

P3

Paper Print Packaging

» **Druckspiegel**

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**Event Special
interpack 2026**

**Women in Packaging
Strong Voices all Over the World**

Thermal Papers

Lecta Expands its Termax Range

Scotch Whisky Sector

SmartCask™ From CCL Label

Editorial

However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results.

(Sir Winston Churchill (1874 - 1965), British statesman)

Dear readers!

Interpack in May (Düsseldorf, Germany) has the potential to highlight positive aspects. While newspaper printing, commercial printing, graphic papers, and many other sectors are struggling, and the paper and printing industry in general is grappling with the current economic and geopolitical situation, the packaging market is holding its own and actually generating growth! For example, a report published by Smithers ("The Future of Moulded Pulp Packaging to 2030") predicts that global demand for molded pulp packaging will increase from US\$4.7 billion (estimated value for 2026) to US\$5.5 billion by 2030. However, the packaging industry is also under considerable pressure to transform. Competitiveness requires a clear strategic vision and investment. But that money still needs to be earned – a challenge given the current situation: rising costs, raw material crises, energy supply issues, labor shortages, uncertain supply chains burdened by fluctuating tariffs, and the expenses associated with sustainability requirements and other regulations. Oh yes: And how exactly can we use all this AI stuff?

The answers to pressing questions are not trivial. Process excellence, complex risk assessment, resilience improvements – all of this requires time, meticulous planning, highly qualified personnel, and financial infrastructure. Nevertheless, the outlook is positive. Because it's not just interpack that wants to emphatically demonstrate: This is an industry where there's still money to be made.

Have a great read & stay safe!


Your



AUTHOR: SBR

AI-Ready in the Print Industry



 THE USE OF AI TO ANALYSE DATA FROM PRINT PRODUCTION EQUIPMENT AND ERP SYSTEMS CAN TRANSFORM BUSINESS INSIGHT.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping the printing industry, offering a wide range of tools that boost productivity, unlock smarter customer insights, and enhance creativity across converter operations. For label and packaging converters, it's no longer a question of whether to adopt AI tools, but when. Michael Matthews, Product Manager – DP Colour, Domino Printing Sciences, explores AI adoption within label and packaging businesses today and provides guidance for long-term AI success.

AI adoption accelerates

According to Alliance Insights' ["AI Adoption in the Print Industry"](#) report, 85% of US print providers see AI as critical for competitiveness. However, while many print businesses are taking their first steps into AI in everyday operations, a significant 42% remain unsure where to start.

The potential is significant: in addition to intelligent automation and optimisation via machine learning, the use of AI to analyse data from print production equipment and ERP systems can transform business insight. From identifying customer order cycles, assessing ink and substrate reorder patterns, to monitoring equipment efficiency and maintenance intervals, AI can provide real-time insight to support smarter decisions.

Expanding existing intelligent automation

Many converters are, in fact, already using AI on the shop floor, thanks to the integration of machine-learning-based intelligent automation into [modern press workflows](#). Using AI to automate repetitive pre-press tasks, scheduling, and job routing improves operational efficiency while freeing operators to focus on tasks that deliver greater value.

In addition, the use of intelligent automation in layout optimisation and colour management modules, as well

as real-time RIP, is enabling variable-data personalisation at scale without slowing production transforming competitive advantage. AI-driven visual quality inspection to detect errors before they affect output, and predictive maintenance prompts also offer significant benefits – including less waste, fewer reprints, and greater reliability. To date, however, just 10% of converters claim to have explored these tools.

Preparing for AI

Given the diverse opportunities presented by AI technologies, it is important to understand how best to progress. AI is not a single, ready-made solution that delivers instant results, but rather a set of specialised tools and systems that require specific conditions to deliver maximum benefit to converters.

To unlock wide-reaching benefits, converters need to prioritise, plan, and coordinate. Start by assessing where AI could add the most value and focus on a priority AI use case, such as automating pre-press tasks, before scaling across the business.

Accurate data

AI provides the opportunity create a data-driven ecosystem where every stage of the customer journey and printing process is optimised for speed, accuracy, and sustainability. As such, data quality is paramount. Data needs to be clean, accessible, and well structured, which means it is important to assess the data management capabilities of current systems, including data capture and intelligent automation tools.

To maximise the benefits of AI, any new printing and ancillary equipment should be data-rich, offering strong, future-proof data capture and reporting capabilities to feed machine learning and AI models.

Upskill your business

Humans will continue to play a key role in AI-enabled print operations. Leaders in AI adoption actively maintain human oversight of AI processes, with more than half (56%) of the print businesses surveyed ensuring that human team members check and verify all AI functions. While AI analysis can supply insights and predictions to support decision-making, humans are needed to interpret the results in the wider business context and making informed decisions.

To do this effectively, converts will need to build capability across several skill areas. Data literacy is increasingly valuable, enabling teams to understand and validate machine-generated insights. Strong workflow knowledge also remains important, helping operators to understand how AI fits into pre-press, colour, and production processes. As AI-enabled tools become more common, basic familiarity with how machine learning works and what its limitations are will support confident adoption.

In addition, problem-solving, colour and print-quality expertise, and digital connectivity skills will all play a role in ensuring AI systems deliver reliable, real-world value. With 23% of print businesses actively hiring for AI skills, there is strong recognition that the right people, with the right skills, are key to both driving change and managing AI enabled processes.

The future: connected factories

AI will continue to develop, creating faster, smarter, and more efficient workflows that will drive the creation of connected factories. Press-agnostic data platforms will unlock insights across the business, from customer purchasing patterns and equipment utilisation to preventative maintenance and material use, enabling smarter business decisions.

Now is the time for converters to prepare for utilising AI for long-term business success. In addition to strengthening data quality, enhancing connectivity across equipment and systems, and developing skills in data literacy, workflow understanding and AI-enabled decision making will all be critical. With the right capabilities in place – and support from a trusted and knowledgeable [digital printing supplier](#) – converters can

not only adopt AI, they can turn it into a sustained competitive advantage, providing a robust foundation for future success.



 MICHAEL MATTHEWS, DOMINO PRINTING SCIENCES.

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 EDITOR: SBR

 IMAGES: ADOBE STOCK [1], DOMINO [2]

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www.p3-news.com

www.blattundfeder.at

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Rate Card applicable from January 1st 2025.

No. of issues 2025: 4 digital issues including bio-fibre magazine plus bi-weekly newsletter and online access to all articles from our magazines. The minimum duration of the subscription is one year. This period is automatically extended by a further year, unless the contract is terminated in writing with three months' prior notice to the end of a subscription year. For subscriptions and prices please visit our websites or contact our reader service.

