available at the stores near them and the exact quantity available. The Store Finder also has a 'Notify Me' feature that provides daily SMS alerts when fresh stocks arrive at the stores.

ITC's perfume manufacturing facility in Himachal Pradesh has started production of Savlon sanitisers. ITC has repurposed this perfume facility to help produce an additional 125 thousand litres of Savlon hand sanitisers. ITC has also reduced prices of Savlon sanitisers



Colgate-Palmolive's soap packaged with hand washing instructions

and is working on getting the new stocks with the revised prices to the market. Likewise, liquor manufacturer RadicoKhaitan has extended its services and produced its first batch of hand sanitiser. RadicoKhaitan expanded the use of Extra Neutral Alcohol (ENA) at the company's mother distillery in Rampur, Uttar Pradesh and at other bottling plants in different parts of the country to produce Radico 8PM Extra Strong Hand Sanitisers. Diageo said that it will provide 500 thousand litres of alcohol to the sanitiser industry across 25 states in India for national healthcare systems and for consumers.

Godrej Consumer Products supported the free distribution of one million packets of Godrej Protekt Mr Magic powder-to-liquid hand wash in Maharashtra through partnership with the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) and Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC). It also partnered with communities linked to its CSR programmes to support 112 thousand beneficiaries across eight states with hand wash, sanitisers and soap. Meanwhile, Nivea India deployed its production centre in Sanand, Ahmedabad that manufactured skincare products to manufacture hand sanitisers for frontline healthcare providers and the police department free of cost.



Nivea has deployed its Sanand plant, which manufactured skincare products, to produce hand sanitisers

Converters join the cause

Max Speciality Films donated food locally to the communities in Nawanshahr in Punjab, an area hard hit by the Covid-19 crisis. Meanwhile, ITC Paperboards and Specialty Papers Division distributed one thousand food packets to migrant workers in Bhadrachalam.

Ahmedabad-based packaging converter →



Stakeholders in the plastic industry have taken the opportunity of the outbreak to highlight the importance of single-use plastic to fight the spread of the virus

Gujarat Print Pack provided the labels for the hand sanitisers manufactured at the Nivea India unit at Sanand, Ahmedabad completely free of cost. Signode India has ramped up its efforts for manufacturing labels for hand sanitisers at its Rudrapur unit.

Neovation Graphics restarted its operations after seven days of lockdown for manufacturing labels for its customers engaged in manufacturing food and hygiene products to keep up their supplies. Another Ahmedabad-based converter, S Kumar Multi Products, has been working at a 20% capacity with minimum manpower to produce labels for edible oils, IV fluids and critical pharma injectable labels, among others.

Temporary relaxation of packaging and labelling requirements

The Indian government eased jute packaging norms to allow alternative packing arrangements for food grain in a move to protect the

interest of wheat farmers amidst the closure of jute mills due to coronavirus-related lockdown.

The Union textiles ministry said that it has extended the permissible limit for high-density polyethylene or polypropylene bags from 1.80 to 2.62 lakh bales in a view to protect the produce of wheat farmers by providing them alternate packaging bags.

A similar effort had been made in the US by the Department of Agriculture in Florida, which waived off certain labelling and packaging requirements for eggs in order to accelerate its delivery from producers to retailers.

The safest packaging material

As science confirms that the virus can survive on surfaces, the pandemic has led to new discussions and perspectives around the safety of various packaging materials. A recent study published by the US National Institutes of Health found that the virus survives for up to

two or three days on steel and plastic surfaces and one day on cardboard. Thus, the onus is on the packaging companies to ensure that packaging does not become a potential route for spreading the virus and measures are taken to deal with it.

There has been a growing discussion among stakeholders about the need to shift back to single-use packaging during the outbreak. Stakeholders in the plastic industry have taken the opportunity to highlight the importance of single-use plastic to fight the spread of the virus. Others, however, believe that the pandemic is a chance for reusable packaging to step up to meet crucial needs while keeping waste to a minimum.

Experts believe that single-use packaging may give a false sense of safety when in reality it could also be contaminated during its production, transport, or handling. The option is reusable containers, despite the risk, as it can be sanitised.

Is plastic safer?

Amidst the outbreak, global coffee chain Starbucks banned reusable cups in March 2020 and organisations, such as the Plastics Industry Association in the US, have been addressing the advantages of plastic. In a statement, Plastics Industry Association president and CEO, Tony Radoszewski, said, "Plastics have been the material of choice in the medical field for decades and we live healthier, longer, and better because of these materials. The global plastics industry stands ready to assist authorities and public health advocates in making sure our materials and products are on the frontline of combating the spread of coronavirus."

It appears that single-use disposable food packaging has made a comeback with Covid-19 as many consumers believe this to be safer and/or more hygienic. Meanwhile, the European Carton Makers Association (ECMA) says that carton board is proving to be an essential item in maintaining an effective supply chain for food and pharmaceutical products during the Covid-19 crisis. ECMA claims folding cartons are a sustainable solution that is aligned with the European Commission's circular economy strategy. The value of which is being reinforced today as a critical item involved in keeping Europe supplied with food and medicines.

For some years now, sustainability has been a key driver in the business and marketing strategies for many food and beverage com-



panies in the Asia Pacific region such as Coca-Cola and Nestlé, especially after China banned plastic waste imports in 2018. One of the main initiatives across many of the companies that have this focus has generally been to cut down on the use of single-use plastic bottles and packaging, but experts say it is likely that 'companies may resort to plastic packaging to combat the spread of the pandemic, putting the sustainability aspect in the back seat' again.

One of the most likely places this will happen will be in China, as the Chinese government is likely to enforce tighter regulations to change meat handling and distribution practices. Distributing meat in plastic packaging is likely to reduce the risk of a future outbreak.

India is also expected to see a rise in plastic packaging usage, especially with the recent nationwide lockdown increasing the need for more long-term food storage. Again, with the lockdown, there has been considerable rise in food delivery and takeaway services. This may eventually lead to the adoption of disposable packaging.

But, is plastic safe?

Environmental activists have protested claims that plastic food packaging is safer, and they may actually not be wrong. According to a statement on the Break Free From Plastic website by non-profit organisation Upstream, disposable packaging is not safer than reusable packaging if not washed properly with soap and hot water.

Scientific research backs up some of these points: A recent University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) study showed that the virus causing Covid-19 can remain on plastic surfaces for some two to three days, so if not properly cleaned before contact is made, may not be as safe as expected.

The Centers for Disease & Control (CDC), based in the US, has stated that consumers



There is no word yet if plastic is really safe to use

face a low risk of spreading the virus from products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient temperatures.

No concrete scientific data has yet been seen for the virus' lifespan on reusable bags, but expert advice is to clean these thoroughly with soap, water, and/or disinfectant.

So one way or the other, the safest way to proceed and keep food and groceries as hygienic as possible is likely to observe proper cleaning protocol at higher levels of caution than usual, regardless of whether disposable or reusable packaging is used.

In the argument on the use of plastic, the bottom-line must be clear. In the bid to fight the virus, we shouldn't go back to the old ways and create unnecessary amounts of single-use plastic waste.

China and the supply chain

Following the Covid-19 outbreak, self-isolation rules have resulted in short supply and event cancellations, and supply chains are now looking to source away from China following manufacturing and production disruptions.