Bank account: N26 Bank GmbH

IBAN: DE15 1001 1001 2747 2327 68

BIC: NTSBDEB1XXX

Publisher: Verlag Blatt & Feder

Managing Director: Stefan Breitenfeld

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VAT ID: ATU 6350 1311

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The Annunciation



Albert Bouts (1451/55 - 1549): The Annunciation (ca. 1480). Oil on wood, 75.2 x 69 x 8.5 cm. Bequest of John L. Severance 1942.635. Cleveland Museum of Art.

The scene of the Annunciation to Mary that she will give birth to Christ is depicted here as a contemporary scene that may have been familiar to any viewer at the end of the 1400s. Mary is portrayed as an ordinary but wealthy woman who is interrupted by the Archangel Gabriel as she reads a book of hours. This type of book was enormously popular in the late Middle Ages as a prayer and devotional book, particularly among the wealthy, literate nobility, and city aristocracy.

<https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1942.635>

Ecoalf and Smurfit Westrock Design Boutique From Corrugated Cardboard and Paper



THE MINIMALIST INTERIOR DESIGN LEAVES ROOM FOR THE MERCHANDISE ON OFFER.

Sustainable lifestyle brand Ecoalf, in collaboration with Smurfit Westrock, the world's largest manufacturer of paper-based packaging, has opened its first store where the walls, fitting rooms, shelves, and tables are all made from corrugated cardboard and paper. The project in San Sebastián, Spain, is a milestone in retail, as it integrates recyclable materials into the physical structure. The use of corrugated cardboard and paper for furniture also offers high resistance to vertical compression and bending, ensuring the circularity of natural resources.

All furniture was designed and produced at the Smurfit Westrock plant in Sorpel, Portugal. The raw materials used for this project are FSC and PEFC certified. They come from Smurfit Westrock's forests in southern France and were processed into paper at the French paper mill Cellulose du Pin.

The consistently sustainable Ecoalf strategy

Founded in 2009, the company's vision is to end the exploitation of the planet's natural resources to ensure the needs of future generations. Since then, Ecoalf has been developing a new generation of recycled products that stand for high-quality design and consistent quality.

Over the past 15 years, innovation, research, and development have enabled the creation of more than 600 new recycled materials. This has involved recycling over 350 million plastic bottles, as well as tons of discarded fishing nets, used tires, post-industrial cotton, and wool. This has resulted in the saving of more than 54 billion liters of water, the restoration of over 50,000 m² of land with regenerative cotton, and the avoidance of 12,500 tons of CO₂ emissions. Ecoalf has committed to becoming emission-free by 2030.

For every item sold bearing the title "Because there is no planet B®," 10% of the proceeds are donated to the Ecoalf Foundation to support the expansion of the project. Ecoalf has been a member of the B Corp community since 2018, a global network of certified companies that have chosen to prioritize social responsibility, environmental protection, and transparency over profit maximization. In 2022, Ecoalf was recognized as "Best for the World," placing it among the top 5% of the 5,000 best B Corps worldwide.

"We are very proud to have opened our first store with walls, changing rooms, shelves, and tables made from corrugated cardboard and paper. This would not have been possible without our partner Smurfit Westrock," said Javier Goyeneche, founder and president of Ecoalf. "The collaboration with Ecoalf underscores Smurfit Westrock's commitment to offering sustainable and innovative solutions for customers, consistently focused on a responsible and environmentally friendly production model," explained Ignacio Sevillano, CEO of Smurfit Westrock for Spain, Portugal, and Morocco.



 THE ECOALF STORE IN SAN SEBASTIÁN.

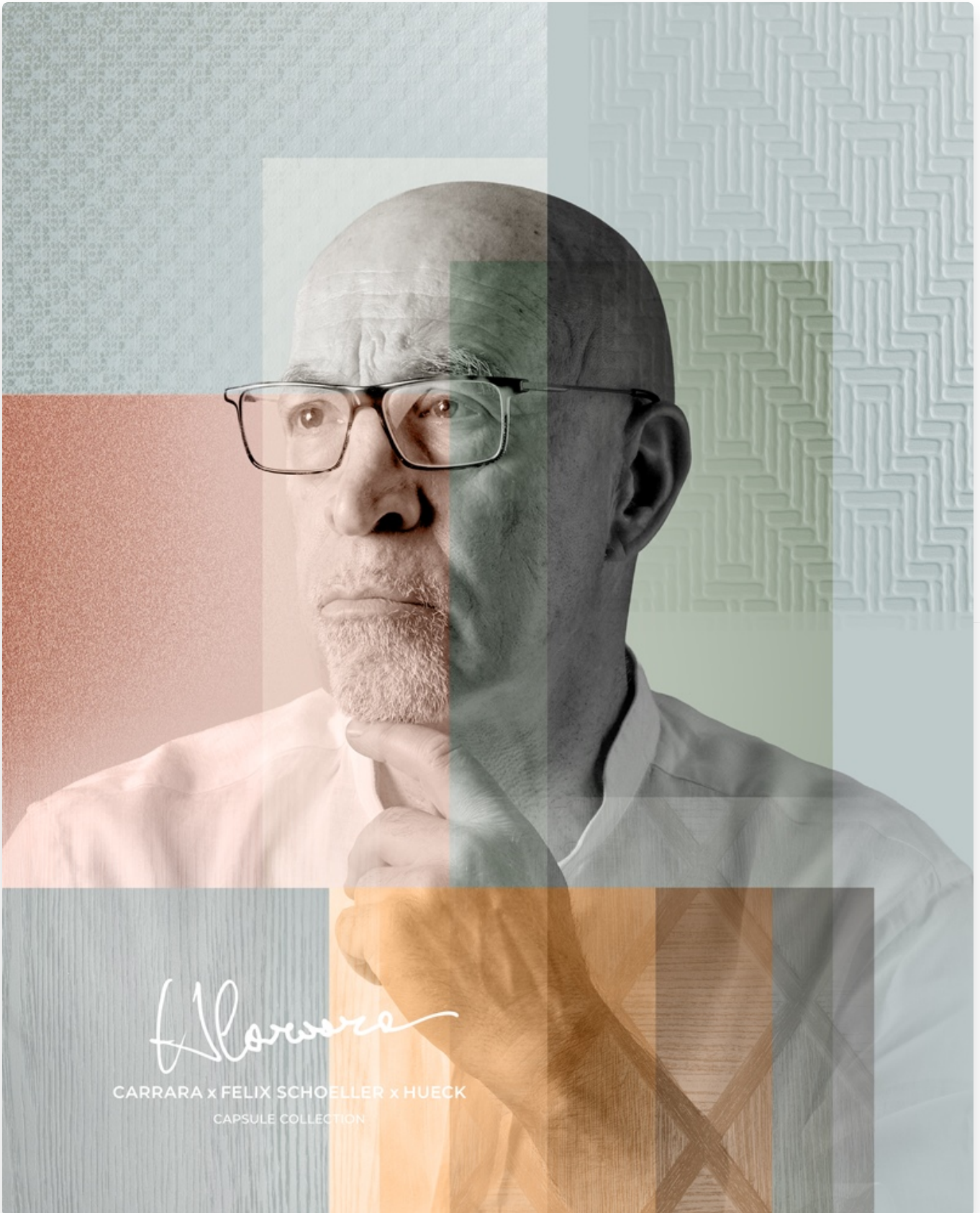


 RECYCLABLE MATERIALS WERE INTEGRATED INTO THE PHYSICAL CONSTRUCTION.

 EDITOR: SBR

 IMAGES: PABLO BORDASS

Felix Schoeller, Carrara and Hueck Redefine Surface Design Through Material Intelligence



Carrara
CARRARA x FELIX SCHOELLER x HUECK
CAPSULE COLLECTION

📌 CAPSULE COLLECTION: FELIX SCHOELLER, CARRARA, AND HUECK TRANSLATE THIS APPROACH INTO A NEW CAPSULE COLLECTION, A CURATED MATERIAL SYSTEM IN WHICH COLOR, TEXTURE, AND LIGHT INTERACT TO REVEAL A NEW DEPTH OF SURFACE EXPERIENCE.

The decorative surfaces industry is at an inflection point. At a time when AI-generated aesthetics often lack material roots, three leaders in their respective fields – Felix Schoeller, Alessandro Carrara, and Hueck – have chosen to go a step further, combining their craftsmanship to create surfaces with emotional and cultural depth. This quality is not achieved by chance, but through a precisely coordinated design process for each

surface, in which material, color, and texture are deliberately harmonised.

Felix Schoeller, Carrara, and Hueck translate this approach into a new Capsule Collection, a curated material system in which color, texture, and light interact to reveal a new depth of surface experience. The Capsule Collection is a tangible outcome of the "Connex – Together for Surfaces of the Future" initiative, demonstrating how close collaboration between a designer, a paper manufacturer, and a texture specialist creates surfaces with unprecedented emotional and technical depth.

The collection is driven by the vision of renowned designer Alessandro Carrara, whose "CORE and SKIN" philosophy states that true design begins with the material, not a digital image. While traditional models often chase fleeting viral trends, the Capsule Collection focuses on material intelligence – the invisible mastery required to orchestrate how light, color, and texture interact to create atmosphere.

"Over time, I have learned to capture the soul of natural materials, isolating and refining details: a proportion, a shadow line, a harmony," says designer Alessandro Carrara. "By proposing textures that allow light to interact with the surface, we create the most natural tactile and visual effect possible."

The Capsule Collection comprises 19 colors and seven structures, developed as a consistent material system for applications in interior architecture and furniture design. The focus is not on individual variants, but on the intentional interplay between color and structure: each color is designed to harmonise with every structure, enabling a high degree of design coherence across all combinations.

"We provide guidance and future security in an increasingly volatile market. With the new co-created Capsule Collection, we demonstrate how curated color management, moving from fleeting trends to market-ready solutions, creates a lasting design language that offers our B2B partners a clear competitive advantage," says Philipp Keisker, Head of Innovation at Felix Schoeller.

The hidden makers behind the Capsule Collection

What makes this partnership unique is that the collection was not merely manufactured after being designed; it was designed through manufacturing. Alessandro Carrara provides the design vision and the tactical understanding of how surfaces must perform in real-world environments. Felix Schoeller acts as the enabler of color, providing the foundational decorative base papers that ensure ink absorption and color fidelity are perfectly balanced under industrial pressure. Hueck contributes world-class expertise in press plate technology, translating the design intent into micron-precise physical relief that determines how a surface catches the light and responds to the touch. The result is a unique collection created by those who work behind the surface, where material knowledge, human emotion, and industrial craftsmanship converge.

"Surface is language, and structure is its physical relief," says Max Thölen, Product Manager at Hueck. "By developing color, paper, and texture in concert, we have created a material system in which structures such as 'Grace' or 'Milos' do not merely mimic nature, but orchestrate a sophisticated interplay of light and shadow that remains consistent even at an industrial scale."

The launch of the Capsule Collection marks the beginning of a shared strategic horizon. Felix Schoeller and their partners are committed to acting as enablers of integrated innovation, providing solutions that empower clients to meet the challenges of tomorrow with fast, coherent, and emotionally intelligent products.

About Felix Schoeller

Felix Schoeller harnesses the power of paper. The specialty paper manufacturer empowers customers and partners to develop solutions that benefit people and the planet. Founded in 1895, the family-owned company operates 10 locations in six countries and offers proven paper solutions ranging from photo and digital printing papers to decorative papers for the furniture and wood industry, release papers for medical devices and industrial applications, sublimation papers for fashion, sportswear, and home furnishings, and flexible paper composites for packaging. In addition to proven paper solutions, Felix Schoeller promotes the use of paper in new applications and works to replace limited resources with paper as a renewable raw material. True to its vision of making life better with paper, the company follows its central brand promise: PAPER MADE FOR LIFE. Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp has been managing the Osnabrück-based family business in its fifth generation since 2018.

www.felix-schoeller.com

About Hueck

Hueck, based in Viersen (Germany), is a worldwide supplier for surface structured press plates and press pads for the laminate flooring and furniture industry. Their mission is to create inspiring surfaces and develop solutions that bring diverse textures to life. They see themselves at the intersection of design and technology. Furthermore, Hueck develops and produces high-quality press pads. In 1999, Hueck became part of the Berndorf AG, a company based in Austria.

About Carrara Srl

Carrara Srl is a consulting firm founded in 2018 by Alessandro Carrara and his son Michele, building on more than 49 years of experience in printed decor papers, press plates and melamine-faced panels. Alessandro Carrara began his career in 1977, initially working in a printing company as a chemical technician. He later advanced into leadership roles, becoming a director responsible for sales, promotion, and design development. Over the years, he collaborated with leading engravers and contributed to the creation of more than 400 decorative designs, serving a wide range of industries – from high-end furniture to mass-market applications. In 2000, he joined Gruppo Saviola and later Cleaf, where from 2004 to 2017 he worked as General Manager, also leading the research and development of decorative surfaces and press plates, further strengthening his expertise and developing around 70 projects. Since 2018, through Carrara Srl, they have provided consulting services to major international players in the MFC panels and laminates sector. The company operates across the entire production chain, offering a fully integrated approach – from concept creation and product development to commercial strategy, marketing planning, and support at international trade fairs –leveraging extensive experience all over the world.