One of the main concerns in the industry comes from workers having to self-isolate, especially in China, where many packaging companies rely on manufacturing facilities. For example, Procter and Gamble (P&G) accesses 387 suppliers in China that ship to use globally more than 9,000 different materials, impacting approximately 17,600 different finished product items. Each of these suppliers faces their own challenges in resuming operations.

The pandemic has caused considerable disruptions for companies and, as a result, many are looking to relocate away from China. A survey conducted by the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) between 22 February and 5 March revealed that production in China fell to an all-time low in February, with manufacturers in China reporting a 50% operating capacity with 56% of normal staff.

But there is a lesson to be learnt. Experts say it is important to avoid clustering of suppliers in one region, particularly around similar supply chains. This will be increasingly critical as the world becomes more volatile through climate change and other man-made impacts. That makes it important to look beyond selecting on lowest price only and understanding the overall value and the risks in the supply chain.■

COVER STORY

Musthafa: Find a way to reuse nature's own packaging ideas

How often do you come across a product available in the purest form of packaging – the nature itself? With its coconut packaging, iD Fresh has added another feather to its cap of packaging innovations. PC Musthafa, co-founder, iD Fresh Food, in a conversation with Abhishek Muralidharan of WhatPackaging?, explains how the company took inspiration from nature

Abhishek Muralidharan (AM): Is fresh food the burgeoning trend?

PC Musthafa (PM): Fresh is the future. People are becoming more health conscious, which is leading to a fresh revolution, which is not discernible yet, but it is definitely happening. There are already numerous fresh food stores being established in the world, which is set to multiply soon.

Products with a long shelf life are disappearing. This is why we ventured into fresh food category in the first place. When we launched Tender Coconut, in the same store, they were selling 10-15 packs of a coconut drink, which has now reduced to almost zero. Similarly, when we launched idly and dosa batter, the conventional powder disappeared. The same was the case when we introduced our parotas. All this made me believe that anything can be sold fresh.

AM: We see iD Fresh food products populate the retail shelves in Mumbai. Has iD become 'The' fresh food brand here?

PM: In some markets, we are 'The' fresh food brand, but there also exist some markets that we are yet to venture into. If we look at the Bengaluru market, we have a 75% market share. In the Mumbai market, we have around 90% market share. If we add Pune to that market then it becomes a 95% market share. We have also started catering to New Delhi and Kolkata markets. Overall, we would be easily doing a business of around Rs 260-crore today.



PC Musthafa: Fresh is the future. People are becoming more health conscious leading to a fresh revolution

AM: How much do you garner from eCommerce sales?

PM: Our products are available on select platforms such as Amazon Pantry, Milkbasket and so on. As of today, only around 2.5% of our revenue is coming from online platforms. So, if I have to bifurcate, 93% of our business comes from B2C channels such as modern and general trade. Our plan is to take our eCommerce sales to 4% in the next two years.

AM: iD is a company which has never shied away from social media presence. This, we believe, boosts brand visibility and also consumer connection, especially among the millennials. What role have these social media platforms played for iD?

PM: I think the best part about social media is the fact that people love stories. I feel that social media is the ideal platform to create a story and also propagate it. Well-crafted stories are vital for creating a brand and this is the reason all our campaigns have been suc-

cessful. Social media is the number two platform today after TV, which means it has overtaken print media as well. Moreover, for a company like us, which has its presence in most of the metro-specific cities, social media seems to be the right platform for us. Social media helps us connect with our existing customers and also with people who are yet to try our products. I have learned that two concepts work very well in social media for a brand like iD – emotional stories and product and packaging innovations.

AM: What role does packaging play for your company?

PM: We have tried to get something more out of packaging from day one, right from our initial product – the idly and dosa batter. We have always been asking questions – can packaging deliver functionality? Can we do something to bring an authentic feel to the pack? Can we use natural packaging as it is? This has been our thought process throughout our company's journey.

AM: iD Fresh has always been in the forefront of packaging innovations...

PM: In 2014, we innovated a packaging for dosa batter, which enables the product to be dispensed directly from the pouch. The package is more like a transformer as it functions

The current coconut market is pegged at Rs 4,000-crore growing at a compound annual growth rate of 10%. With grated and tender coconut, by 2022, iD Fresh aims to capture 60–70% of the organised coconut market. Over the next three months, both the products will be available at retail outlets as well as at iD Kiosks where consumers can experience and taste the products before making the purchase.

In the next phase of the launch, iD will be empowering the street hawkers selling tender coconut by helping them set up a hygienic cart with a cooler, giving fair price margins and even collecting the waste from them at the end of the day.

like a pouch during transit and storage, but when you open the zip lock, it becomes a dispensing tool.

Similarly, when we introduced our vada batter package into the market two years ago, it delivered great functionality as well. So, just to give out some numbers, the awareness level of the brand iD was around 24–25% in the Bengaluru market, two years ago. After vada batter's introduction, we have learned that our awareness level has gone up to 76%,

There's a new revolution happening in the fresh food world, which is unnoticed yet. Soon, it will be too late for any brand to get into the fresh food category.



which is three-fold. People really loved the packaging concept – when they squeezed the spout, they were able to make a perfectly round-shaped vada. We also released a one-minute video on how to make vada using the package, which went viral. The product helped us get global attention. That is the power of innovation.

AM: What about your filter coffee packaging for which you recently launched a strategic business unit?

PM: For the filter coffee, we used packaging for two criterion. Firstly, to ensure the product can be used in travelling. The sachets enabled customers to carry their favourite filter coffee on their journeys out of India. The idea really helped. Secondly, the family pack, which had a 3D tumbler design to provide a nostalgic feel to the package.



iD Fresh produces 1,000 coconuts per day, which is just being supplied in 100 outlets in Bengaluru

“

Instead of reinventing or creating our own packaging, we need to find a smarter way to integrate nature's packaging to our products. We need to rethink whether there is a way in which we can provide value addition and repack the same product in the package that God has created for it.

”

AM: Where did the idea of grated-coconut-in-a-coconut come from?

PM: The answer is simple! We launched idly, dosa and vada. So, what's missing in the fresh food portfolio? Chutney! Now, because of our philosophy of producing 100% natural products without the use of any chemicals or preservatives, it was a tough task for us to produce fresh chutney, as it has a very limited shelf life. But we knew that if we were able to provide grated coconut, making chutney is a fairly easy task. Thus, once we decided on the product, we tried different packaging options to maintain the product's freshness without the use of preservatives or chemicals. But nothing worked. Then a thought struck. Why don't we use nature's own packaging as it is? And the idea came out in flying colours.

AM: In a product such as tender coconut, when you integrate nature in packaging, it can have some variations; in this case, two shells won't be exactly the same. How did you address this issue?

PM: The shell variations are built into the packaging design. First, we remove the outer shell and then we categorise the coconuts into different variants based on the size, weight, water and pulp content, sweetness level and so on.

AM: How were you able to predict the water content with 95% accuracy?

PM: It's a matter of common sense and sci-

ence. We analysed thousands of coconuts, which enabled us with a lot of predictability on identifying what's inside the coconut without opening it. We used common sense in procuring the coconuts with the right maturity level from the right farms. Then, after shaving the husks, we were able to measure the weight and volume of the coconut. Now, we have vital information – weight, volume, farm, maturity level and type – about the coconut without even opening it. This data enabled us to predict other factors such as water content, pulp (*mala*), sweetness and total edible quantity.