 SMARTCASK™ FROM CCL LABEL

Transparency for the Scotch Whisky Sector



 SMARTCASK INTEGRATES ROBUST, LONG-LIFE DATA CHIPS DIRECTLY ONTO INDIVIDUAL CASKS.

In response to growing demands for trust, transparency and verified ownership in the Scotch whisky market, CCL Label announces the development of SmartCask™ (by Checkpoint), an advanced digital identification and data platform designed to bring secure, long-term traceability to whisky cask management.

„Recent revelations from BBC’s Disclosure: Hunting the Whisky Bandits have sent shockwaves through the spirits industry. The investigation exposed widespread fraud in whisky cask investment schemes, including false claims and, in some cases, entirely fictitious casks. The findings have intensified calls across the sector for stronger oversight, digital traceability and verifiable ownership records“, says Alex Mulvenny, Managing Director Wines & Spirits Europe. „As the world’s largest label company and a trusted partner to premium drinks brands worldwide, CCL Label is committed to advancing technologies that protect product integrity and provenance. SmartCask represents the next step in secure, data-driven cask management.“

A New Standard in Cask Transparency and Traceability

SmartCask integrates robust, long-life data chips directly onto individual casks, creating a unique digital

identity engineered to endure for decades. Under standard storage conditions, the technology is designed to last up to 30 years, with lifespans of up to 50 years when stored within a temperature range of -20°C to $+40^{\circ}\text{C}$.

Each chip functions as a permanent digital passport, securely storing verifiable information relating to:

- Cask origin and filling details
- Liquid contents
- Ownership records
- Movement history across warehouses and supply chain partners

By combining durable hardware with advanced software and structured data management, SmartCask provides distilleries, bonded warehouses and brand owners with scalable oversight of their cask inventories. From filling and maturation through to bottling or transfer of ownership, every stage can be authenticated and audited with confidence.

Addressing Industry-Wide Vulnerabilities

More than 22 million whisky casks are currently held in storage across Scotland, many relying on manual records or fragmented digital systems. Limited traceability and inconsistent oversight have created vulnerabilities that the industry can no longer afford to ignore.

SmartCask is designed to support the sector's accelerating shift toward secure digital traceability, aligning with emerging digital passport frameworks and strengthening ownership verification processes. By creating tamper-resistant, long-term digital identities for individual casks, the platform provides a practical foundation for restoring confidence in the global whisky investment market.

Built for Endurance. Designed for Confidence.

Engineered specifically for the demanding maturation environment of Scotch whisky, SmartCask maintains data integrity across the full lifecycle of a cask. The solution enables producers to transition from paper-based documentation and siloed databases to a secure, interoperable and future-ready system.

For packaging and food & beverage stakeholders, SmartCask represents a significant step forward in connected packaging innovation — extending smart labelling and digital authentication technologies upstream into bulk asset management.

A Collaborative Path Forward

CCL Label will engage with industry bodies, including the Scotch Whisky Association, alongside leading distillers and warehouse operators to explore how SmartCask can help establish stronger standards for transparency and security. The objective is clear: to safeguard one of Scotland's most valuable exports and protect the integrity that defines the category.

"At CCL Label, we believe technology should not only enhance performance, but also safeguard heritage," the company states. "With SmartCask (by Checkpoint), it is time to protect every drop of authenticity."

About CCL Label

CCL Label is a global leader in specialty label and packaging solutions, providing innovative, high-performance products for a wide range of industries including food & beverage, healthcare, personal care, home care, and specialty markets. With more than 50 years of experience in the packaging industry,

CCL Label combines global scale with local expertise to deliver pressure-sensitive labels, shrink sleeves, in-mould labels (IML), RFID-enabled solutions, and sustainable packaging technologies tailored to customer needs.

Backed by a strong financial foundation and an extensive worldwide manufacturing network, CCL Label supports multinational brands and retailers with consistent quality, technical excellence, and reliable supply. The company is committed to advancing circular packaging solutions through recyclable materials, design-for-recycling innovations, and lower-carbon manufacturing practices. CCL Label is part of CCL Industries Inc., the world's largest label company, headquartered in Toronto, Canada.



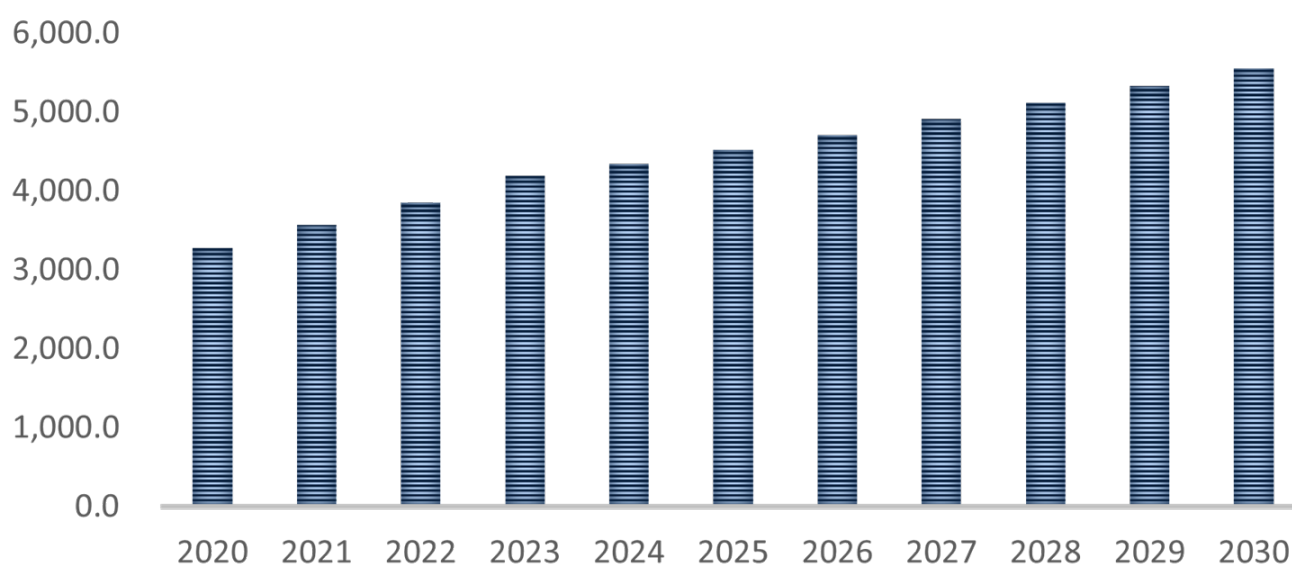
EDITOR: SBR

IMAGE: CCL LABEL

 MARKET REPORT

Sustained Growth for \$4.7 Billion Moulded Pulp Packaging Market

GLOBAL MOULDED PULP PACKAGING CONSUMPTION
2020–30 (\$ MILLION)



 THE FUTURE OF MOULDED PULP PACKAGING TO 2030 IS AVAILABLE NOW FROM SMITHERS.

The market for moulded pulp is projected to reach \$4.7 billion in 2026, according to Smithers, the leading global authority on packaging markets. Data in its newly published report, [The Future of Moulded Pulp Packaging to 2030](#), reveal that global demand is forecast to reach \$5.5 billion in 2030, representing a global growth rate of 4.1% CAGR – outpacing GDP growth.

The report highlights that growth is being driven by mounting regulatory pressure and voluntary corporate sustainability commitments accelerating the transition away from plastic packaging.

Despite a challenging macroeconomic environment that has tempered investment across many packaging segments, moulded pulp is expected to remain resilient. The ongoing conversion from expanded polystyrene (EPS) to moulded pulp – particularly in takeaway food packaging – is a significant growth driver.

Beyond established markets, Smithers identifies particularly strong growth momentum in Asia and Africa, where demand is accelerating rapidly as these regions align with more mature packaging markets.

While eggs and bottle/wine shipping continue to be stable, well-established end uses for moulded pulp, the report points to significant growth opportunities in foodservice, cosmetics, and pharmaceutical applications. Growth rates for foodservice and medical applications are projected at 4.7% and 4.2% CAGR respectively.

while cosmetics applications are forecast to grow at 3.6% CAGR — underscoring the broadening appeal of moulded pulp beyond its traditional segments.

Regulatory developments are continuing to drive innovation across the moulded pulp sector on a global scale. In Europe, the first phase of the PPWR is set to come into full effect in August 2026, while EPR legislation is gradually broadening its reach across US states. In Asia, China has introduced more stringent sustainable packaging requirements in 2025, including financial penalties for single-use plastics that do not meet recyclability or compostability standards. Moulded pulp is well placed to serve as a viable alternative, particularly in takeaway and disposable food-contact applications.

Across all regions, regulation, corporate sustainability pledges, and growing public pressure are expected to work in tandem to drive continued growth in moulded pulp.

With over 80 years of technical and scientific expertise, Smithers is a global leader in packaging industry market research, providing the authoritative data and expert analysis that businesses need to navigate this rapidly evolving landscape.

The Future of Moulded Pulp Packaging to 2030 is available to purchase now from Smithers priced \$6,750 (€6,350, £5,475).



© EDITOR: SBR

© IMAGE: SMITHERS

Lecta Expands its Termax Range



THE NEW TERMAX 170 G/M² AND 172 G/M² PAPERS ARE AVAILABLE IN NON TOP-COATED AND TOP-COATED VERSIONS.

Lecta is pleased to announce the expansion of its Termax range of high-substance thermal papers with new non top-coated and top-coated products specifically developed for ticketing applications. This new product range has been designed to meet the increasing demand for quality and durability across a wide variety of uses, including admission and access-control tickets for events, transport tickets, boarding passes, parking tickets, data-carrier tags for product identification and tracking in logistics and supply-chain operations, as well as supermarket shelf labels, among others.

The new Termax papers include non top-coated versions Termax TFX (phenol-free) and Termax TFS (BPA-free), together with the top-coated version Termax TC30X (phenol-free), available in 170 and 172 g/m². These papers offer excellent double-sided preprintability and outstanding image stability and durability.


With these additional substances, the Termax range is now even more adaptable to diverse market needs, making it the ideal solution for numerous applications that require high-substance, high-caliper papers. The non top-coated versions deliver a cost-effective and versatile solution, while the top-coated papers provide enhanced resistance to environmental factors, thereby optimizing the product's overall performance.

All Termax products are manufactured in compliance with ISO 14001 and EMAS environmental management, ISO 50001 energy efficiency, ISO 9001 quality, and ISO 45001 occupational health and safety standards. Furthermore, they are available on request with PEFC or FSC® C011032 Chain of Custody certification.

With this expansion of its thermal paper range, Lecta reaffirms its commitment to innovation and quality, providing solutions tailored to the specific requirements of its customers in the thermal printing sector and evolving in step with their business.

The Termax range continues "Moving with your business."

 EDITOR: SBR

 IMAGE: LECTA

Processing & Packaging



INTERPACK 2026 SHOWCASES CONCRETE SOLUTIONS FOR THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY.

New therapies, increasing regulatory requirements and economic pressure are palpably changing the pharmaceutical industry. Production processes are becoming more complex, more interlinked and more demanding. To meet these requirements, interpack 2026 will consolidate the range in three halls.

interpack can do two things: it maps the entire processing and packaging value chain – and at the same time creates specific areas for individual user industries. The result for the pharmaceutical industry is a consolidated environment, in which solutions, materials and processes can be seen in direct connection.

In Halls 15 to 17, companies such as IMA, Fette Compacting, Bausch & Ströbel, Uhlmann Pac-Systeme, Groninger, MULTIVAC Health Packaging, Körber Pharma, Romaco, OPTIMA, Harro Höfliger Verpackungsmaschinen, CAM and the Marchesini Group will be exhibiting their approaches to production and packaging in the pharmaceutical sector on around 40,000 square metres. Pooling space with the cosmetics industry is an obvious choice: both sectors place high demands on precision, hygiene and process reliability and, in many areas, utilise comparable technologies.

New therapies, new requirements, great opportunities

The outlook for the pharmaceutical industry remains positive. Pharmaceutical products worth around 1.9 trillion euros were manufactured worldwide in 2024 (VDMA/Euromonitor). Experts are anticipating 24 per cent growth by 2029. The main growth drivers are populous and economically ascendant markets such as China, India and Brazil, along with regions in South East Asia, North Africa and the Middle East.

Overall, the requirements for production and packaging are changing significantly. New therapies and highly effective active ingredients require flexible and networked production systems. Alongside this, processing and packaging requirements are on the increase. Added concerns are rising costs, volatile supply chains and the need for more efficient processes. Companies that will be represented in the pharmaceutical sector at interpack 2026 illustrate just how great the challenges are.

Thomas Fricke, Commercial Director at IMA, describes the situation as follows: "The pharma industry is undergoing major pressure due to the rise of biologics, Cell & Gene therapies and highly potent compounds, all of which require more advanced, flexible and connected technologies. Regulatory expectations for quality, sterility and real-time traceability continue to intensify. Economically, manufacturers face rising production costs, supply chain volatility and the need for faster, more efficient processes."