AM: This was indeed a perfect employment of common sense and science...

PM: Yes. It was due to the accurate information that we had gathered, we were able to introduce the tender coconut with the message of #KnowYourCoconut (KYC), as the packaging included all the information one needed to know before opening the coconut.

AM: Were there any challenges in getting the perfect seal for the grated coconut package?

PM: It is exactly the same as the concept of cork on the wine bottle. The cork expands and seals the coconut, maintaining the freshness. In case of tender coconut, we have provided a small groove on the coconut that is sealed with a sticker for the straw to be inserted. In addition, we have provided a large

Grated Coconut in a Coconut



Grated coconut is packed in a natural coconut shell that maintains the product's freshness. The product has a shelf life of four days.

groove that enables the customers to open the coconut to scoop the pulp.

AM: How many tender and grated coconuts are you currently producing? Are you equipped with the necessary supply of coconuts if the demand shoots up?

PM: We have tied up with vendors in different parts of South India. Presently, we are producing 1,000 coconuts per day, which is just being supplied in 100 outlets in Bengaluru. It will take some time to increase the production to match the demand. And to cater to this demand, we will have to do vendor develop-

ment and work with more farmers to get us the right quality of coconut every time. All these steps are in the strategic pipeline.

AM: Any eco-friendly package product in the pipeline?

PM: Our dream is to move to eco-friendly plastic-free packaging for all our products. But unfortunately, as of now, we don't have a solution, as it is a tough ask to find a suitable and practical alternative. This is an area where we have been working on for years. As a result of which, we have at least two new products with plastic-free packaging now – iD Smart Sip Tender Coconut and iD Grated Coconut in a Coconut.

AM: Have you undertaken any measures to collect and dispose of your post-consumer packaging waste?

PM: We worked with an agency to collect the plastics and dispose them off. Now, there is also a commercial process happening behind all of them. The problem we encountered was that we are not able to pick up the clean package back. So, whichever plastic package we were able to collect through the agency, we disposed it off properly. However, I strongly believe that this is not the way we should look at the overall packaging. We need to find a way where we can reuse God's own packaging and maintain its freshness. I think that is a key challenge today. ■

Smart Sip Tender Coconut



The product comes in a coconut shell with the outer husk removed to reduce the product weight. It has a shelf life of seven days. The packaging includes a paper straw and plastic-free sticker to be peeled by the consumer before drinking. To scrape out the pulp, there's a bigger circular groove that can be cut open with ease. The product is available in three sizes – small, medium and large.

CASE STUDY

Packaging handholds consumers through a brand transition

The WhatPackaging? team came across a packaging innovation that enticed its customers through a seamless brand transition. In conversation with Deepa Naik of Hershey India, WhatPackaging? discovers the thought process and challenges involved in the journey from Brookside Dark to Hershey's Exotic Dark

No brand is formed overnight. It requires a lot of time and money, as spent by brand owners, in carefully nurturing and growing a franchise. And over time, the brand forms an identity in the consumer's mind and becomes their preference. This brand equity accrued over the years is at its most vulnerable when it has to shed its old identity and adopt a new one, which can turn out to be a risky endeavour. Hershey India pulled off one such brand transition while shifting from Brookside Dark to Hershey's Exotic Dark, that too by deploying packaging as a tool to convey the

message.

Day by day, packaging innovations are finding novel ways to get more branding mileage. Packaging has not only become a dominant medium to communicate and intrigue customers, but also, is playing a major role in boosting a brand's growth and helping it reach new audiences. With Hershey's Exotic Dark's smooth brand transition, the company has paved the way for another facet of packaging to be looked upon.

The Brookside brand equity

According to a study by Harris Group, 72%

of millennials would prefer spending their money on experiences rather than on material items. Today, Indian consumers are more inclined to spend on unique and exotic experiences, as compared to a few years ago. Brookside capitalised on this and positioned itself to appeal to the discerning audiences.

To build a premium reputation in the market, Brookside has been bringing alive its proposition by partnering with premium brands to create unique experiences for consumers. One such partnership was with Sula Vineyards. In which, the company hosted a wine pairing session with the sampling of Brookside at its music festival Sula





Fest. "Brookside attracts a customer base of high socio-economic class, aged between 25 and 40 years, living in metropolitan cities. They are highly discerning and experiential in their hobbies and interests, who love life-style experiences such as fine dining, wines, music and travel," says Deepa Naik of Hershey India.

In addition to Sula Fest, to create a buzz in the fashion circle, Brookside collaborated with Times Fashion Week as an exotic chocolate sponsor. The brand had also associated with the TV show Big Boss, engaging the show's participants with a variety of tasks. These initiatives increased brand awareness in the country.

The journey from Brookside to Hershey's
To accelerate Brookside's growth by 2021, Hershey India intends to transition the brand to Hershey's Exotic Dark, says Abhishek

Kumar, general manager marketing, Hershey India.

Kumar explains that over the past three years, Brookside has been able to build a strong franchisee of consumers. However, accelerating growth becomes a key task. So, the company decided to deploy the branding shift. "The strategy is in line with our 'Hershey's First' mantra, which aims at prioritising investments that would foster the growth of our leading brand," he adds.

The strategy will also help the company gain a strong foothold in the premium chocolate's category, with a range of products including Hershey's Kisses, Hershey's Bar and Hershey's Exotic Dark.

The branding is in tandem with Hershey's recent announcement that all three products will be available pan-India through modern and general trade, and eCommerce channels. The Hershey's Exotic Dark choco-

late will comprise of a unique combination of dark cocoa rich and exotic fruit flavours like Blueberry and Acai, Raspberry and Goji or Pomegranate.

Pick, peel and reveal

According to Naik, packaging is one of the best medium to communicate the brand's message. "We had put a lot of thought in planning out the re-brand from Brookside to Hershey's Exotic Dark.

An important challenge given to the packaging team was how to leverage the pack and make the current Brookside franchisee aware of this brand name transition. In this process, we ensure a smooth transition without impacting the current stock in pipeline."

To address this challenge, the Hershey India packaging development team spearheaded by Naik, worked out on a unique proposition of pick, peel and reveal. "Through this packaging innovation, nothing changes for consumers as they still see the same Brookside branding on the pack however they soon discover the new branding through an intriguing strip which when peeled off would reveal the new branding – Hershey's Exotic Dark," says Naik.

The strip over the preformed pouch was not a regular pressure-sensitive label. Instead, it was an integral part of the pouch. In addition, the strip's peelable strength was specifically designed to be satisfactory enough for the end-user to easily open the strip and experience the transition. ■



"For us, the challenge was the newness of technology. Our team overcame all the hurdles of supply chain manufacturing and the turnaround time of execution was amazingly fast. The innovation will target and handhold Brookside's current consumer franchise and provide them a delightful experience as they discover their beloved brand will now be known as Hershey's Exotic Dark."

Deepa Naik, Hershey India

BIG INTERVIEW

Pillai: The impact of Covid-19 can be ascertained based on how fast we can return to normalcy

Rahul Kumar of WhatPackaging? speaks to Jeevaraj Pillai, joint president, packaging and new product development, Uflex, about the impact of the ongoing lockdown on production

What has been the impact of the lockdown on the packaging industry?