Joachim Dittrich, CEO of Fette Compacting, shares these estimations: "Rising regulatory requirements, high cost and price pressure, and expiring patents are forcing shorter time-to-market cycles. At the same time, highly active ingredients and individualised therapies are changing the demands on production and containment. Today, instead of optimising in isolation, companies need to interlink development, technology transfer and production based on data – it is the only way to make processes efficient, secure and scalable."

This will give rise to new conflicts of interest: "Increasing demands for automation, data security and sustainability in particular are driving the pressure to transform. This pressure is heightened by regulatory requirements such as the PPWR. The outcome is a conflict of objectives between product protection, reduced packaging volume and cost-effectiveness," says Michael Mrachacz, CSO & Managing Director of Uhlmann Pac-Systeme, describing the situation.

Automation and sustainability go hand-in-hand

The decisive question is no longer automation or sustainability. In practice, both topics are developing in parallel and are becoming increasingly integrated.

"This is the big challenge for Pharma, because they cannot focus on one of them and give the others a lower priority," explains Thomas Fricke (IMA). "Pharmaceutical manufacturers are therefore strongly investing in automation, AI-enabled intelligence and end-to-end-data connectivity to enhance process control, reliability and throughput. Parallel to that, sustainability is becoming an increasingly important, separate strategic priority."

The Marchesini Group also focuses on this interaction: "In recent years, we have established a cross-functional team that focuses in particular on analysing new packaging materials and their machinability, in order to turn the PPWR regulation into an opportunity. We are driving the replacement of PVC with recyclable mono-material solutions – particularly for blisters and trays – using materials such as R-PET, PP and PVC-free aluminium," says Valerio Soli, CEO of the Marchesini Group.

Efficiency and sustainability go hand-in-hand today and can only become a real success factor through integrated process expertise, says Joachim Dittrich (Fette), describing the situation. "The biggest investments are currently being made in automation, data-based process solutions and AI. Those who control their processes based on data are able to measurably optimise the use of materials and energy."

"A holistic approach is crucial," adds Michael Mrachacz (Uhlmann): "Sustainability must be compatible with machinability and efficiency – and we support our customers with our consulting services along the entire

value chain."

interpack 2026 showcases concrete solutions for the pharmaceutical industry

What is coming to fruition in the investment strategies will be brought to light at interpack 2026. Here, pharmaceutical companies will find solutions for automation, data integration and sustainability.

Marchesini, for example, will be exhibiting machines and lines for the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industries in Hall 15. The focus is on sustainability, innovation – such as AI, robotics and digital solutions – and aseptic technologies. "Marchesini Group will present several innovative solutions in the field of robotics at interpack, increasingly integrated with artificial intelligence. The pharmaceutical industry requires production lines that are more and more sophisticated, safe and connected, in order to ensure products of the highest quality and safety," says CEO Valerio Soli of the trade fair appearance. Uhlmann will also be situated in Hall 15. "At interpack, we will be presenting, in digital form, the PTC 200 for parenterals in carton mono-packaging and the BEC 500 as an integrated blister and cartoning solution. The focus will be on material-efficient, recyclable solutions as well as software solutions and digital and analogue services for the optimal combination of sustainability, process reliability and cost-effectiveness," says Michael Mrachacz (Uhlmann).

IMA will be showcasing advances in sterile processing on an area of over 4,500 square metres in Hall 17. These include "magnetic levitation technologies that enable fully gloveless filling lines for Cell Therapy products – a breakthrough in contamination control and process reliability – along with a new lab scale version offering greater flexibility for R&D teams," says Thomas Fricke (IMA). Additional highlights include a new generation of tablet presses, sustainable blistering platforms, automated cartoning delivering 70 per cent faster changeovers, modular auto-injector assembly and end-of-line solutions. These innovations are complemented by AI-driven digital support tools that enhance monitoring and predictive maintenance.

In Hall 16, visitors will be able to meet Fette Compacting, among others: "At our stand, we will be showcasing continuous manufacturing with the FE CPS, the latest containment solutions, emulators and lab services. The added value lies in shorter development cycles, greater product safety, reduced material consumption and a flexible production infrastructure that adapts seamlessly to new products and regulatory requirements," says Joachim Dittrich.



 JOACHIM DITTRICH, CEO, FETTE COMPACTING.



 THOMAS FRICKE, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR, IMA.



 VALERIO SOLI, CEO, MARCHESINI GROUP.




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WOMEN IN PACKAGING

Strong Voices From all Over the World



 THE PANEL WILL BRING TOGETHER REPRESENTATIVES FROM INDUSTRY, INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND SCIENCE, THUS UNITING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROCESSING AND PACKAGING INDUSTRY.

With an inspiring keynote from Tetra Pak to kick things off, a high-calibre panel discussion and interactive networking sessions, Women in Packaging is entering its next round at interpack 2026 – and is more powerful, connected and inspiring than ever before.

With “Women in Packaging”, interpack 2026 is once again sending a strong signal for female empowerment, diversity and the future of women’s careers in the industry. The format is aimed specifically at women of all career levels – from ambitious career starters to experienced experts, managers and founders. The focus is on inspiration, eye-level dialogue and specific impetus for the individual career path.

On 11 May 2026, participants can look forward to a programme at the Congress Center Düsseldorf that connects and sets things in motion: a keynote speech will provide strong content-related impetus, an international panel discussion will highlight different career paths and perspectives, and topic-driven networking rounds will create space for genuine exchange, new contacts and mutual support.

Thomas Dohse, Director of interpack, says: “Women in Packaging was still an exception when it premiered

in 2023 – today, dialogue on these topics is an integral part of the industry. This exchange is becoming increasingly important, especially in the context of qualified personnel and future skills. interpack introduces a particular international dimension in this respect: participants from all over the world meet speakers from Europe, the USA, South America and Australia and combine different perspectives.”

Keynote: impetus for sustainability and diversity

This is also the vision of Caroline Babendererde, Head of Sustainability Mid Europe at Tetra Pak®. With around 30 years of experience in environmental and sustainability management, including more than two decades in the packaging industry, she is one of the major proponents of sustainable packaging solutions in Europe. In addition to her professional activities, she is a guest lecturer on sustainable packaging and cross-discipline sustainability topics at universities. Her perspective demonstrates how closely linked topics such as sustainability, recruiting young talent and the visibility of career paths are. “Packaging is a crucial component of food safety,” says Caroline Babendererde. “We need to demonstrate much more clearly that it protects products, ensures quality and prevents food losses. In doing so, we will be making a direct contribution to security of supply and climate protection. We want to actively strengthen this awareness – among young people, career starters and, of course, not only among women, because those who recognise our industry’s responsibility and innovative strength also see its strong future opportunities.”

“When it comes to diversity, I hope that equity and diversity will soon be a matter of course. We are making progress, but we still have work to do, especially in the apprenticeship and education sector.”

Panel: perspectives on careers, change and the future of the industry

The panel will bring together representatives from industry, international organisations and science, thus uniting different perspectives on the development of the processing and packaging industry – shaped by participants’ personal experiences, international career paths and individual focuses.

Jill Evanko, CEO of Duravant, will provide insights from the viewpoint of a top manager who has led international industrial companies through transformation and growth.

Dr Kerstin van Wijk, Global Head of Innovation Packaging Adhesives at Henkel, represents industrial practice, combining technological innovation with concrete applications along the value chain.

Luciana Pellegrino, President of the World Packaging Organisation, has enjoyed an exemplary international career in the packaging industry. As the first woman to head the global industry association, she brings along many years of experience in global cooperation between organisations.

Prof. Dr Julia Hartmann from EBS University combines experience from research, consulting and supervisory bodies and will highlight how sustainable transformation can be strategically anchored in companies.

The panel will be moderated by Nerida Kelton, Vice President Sustainability & Save Food at the World Packaging Organisation and Executive Director, AIP: “The first Women in Packaging event at interpack 2023 showed us that events like this are desired by the global industry. What makes it so special are the open discussions, the networking, the opportunity to be inspired by women who have already travelled this path, and the occasion for participants to ask questions, discuss challenges and learn from one another. For me, it’s about meeting new people, hearing their stories and strengthening my own global network of inspiring women in the packaging industry that I can draw on in the future.”

Topic Hubs: exchange that makes connections

New at Women in Packaging are the “Topic Hubs”, topic-driven networking rounds on Career Pathways & Mentorship, Community Building & Peer Networks, Personal Branding & Visibility, Balancing Work & Life and Future Generation & Skills. They will be accompanied by Topic Ambassadors who will structure and deepen the dialogue.

Shannon Doherty-Andall, Chair of Sustainability Working Group, International Fruit and Vegetable Juice Association, is representative of the interface between sustainability, regulation and industrial implementation. Dr Afsaneh Nabifar from BASF combines scientific expertise with international transformation work along the value chain. Dr Kathrin Gimpel, CHRO at the renowned brand manufacturer Teekanne, will introduce the perspective of leadership, organisation and corporate culture. Monica Battistella, Sustainability Manager at Taghleef Industries, contributes her experience in circular economy and regulatory topics as well as her work in international initiatives. And Kaie Kaas-Ojavere, CEO and co-founder of the start-up KIUD, represents the topic of entrepreneurial innovation and new approaches in the field of circular packaging solutions.

The Topic Hubs create a practical framework in which experiences can be shared, challenges discussed and new contacts forged.

Event details

- Date: Monday, 11 May 2026
- Time: 10:30 am
- Location: Congress Centre Düsseldorf, 2nd Floor, Room 26, 27, 28

The programme will be hosted by Emily Whigham, journalist and presenter. Free registration is now open via the following link, places are limited: https://www.interpack.de/de/Anmeldung_zu_Women_in_Packaging.



 CAROLINE BABENDERERDE, HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY MID EUROPE AT TETRA PAK®.



 PROF. DR JULIA HARTMANN FROM EBS UNIVERSITY.



 LUCIANA PELLEGRINO, PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD PACKAGING ORGANISATION.



 MATERIAL SUBSTITUTION

Versatile Packaging for Non-Food



 THE TSCA PROCESSES FLAT FILM INTO A READY-TO-FILL TUBE, WHICH IS THEN SEALED WITH A CLIP.

As the leading trade fair for the international packaging industry, interpack will once again bring together decision-makers and experts from a wide range of industries in Düsseldorf this year. In the process, the wide spectrum of non-food products is the main topic. Whether screws, batteries, stationery, flower bulbs, electronic accessories, DIY or household products – the requirements for modern packaging solutions are just as diverse as the products themselves. Folding cartons, trays, pouches and blister packs have to guarantee protection and functionality, attract attention at the point of sale, survive in e-commerce and become more sustainable at the same time.

In contrast to food, many non-food products are not consumed all at once, but often kept in their packaging for a longer period of time. Stability, reclosure and simple opening mechanisms are therefore required. Whether office supplies in folding cartons or plastic boxes, batteries in blister packs or screws in transparent plastic bags – presentation also plays an important role. Thanks to Euro perforations, non-food products can be placed hanging on the shelf, while viewing windows or transparent plastic packaging allow the contents to be seen.

Classic plastics are being replaced

Sustainability is also at the centre of non-food packaging. Environmentally friendly materials, recyclability and material reduction are more in demand than ever, as are the corresponding machine solutions. Interpack exhibitor Siebeck is pursuing such an approach with its fully automatic JET A50 S tying machine. Instead of classic plastic strapping, the system uses a compostable cord made from 100 per cent cotton. Different packaging heights and freely programmable lacing patterns can be implemented automatically. In addition to classic parcel strapping, the technology can also be used to secure products inside shipping cartons, eliminating the need for air cushions or stretch film.

In the mail order business, product protection, material efficiency and sustainability take centre stage. Flöter Verpackungs-Service meets these requirements with its AirWave systems. These air cushion solutions are characterised by the very low amount of material used, as the protection is mainly generated by trapped air. Based on renewable raw materials, AirWave Bio-Film is biodegradable, while AirWave ClimaFilm is made from post-consumer recycle. In addition, AquaWave has developed water-soluble paper air cushions with a PVA coating that completely dissolves during the recycling process, thus enabling a clean return to the paper cycle. The various film types are processed on the Flöter AirWave1 and AirBoy nano4 air cushioning machines.

An often-underestimated lever lies in auxiliary and operating materials. In the field of sustainable adhesives and printing inks, interpack exhibitor Follmann will be addressing the packaging industry with bio-based dispersions, hot melts and PSA adhesives. Through the targeted use of renewable raw materials and certified mass-balancing methods, fossil resources can be reduced without compromising the process stability of existing plants. In addition, water-based printing inks for flexographic, gravure and screen printing offer a VOC-free alternative to solvent-based systems. This aspect is becoming increasingly important, especially in the non-food sector, where packaging is often printed in an eye-catching way.