Many industries have been hit by the ongoing lockdown. Agencies such as Moody's moderated their growth expectations for India from a rate of 5.3% to 2.5%. However, one would agree that during any crisis, the consumption levels for essential commodities such as food and medicines increase due to fear-mongering and hoarding of stocks. Hence, packaging which caters to these lifeline industries doesn't suffer from a de-growth.

What about the impact on your business?

Since we are an essential service sector, our plant is open albeit with minimal staff. We are trying to support the packaging demands of the FMCG and pharmaceutical sector. There is a surge in demand in the short term however, with constraints on the supply chain side, we are likely to get impacted in the medium and long term, both in domestic and international markets, till such time the pandemic gets eradicated. Thus, the overall impact of the pandemic on our business can be ascertained based on how fast we are able to contain its spread and return to normalcy.

What was your immediate plan of action and how were you able to execute it?

The lockdown was declared in just a matter of a few hours, however, since packaging is an essential service, we were able to obtain necessary permission from the local authority to resume our production process. But with minimal staff and by following all necessary

preventive measures.

Despite the permissions available, the biggest bottleneck, as of now, is the continuity of the supply chain. Though the government has eased the norms to allow movement of goods, there are multiple challenges on raw materials and logistics availability and the cost for movement of goods have become exorbitant.

As there is a possibility that the lockdown might extend, what will happen if these challenges continue to occur?

We see these challenges as a temporary phase since the government has been taking several positive steps to not only prevent the spread of the virus, but also ensure that the supply of essential commodities to consumers remains uninterrupted. For Uflex, the advantage of working across the value chain of flexible packaging helps us to be better placed to overcome this challenge.

What steps have you undertaken for employee's safety at your production units?

At our plant, our staff (barest minimum) is being thermal screened daily. Any employee who has any signs of fever, cold or cough has



Jeevaraj Pillai: There is a surge in demand in the short term

been advised to stay at home. Timely sanitisation measures are also being undertaken and social distancing is being maintained as well. For the rest of the staff not attached to production directly, we are encouraging them to work from home. Even in the last few weeks preceding lockdown, we had enforced measures related to travel restriction and frequent sanitation cycle, across all our premises. In a bid to discourage gatherings, we had suspended all training activities and were encouraging our employees to make use of virtual meetings.



Though the government has allowed movement of goods, there remains multiple challenges in production

How have you managed to be connected with your customers?

What we are facing is an extraordinary situation and such times call for extensive coordination. Especially, when it comes to delivering qualitative output and customer service with the fastest turnaround time, despite the challenges one is facing. Our sales, marketing and leadership teams are chipping in to engage with customers, on a regular basis. We have made use of phone and video calls, and of course, eMails to have uninterrupted internal and external coordination with our partners and customers. We have also been making use of social media tools to get our message across to customers and consumers. We have always been customer centric and our strong lineage has helped us keep our customers assured of our services, during these tough times!

Your take on the government's efforts to fight Covid-19?

In the wake of the outbreak, the government of India has been taking innumerable steps to prevent the spread of the virus and ensure that no one is deprived of access to essential items during the lockdown. This is a gargantuan task and we appreciate the Central and State governments' efforts to ensure it. We are also thankful for being granted the status of 'essential services' to run our packaging plant. However, I would suggest that the government should ease movement and working conditions for units that manufacture

essential goods and let its supply chain be run seamlessly.

How can this happen?

This can only happen if the government disseminates information to local level authorities on the maintenance of the supply chain ecosystem for essential goods, with the same intensity, as it is communicating other measures related to the lockdown. Also, the local authorities need to let the companies decide on the number of workers that would be needed to function at minimum capacity, fulfilling the requirement of the work in a manufacturing unit for effective operations.

What about the shortage of important constituents for packaging?

The whole ecosystem of supply chain in the industry has been disrupted, due to the lockdown. Many businesses that are important in the supply chain of packaging are not being allowed to run or lack the wherewithal to run its plants with the current resources of manpower. This is definitely leading to a shortage of raw materials as well. For example, we are facing a shortage of inks and adhesives that are an important fraction of the final packaging for daily essentials and pharmaceuticals, as those plants that manufacture raw materials are yet to get permission to operate.

So how are you tackling this situation?

We are doing our best with the available

resources, be it human or material. We are in constant touch with other converters and SKUs to figure out a way to source raw materials. Also, as I mentioned earlier, having the advantage of working across the value chain of flexible packaging, we are better placed than others in this industry on availability of raw materials, though we too are unable to run our packaging plant with full capacity.

Do you invest in health care and is there a robust system in place?

Our medical team is available round-the-clock to attend to healthcare concerns of our workers at the units. In case someone needs attention, they are guided to the infirmary and given the necessary medication. We also have our workers and their families covered by medical insurance.

Do you feel the situation has brought the value of packaging into limelight?

Packaging is a core industry that literally binds the world together. Among our clientele, we have leaders from sectors as disparate as pharmaceuticals, FMCG, groceries, F&B and more. At times of need such as these, we will not let our clientele down, and it is important to understand that packaging is truly a bellwether of the economy and of consumption. Therefore, it is important for society to understand that packaging, an aspect that touches every life on Earth, is not a luxury. It is a necessity.

Will this bring a paradigm shift in the way packaging is perceived?

Definitely, the way packaging was perceived earlier especially that of plastic packaging will see a change. Plastic was much demonised earlier. The consumers are worried about picking up fresh produce off the supermarket shelves and are preferring plastic packaging.

Your message to the industry

Society and packaging manufacturers need to work hand-in-hand to ensure that we keep plastic, an integral part of packaging, within the economy and out of the environment. That is the message that should go out from the exemplary handling of this situation, by the packaging industry at large. ■

SHELF IMPACT

How packaging can boost the stock of private labels

As private labels make their presence felt, Deepti Kshirsagar of Tricycle Tribe Creative Ventures tells the WhatPackaging? team how packaging can play a vital role in raising the labels' brand value

Private labels are on a steady rise in the Indian retail scene. Also called in-store brands or in-house brands, they are created by retailers to make a competitive and unique product offering. Their growth is directly linked to the growth of organised retail in India which according to an Indian retail intelligence survey, accounts for less than nine per cent of total sales.

With modern retail gaining its foothold in the country even in tier-two and three towns, private labels hold a bright future in the times to come. Online retailing is also becoming a steadily growing avenue for brands.

The case for private labels

Today private labels are penetrating across categories like apparel, tech, homecare beyond groceries and fresh produce. Deepti Kshirsagar feels, "Private labels have great potential to grow, especially in India, due to its large consumer base who seek value, quality, and freshness over brand names. Consumers who buy loose, unbranded staples and goods see great value in upgrading to private label brands and the segment accounts for a large chunk of the population even today."

Another facet to be looked upon here is that many times national brands are limited by economies of scale, and thus, face challenges in catering to the divergent needs of a country like India with multiple regional preferences. Private labels can step-in here in understanding their diverse region-centric demands of consumers and catering to them in stipulated time.

"Premiumisation of private labels with niche offerings is the next big thing in sectors



Private labels have penetrated across categories like apparel, tech, homecare and fresh produce

such as health, eco-fashion, and so on. From freshly made cold pressed juices, organic food staples, international variety of cheese to extensive line of premium baked goods, with the kind of engaging experience and extensive choices that the private labels are offering, there is no doubt that, we will see consumers turning down brand loyalists soon."

The marketing challenge

Traditionally, private labels mostly try to address niches that are considered infeasible for national brands or are positioned as cheaper alternatives to the top brands. Private labels can address these markets economically as they don't incur any marketing or distribution costs. This predisposition however creates some challenges in creating a brand value around a private label.

According to Kshirsagar, as private labels are comparatively low in price, they are also perceived to be low in quality. And they have to compete with national brands without being on prime time.

Kshirsagar observed, "Initially, when private labels entered the retail scenario, they employed basic, un-engaging packaging, reinforcing the fact that they are low value products. The packaging is boring, simple and it is homogeneous even





Supremia is a premium private label available on eCommerce platforms

for different product categories, to the point that it creates confusion in the minds of buyers. Many times we see that these products adapt the packaging characteristics of leading brands. Thus, trying to imitate the leader brands in the category and pave a way for itself in the market."

As private labels are witnessing a paradigm shift in the marketing strategy, big retail players intend to create private labels that are more than just value for money or mere alternatives to national brands. When the objective is to create a brand that consumers will value and cherish for a long term, the design strategy and brand positioning has to be crafted in a manner which appeals to the consumers.

Branding strategies for private labels

Kshirsagar highlighted a few strategies that can help private labels mitigate the low value perception, grow across multiple product categories and also increase brand awareness among consumers.

A private label is intended to straddle across categories and grow newer ones. Kshirsagar said,

"When TCT attempted the logo design of Tata's Fabsta, a

number of colour variations were created. This enabled flexibility in brand logo usage and avoided monotony in the characteristics of the products. With wholesomeness at the core of the brand, the hero ingredient story became an anchor of the visual architecture across the brand."

Kshirsagar added: "I think private labels have a great advantage over national brands. It can push the boundaries in terms of visual appeal. It can disrupt the market by breaking

the category codes. Research shows that even today, 70% of purchases made are on an impulse. Thus, we used disruptive visual designs in low involvement categories such as *papads* and broke the serious category codes of the growing nacho segment to create enough reasons for a consumer to switch preferences."

According to Kshirsagar, the major challenge private label packaging face is the print run length. TCT addressed these challenges for one such brand, by managing the designs in a way that three SKUs can be printed on one roll. This reduced the need for changeovers and additional makereadies, thereby reducing the printing costs.

Another area that TCT addressed with its packaging design is product awareness. As private label products don't get advertised in mainstream media, it becomes imperative to use packaging as a cross-promotion tool for private labels. TCT deployed this strategy by using the back of the pack to promote the range of products of a brand.

Kshirsagar said in her concluding remarks, "Strategic and thoughtful packaging for private label brands can easily create a strong point of differentiation, and help it stand out from the rest. It can help elevate the perception of the private label to a valued brand and trigger the buying decisions for the consumer." ■

TCT's strategies for Tata's private label brand Fabsta



Fabsta was conceived as a brand that promises great quality and an unforgettable culinary experience bringing families together to celebrate moments of happiness. While making its branding decisions, TCT implemented some key strategies.

SPOTLIGHT

Innovative edible oil PET packaging from BL Agro

Ashish Khandelwal, executive director of Bareilly-based producer of edible oils, BL Agro, explains how it has disrupted the Indian market by venturing into rigid PET packaging and how it has further enhanced its bottle design by lightweighting them



Ashish Khandelwal: We work with a simple objective to manufacture, process and market the purest products possible

Brand brief – BL Agro

BL Agro is a family-owned company founded in 1945. The company produces Bail Kolhu, a mustard oil, and Nourish, which is the brand name for its food products and its refined oil category such as sunflower, rice bran, and soya bean oil.

With eight facilities in the area around Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh, BL Agro runs one packaging unit and two refinery units, where it manages a range of packaging formats such as bottles of 200 millilitres, 500 millilitre and one litre in American boxes; two litres and five litres bottles in wrap-around blanks; 15 litres polyethylene terephthalate (PET) jars – altogether accounting for 140 different SKUs. The company installed three lines of Sidel PET manufacturing machines between 2014 and 2019.

"We work with a simple objective to manufacture, process and market the purest products possible, delivering tastier and healthier food solutions to our consumers. And strongly believing in creating a brand that offers budget-friendly and sustainably-sourced products to customers," says Ashish Khandelwal, executive director of BL Agro.

The shift from poly pouch to PET

According to the ministry of agriculture,

Sidel and BL Agro's combined effort

The handle insertion, the orientation of the bottle for the insertion itself, and the definition of the labelling area on the bottle were all issues that BL Agro and Sidel had to solve hand-in-hand to differentiate the BL Agro packaging options on the retailer shelves.

Giulio Bellanti, Sidel business development director for edible oil in Asia, Oceania and Africa, says, "Together, we were able to take this innovative concept, which offers a real marketing benefit and – via prototyping and extensive testing – turn it into an industrial reality within an operating packaging production line."



With eight facilities in Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh, BL Agro runs one packaging unit and two refinery units

the per capita consumption of edible oil in India stands at 19 kg per year and is currently experiencing a growth of around six per cent annually. Previously, the majority of edible oils in the country were packaged in 15 kg metallic cans, while now this entire segment is shifting towards consumer packs. The first packaging that replaced the cans was the poly pouch, which accounted for around 80–85% of the volumes at one point. Then, the category experienced a move to rigid packaging, specifically to PET bottles.

Speaking about the factors that triggered this shift, Khandelwal explains, "The market is concerned about the environmental characteristics of the poly pouches as they are not recycling-friendly. Meanwhile, PET offers a number of advantages as it is bottle-to-bottle recyclable, it offers lightweighting opportunities that significantly reduce the amount of PET resin used. It also allows great design flexibility, transparency, affordability and especially absolute food safety."

The Bareilly-based manufacturer was among the first producers of edible oils, which recognised the trend towards PET

early on. By using PET, the company wanted to distinguish itself as a brand that focuses on providing consumer experience. And in search of this key factor of brand differentiation, BL Agro started searching for newer container designs. "We always believed that a good usage experience is crucial and that is why we ventured into PET packaging way back in 1999," says Pradeep Hada, who is in charge of sales and marketing for BL Agro.

BL Agro wanted something different from what was available on the market at that time, and hence, it experimented with disruptive packaging designs. "We were one of the first companies in India to introduce two litres and five litres bottles with a handle. At that time, PET bottles were still considered a breakthrough in India, attracting end users due to their innovation component and ideally presenting high quality products thanks to their transparency – both very important points for us. When we started working on what became our two litres and five litres bottle, Sidel proposed some creative and disruptive concepts to us. We thus found a design that was quite unique and iconic," says Hada.

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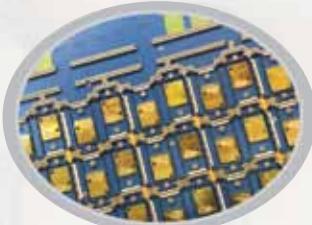
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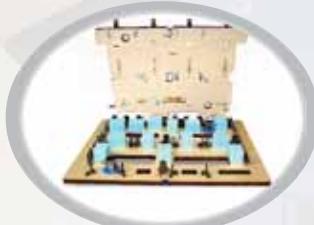
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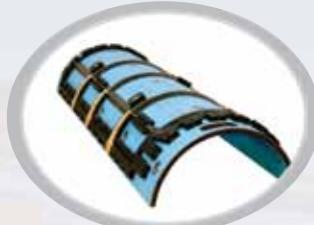
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BL Agro approached Sidel to help them differentiate their bottle designs while saving resources and raw material and still being able to address the demand

The challenges

Throughout the different periods of its development, BL Agro approached global manufacturer of packaging equipment for liquids, Sidel, to help them differentiate their bottle designs while saving resources and raw material and still being able to address the growing market demand with budget-friendly products.

The result of the thorough packaging development process with Sidel was a PET bottle for edible oil with a handle and a triangular design – a unique approach to this type of product. "Producing such a PET bottle with a handle is no easy feat; it was very difficult to find suppliers who were confident to take on this challenge. The packaging team at Sidel was the only one who agreed to do a prototyping of the bottle, including the two notches for the handle," highlights Khandelwal.

To successfully overcome the twofold challenge, encompassing the PET bottle shape and the handle's specificity, Sidel's full set of packaging R&D capabilities was needed. Khandelwal explains,

"We appreciated the initial design a lot; however, it was quite difficult to see the packaging design become a reality because the bottle is neither square nor round. To add complexity, it also has notches that need to be completely formed, so that the handle insertion can take place. On the other hand, the notches cannot be too deep, because the handle would come off."

"In the second step of the execution, we were sure that the proposed designs would also be executed well when it came to blowing the bottles. After all, this is what Sidel is internationally known for. In the end, we achieved an extremely precise blowing combined with exact notch positioning and formations," says Khandelwal.

Lightweighting the bottles

Besides leveraging the marketing advantage and the brand differentiation, the edible oil company also wanted to significantly lightweight its PET bottles. "Usually, a two litres bottle with a handle weighs around 70g. By carefully reviewing the container design, we achieved a

weight reduction of approximately 21% and we are processing a 55 g bottle today," says Khandelwal.

He adds, "The successive lightweighting steps have always been done without compromising the bottle's top load characteristics and other mechanical requirements for transportation and transit.

The bottle's stability and resistance throughout the supply chain have been tested and validated by Sidel's packaging experts. The result was an optimised large format bottle that facilitates the handling, while fully protecting the product inside."

Similar to the two litres bottle, the five litres format was also lightweighted – with a reduction from 130 g to 110 g, excluding the handle. These weight reductions have a substantial sustainability impact and translate to more than 650 tonnes of PET saved per year, claims BL Agro. "These developments also clearly mark significant savings in terms of material costs in a highly competitive edible oil market, particularly in India," concludes Khandelwal.■

Debonding, Compatibility & New Designs to Support Circular Economy Initiatives for Plastic Waste Management in India

At a recently concluded MSMECII Chamber Of Commerce Event, Henkel IMEA's Business Director for Packaging Adhesives, Sunil Kumar; presented Henkel's initiatives on Circular Economy.

The event was an excellent opportunity to exchange views with key government stakeholders on India's vision for Plastic Waste Management and Circular Economy.

For more information on Henkel's sustainability initiatives please visit: www.henkel-adhesives.com



NEWS

ShrinathFlexipack to set up Rs 114-cr factory in Abu Dhabi

By Abhishek Muralidharan

Telangana-based manufacturer of plastic packaging materials, ShrinathFlexipack, has finalised an agreement to invest Rs 114.06-crore on a greenfield site within Khalifa Industrial Zone's (KIZAD) Polymers Park in Abu Dhabi.

This will be the company's first factory in the Middle East and it will enable the company to serve its clients in the region, while also enabling it to expand into African and European markets.

Ashish Malani, CEO, ShrinathFlexipack, said, "We anticipate great success in Abu Dhabi, and we appreciate KIZAD's sup-



The factory is set to produce up to 30,000 MT plastic goods per annum

port in helping us set up and connect to its integrated polymer-centric logistics hub. Our presence here, emphasises our determination to strengthen and expand our offerings and ensure our business breaks into new markets."

The factory is expected to produce up to 30,000 metric tonnes of plastic goods per annum. It is

also set to employ modern European extrusion lines to produce stretch and cling films.

According to Khalid Al Marzooqi, commercial director at KIZAD, its multimodal connectivity including Abu Dhabi Ports' flagship deep-water port, Khalifa Port, will be a boon for ShrinathFlexipack, which plans to export and import out of Abu Dhabi.

MTL to invest over Rs 100 cr on a new Silvassa plant

By Aultrin Vijay

Manjushree Technopack (MTL) has committed to invest more than Rs 100-crore to set-up a new greenfield plant in Silvassa, bordering the state of Gujarat. With a production capacity of 10,000 MTPA, the plant will cater to FMCG, lubricants, and agrochemicals sectors.

Sanjay Kapote, CEO at MTL, said, "West India will play a critical role in our growth and we are estimating 10% of MTL's business coming from this



Kapote with team Manjushree at the new factory

region. With the launch of the new plant at Silvassa, we will bolster our relationship with scores of brands who are active in the region. Like Silvassa, we aim to be present in more manufacturing hubs across the country in the

next four years as part of our growth strategy."

According to Kapote, the plant is a strategic investment expected to help forge relationships with existing customers and pave the way for acquiring new customers.

FSSAI to open 10 offices across India

By Abhishek Muralidharan

FSSAI has decided to set up six new branch offices, four new import offices and two new food laboratories in the country. With this, FSSAI will have four regional offices in New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, 12 branch offices and six import offices. In addition, it will have four national food laboratories at Kolkata, Ghaziabad (Delhi-NCR), Mumbai JNPT and Chennai and two food laboratories at Sanauli and Raxaul on Indo-Nepal border.

FSSAI's new branch offices will be in Bhopal, Chandigarh, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Visakhapatnam and Hyderabad and the new import offices will be at Attari, Kandla, Raxaul and Krishnapatnam. It plans to set up two new food laboratories at Mumbai JNPT and Chennai. Built-up space for the purpose is being taken on long-term lease from Chennai and JNPT

Mumbai port authorities.

FSSAI has recently upgraded its food laboratory at Ghaziabad. This is being successfully run on PPP-mode now. Work on upgradation of Kolkata food laboratory is in advanced stage and will soon be completed. FSSAI also plans to strengthen its laboratory extension centres at Sanauli and Raxaul.

While inaugurating the north regional office of FSSAI at Ghaziabad, chairperson Rita Teotaia said the expansion of the network is to ensure that FSSAI has a pan-India presence. "This would help FSSAI strengthen its inspection and enforcement activities and have better control of imported food. Location of new offices has been decided after taking into account the workload of food imports and central licensing at various places. The work on identification of space for new offices has been initiated," she said.



Pawan Agarwal and Rita Teotaia of FSSAI

NEWS

Tecnocap announces Indian JV Tecnocap Oriental

By Dibyajyoti Sarma

Italy-headquartered Tecnocap, a global player of metal packaging, has announced its entry into India with a joint venture called Tecnocap Oriental. The company recently signed an agreement towards this with the Indian packaging producer Oricon Enterprise.

Tecnocap develops and manufactures functional, attractive and reliable metal closures, aluminium aerosol cans and bottles, enabling worldwide customers to build their brands, to protect the integrity of their products and guarantee the safety of consumers.

According to the



Morlicchio: The JV marks our entry into the Indian market

agreement, the two partner companies have set up the Tecnocap Oriental based in Mumbai.

Tecnocap will have the control of 75% of the share capital through the acquisition of the metal lug business of the Indian partner Oricon, which will hold the remaining 25% of the company.

"This joint venture marks our full entry into the Indian and Far Eastern markets and represents a key stage in our international growth strategy, achieved through business diversification and expansion towards high growth markets," Michelangelo Morlicchio chief executive, shareholder and founder of Tecnocap said.

"Beyond seizing the great opportunities for market growth, this alliance gives us the chance to exploit mutual synergies to operate successfully thanks to the highest quality products, services and logistics," he added.

HUL completes merger of GSK Consumer Healthcare

By WhatPackaging Team

Hindustan Unilever has announced that it has completed the merger of GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare. This merger was first announced on 3 December 2018.

The merger has been on the basis of an exchange ratio of 4.39 HUL shares for each GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare share. The approvals have now been secured. In addition, the board of



HUL acquired the Horlicks brand for Rs 3,045-crore

directors of HUL have approved the acquiring the Horlicks brand for India from GSK for a consideration of Rs 3,045-crore. This was an option available in the original agreement made between Unilever and GSK. The other brands which were under the

ownership of GSKCH like Boost, Maltova and Viva come to HUL's brand portfolio by virtue of the merger.

HUL's strategy to build a sustainable and profitable Foods and Refreshment (F&R) business in India is accelerated by this deal. Horlicks, with a volume share of close to 50 per cent, was introduced to India in the 1930s. Through a statement GSK reinstated that India remains an important growth market.

IN BRIEF Honours

Uflex was recognised with six awards, including three golds and three silvers at the prestigious Flexible Packaging Awards 2020 hosted by Flexible Packaging Association (FPA), in USA. The company won two golds and one silver for the packaging of FlexiTube for Bio Creative Labs (USA); and one gold for its 4D bags with handle. While, it won silvers for Flex Asclepius PCR-based BOPET films and FlexPET F-STF ultra soft super durable BOPET film. The brick-shaped 4D bags with handle comprise a re-closable option, which can stand or lie on the belly. The package functions as flexi-cartons. All six panels of the bag are printed and can be made of different substrates.



Bijendra Sharma, managing director, **BHS Corrugated**, was honoured with the CEO of the Year award at the annual ET Now Awards. Sharma said, "We are helping packagers to produce high quality corrugated boxes which is directly contributing towards reduction of plastic in packaging. The kraft paper used to produce corrugated box is also made from recycled waste paper and hence indirectly contributing towards green environment."

Manjushree Technopack was listed as one of India's Growth Champions in 2020 by The Economic Times and Germany-based Statista. The ranking is an acknowledgement for the contributions of companies paving the way for others to excel in a challenging economic environment. Vimal Kedia, chairman & MD of Manjushree Technopack, said, "Being one India's Growth Champion is a testament of our continuous advancement in packaging innovations."



Gandhi Automations received two awards for automation at separate events held in Mumbai and Jaipur. It received Automation Industry Leader Award and Robotics/Automation Supplier of the Year Award. The awards were for the company's automation services for the logistics and supply chain industry.



Coca-Cola goes hyper-local with labels in Bengali

By Dibyajyoti Sarma

Coca-Cola India has introduced packaging labels in Bengali language for all beverages across its portfolio, which includes Coke, Sprite, Thums Up, Maaza, Fanta, Limca, Kinley, and Minute Maid in West Bengal. The company said that each brand will devise a hyper-local campaign to bring out an on-ground experience for consumers in the state.

T Krishnakumar – president, Coca-Cola India and South West Asia, said, "West Bengal is a vital part of our India story, and we will continue to build for the state by customising our brand and product propositions with an improved understanding of the local consumers' consumption patterns and desires."

The company claims that West Bengal is the first Indian state where the entire portfolio and marketing initiatives of Coca-Cola's brands have been hyper-localised to resonate with local language and suit consumer preferences.

"West Bengal has and always will remain close to our hearts and with this initiative, we aim to showcase our gratitude by celebrating the unique, diverse culture of Bengal with our differentiated offerings and continued investment. We are initiating this as a pilot in



(l-r) T Krishnakumar and Amjad announce the launch

West Bengal and plan to extend this nationally with local execution in other states," added Krishnakumar.

According to Shehnaz Gill, senior vice president - operations, Coca-Cola India, the hyper-local strategy will reflect in the marketing mix, packaging, advertising, social media activations and a range of on-ground events across the portfolio. "This will be further anchored in a strong marketing framework to create an edge while keeping the consumers' sensibilities at the forefront of all decisions," said Gill.

Meanwhile, following successful Unnati interventions in Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, Coca-

Cola India on 13 February launched Unnati Litchi in Bihar together with DeHaat, National Research Centre on Litchi (NRCL), and Kedia Fresh.

The initiative is aimed at enhancing efficiency of the agri value chain and farmers' capability building on high-density plantation, farmer training for good agriculture practices and creation of demo orchards through appropriate technology interventions.

The initial phase of this initiative has been launched across Muzaffarpur, Samastipur and Vaishali districts of Bihar, which are the major hubs for litchi cultivation in the state.

Unnati aims at educating and training more than 80,000 farmers in revitalising farms spanning over 3,000 acres.



The initiative has been launched across the state of Bihar

HCCB collects 30,000 kg plastics with new initiative



By Dibyajyoti Sarma

Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB) has helped collect more than 30,000 kg of plastics under its *Plastic Lao, Thaila Pao* campaign, which was launched in October 2019.

In partnership with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and several other NGOs and local municipalities, the company is now planning to double the number of cities for the campaign during 2020.

In the first phase, the campaign helped HCCB collect plastic waste from nine locations across seven cities that included New Delhi, Varanasi, Ghaziabad, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Hyderabad and Kolkata. The second phase will kick off in Goa, Jodhpur, Aurangabad, Mumbai and Chennai.

The *Plastic Lao, Thaila Pao* campaign is

designed as a barter system, in which people are given one recycled cloth bag at its mini material recovery stalls for each set of 10 PET bottles, 10 pieces of mixed plastic products, 20 pieces of multi-layered plastics, (of at least 100 gms and above), 20 small mixed plastic products or 15 pieces of plastic bags (of normal size of 1-2 kg carrying capacity).

In an effort to raise awareness against the use of single-use plastic and encourage the use of sustainable materials, HCCB had distributed 22,000 cotton bags at its experience centres, which were set up in four of its factories in Ameenpur, Siliguri, Chittoor and Gobles earlier this year.

So far, the FMCG major has collected and recycled more than 30,000 MT of plastic waste.

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NEWS

NID to create sustainable eCommerce packaging

By WhatPackaging Team

USA-based Georgia Southern University is partnering with the National Institute of Design (NID), along with some of the largest eCommerce companies in India to develop alternatives for the packaging of online retail shopping.

According to Georgia Southern University, the objective of the partnership is to generate ideas and prototypes for innovative and sustainable packaging solutions for the eCommerce industry and to design sustainable packaging, keeping in mind the challenges faced in transporting goods from store to home.



Georgia Southern's Dominique Halaby with NID students

Dominique Halaby, director of Georgia Southern's FabLab and Business Innovation Group, and Santanu Majumdar, associate professor of graphic design, recently travelled to India to conduct a two-week workshop with NID students on creating

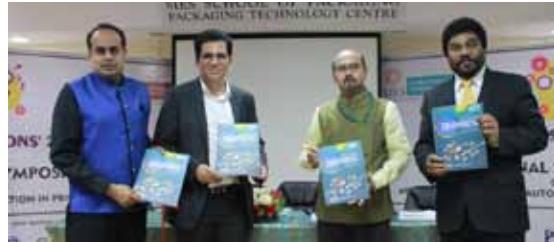
sustainable eCommerce packaging, during which, students from NID worked in various areas to understand the process, including supply chain management to human interaction with eCommerce packaging, in addition to the challenges faced at every touch point.

SIES symposium on AI and automation in packaging

By Abhishek Muralidharan

The second edition of National Symposium held under Impressions, the annual event of SIES Graduate School of Technology's Printing and Packaging department (PPT) shed light on the topic 'AI and automation in printing and packaging' on 29 February.

The forum discussed the domains related to IoT, automation and AI that can be integrated with printing and packaging. The event also marked



The event marked the release of the magazine Adviteeya

the release of the PPT department's half-yearly magazine Adviteeya.

Vivek Kapoor, director, Creative Labels, stated that AI and automation will become indispensable in the industry in the

future. The guest of honour Ajay Mehta, MD, SMI Coated Products, mentioned about the importance of staying abreast of the latest technologies and giving back to the society.

IN BRIEF Launches

Processing and pack-



aging machine manufacturer for pharmaceutical solids, **Romaco**, has introduced its Noack Unity 600 blister packaging line – a high speed machine for medium to large batch sizes. Unity 600 functions as a monobloc transfer system, which is designed for blister formats arranged crosswise to the running direction. The machine boasts of a maximum output of 600 blisters and 400 cartons per minute. The modular system concept of the packaging line consists of a blister machine with rotary sealing and a continuous motion cartoner. Romaco claims that the packaging line has a small footprint and can also be delivered in a carbon-neutral version



Germany-based inline vision quality control solution provider, **Laetus**, has introduced a multifaceted blister pack-

aging control solution with Polyphem wt – a colour camera system for monitoring blister machines online. According to Laetus, Polyphem offers a range of options to control blister packaging for applications such as coloured tablets, capsules, dragees, syringes and vials or applicators. Laetus has installed over 2,300 Polyphem wt systems across the world



Finland-headquartered pulp and paper manufacturing company **Stora Enso** has replaced plastic packaging with an eco-friendly solution and launched a new cardboard packaging box designed for pellets. The new premium box format offers clear advantages for households when it comes to transporting and storing the pellets. In the Packaging Solutions Division, specialists were involved in designing and supplying the new packaging materials for the Wood Products Division, while the graphic design of the box was developed by the Finnish branding and design agency Aune Creative. The launch will first focus on the Italian market, which is the largest European market for pellets for private households. Further customer feedback will be collected over the next two years, after which the product will gradually become available on other markets as well.

WP? Survey

Should single-use plastics be banned with immediate effect?

46%

Strongly agree

13%

Tend to agree

38%

Disagree

3%

Don't know

Time to move away from a single to triple bottom-line mindset

DQS India's Ganesh Kumar says the current Covid-19 situation is an opportunity to create a greener environment

In the midst of the setbacks caused by Covid-19, there exist some positives on the environment and ecological front. The level of toxic air pollutants is dropping, and the Himalayas, after 30 years, are visible from 200 miles away. The air quality in New Delhi, recently considered as one of the most polluted cities in the world, has also dropped to satisfactory levels.

But will this sustain once lockdown is relaxed?

According to a report by *The Economist*, a similar pattern unfolded during the global financial crisis of 2007–09, when the worldwide CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels and cement production dropped by 1.4% in 2009.

As the chart shows, in 2010, CO₂ emissions grew again by 5.8%–5.9% – faster than it grew since 2003. And by the end of the year, annual emissions were greater than it was in the past.

So, will the emission pattern go to pre-Covid-19 levels or can we make the world greener?

According to Kumar, if social distancing and work from home becomes a norm, we can think of a new scenario where people will value a cleaner and greener tomorrow.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has shown us that it is possible to make transformative changes rapidly. We are in a different economic situation,

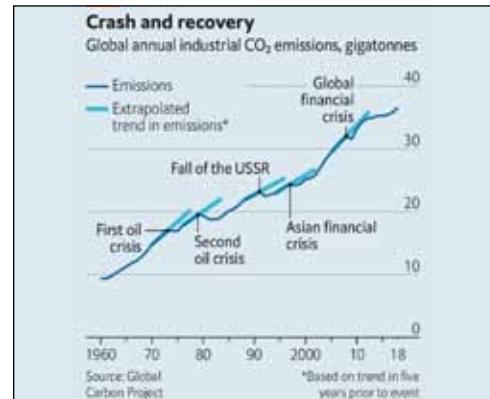


Image credits: The Economist

which we didn't even dream of until last month. Thus, these circumstances must be utilised to usher in a global systemic change," says Kumar.

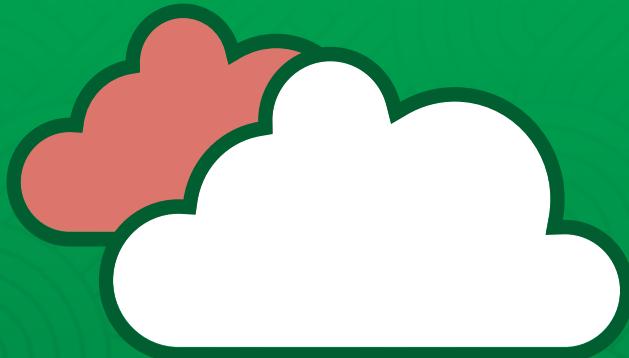
Kumar states that now is the time to move away from a single bottom-line mindset (profit) to triple bottom-line mindset (profit, planet and people).

"This is an opportunity to examine our flaws and build a brighter future. Let's begin making an investment in resilience, shared prosperity, wellness, and planetary fitness. For a substantial amount of time, we have been indulging in activities that have exceeded our natural limits. Now, is the time to strive for something new," says Kumar.

"As Albert Einstein said – The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but expecting different results. Now is the time to do things differently." Kumar concludes.

Three tips for better environment

- As a responsible business community, printing and packaging converters should consider alternate material choices and its impact on the environment. Converters should also integrate projects such as waste recycling, chemical effluent treatment, reducing waste to landfill. Simple process improvements such as colour management and wastage reduction should be initiated to reduce business impact on the environment.
- It is the right time to phase out fossil fuels and make efforts to switch to renewable energy technologies. Most of which are now globally available and have also proven to be more economical than fossil fuels in many cases. Government subsidies should also support those opting for renewable energy.
- The pandemic is causing a massive rethink in the entire food supply chain starting from the way we produce to the way we eat. Regenerative agriculture is recommended by sustainable agriculture specialists as it helps to sequester carbon in the soil at a rate that is enough to reverse the climate crisis. The government is planning for separate eco labels, which can create awareness among customers on the externality effects of what they consume.



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