New concepts are also emerging for primary packaging. Exhibitor AeroFlexx combines flexible LDPE film with an integrated air chamber structure for its liquid packaging of the same name. The result: up to 50 to 70 per cent less plastic consumption compared to classic bottles. The design enables almost complete emptying thanks to the self-sealing valve technology. The robust packaging also protects the product from external influences and permits easy recycling after use. AeroFlexx was recently honoured with a German Packaging Award (Deutscher Verpackungspreis).

Tubular packaging for non-food items

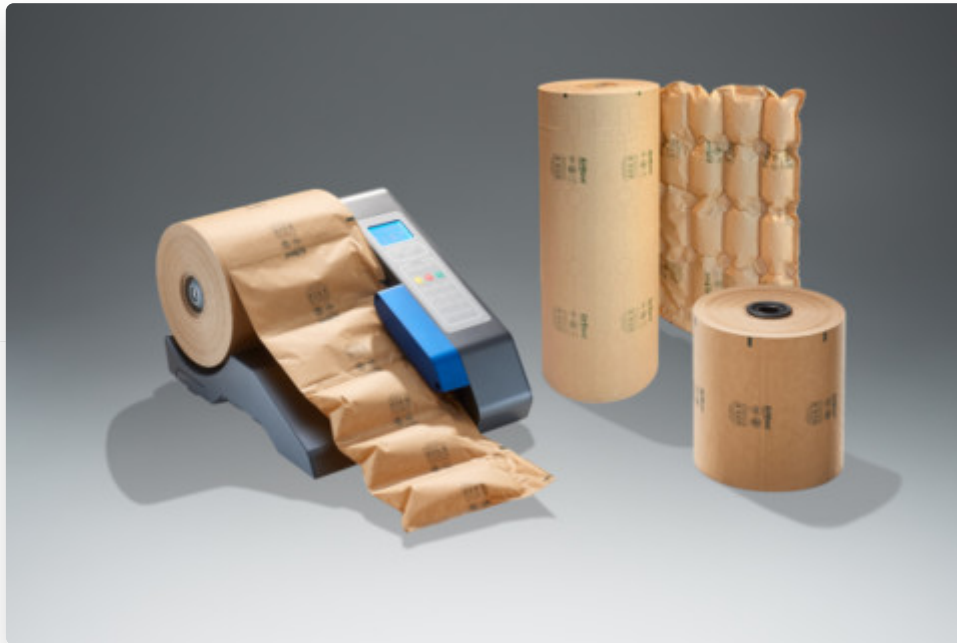
Poly-clip System is increasingly transferring its expertise in the food and pet food sector to technical and industrial non-food applications. With the automatic double clipper FCA 80, for example, the interpack exhibitor is showing a robust entry-level machine that securely closes collagen, fibre and plastic casings and is particularly suitable for pasty or viscous technical products, such as sealants or construction chemicals. The automatic double clipper is mechanically and electrically coupled with a filling machine. The portions are transferred to the exact gram and clipped together to form individual sausage-like packaging or chains.

In addition, the TSCA 120 sealing and clipping machine processes flat film from the roll into a ready-to-fill tube, which is then sealed in an integrated clipping unit. The machine is suitable for technical products, such as sealants and civil explosives. A wide variety of composite films can be used, while an integrated printing

unit enables direct product labelling during the ongoing process. For non-food manufacturers, the result is high process reliability combined with a flexible choice of materials.

Auer Packaging's durable reusable solutions are ideal for transporting industrial non-food products. The interpack exhibitor presents the Euro container with Pro hinged lid, which has been specially developed for applications requiring splash water protection and dust-tightness. An integrated rubber seal and clamping lever locks reliably secure the contents, while the stackability and optional lock integration offer additional functionality. For large-volume liquids or granulates, the Bag-in-Box IBC combines a stable reusable IBC with replaceable inliner bags, thereby meeting hygiene requirements and minimising oxygen contact during emptying.

Non-food packaging has to do more today than ever before. It not only protects products, but also represents brands, optimises logistics processes and meets increasing sustainability requirements. At interpack from 7 to 13 May 2026 in Düsseldorf, exhibitors will be demonstrating how technical development, material substitution and system integration can create solutions for non-food that meet both ecological and economic requirements.



 THE AIR CUSHIONING SOLUTIONS FROM FLÖTER REQUIRE LITTLE MATERIAL.



 ALTERNATIVE TO CLASSIC STRAPPING: THE FULLY AUTOMATIC TYING MACHINE FROM SIEBECK USES COTTON CORD.



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 PRESSURE TO TRANSFORM

Solutions for the Confectionery and Bakery Industry



 THE GREATEST PRESSURE FOR TRANSFORMATION STEMS FROM THE COMBINED IMPACT OF RAW MATERIAL CRISES, SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS, HEALTH REGULATIONS AND RISING COSTS.

The confectionery and bakery industry is growing – yet at the same time faces significant pressure to transform. Remaining competitive requires investment. To this end, interpack 2026 will bring together the industry's technological offerings across three halls covering around 40,000 square metres.

interpack 2026 once again offers its visitors dedicated zones for their respective sectors. The confectionery and bakery zone spans Halls 1, 3 and 4, directly at the South Entrance of the Düsseldorf Exhibition Centre. Manufacturers will find solutions there covering the entire value chain – from raw material processing through shaping and coating to primary and secondary packaging. Exhibitors here include Aasted, Sollich, Theegarten-Pactec, SACMI Packaging & Chocolate, Bühler and Coperion. This means the technological core of the industry is represented on site. This is complemented by the world's largest selection of packaging materials and supplies in Halls 7–10. In total, over 2,800 exhibitors from around the world are expected at interpack from 7 to 13 May.

Stable industry environment with clear growth momentum

The outlook is positive despite numerous challenges. The global market for baked goods stood at 177 million tonnes in 2024. Growth of 9.6 per cent is expected by 2029. Markets in the Middle East and Africa are developing particularly dynamically. The global confectionery market is also set to grow by 4.5 per cent by 2029. Latin America, the Middle East and Africa are showing double-digit growth rates, whilst North America is experiencing a slight decline (source: Euromonitor International/VDMA). The market environment is therefore stable. At the same time, sales regions, cost structures and regulatory frameworks are shifting.

Exhibitors clearly identify the need for action

The scale of the challenges is highlighted by companies exhibiting in the confectionery and bakery sector at interpack 2026. One of these is Bühler, which can be found in Hall 3 at interpack. Thomas Isom, Global Head of Business Development Consumer Foods at Bühler, explains, for example: "The greatest pressure for transformation stems from the combined impact of raw material crises, sustainability requirements, health regulations and rising costs. The key levers for companies therefore lie in three areas: resilient and sustainable raw material and supply chains, recipe and product innovation (particularly sugar reduction and alternative ingredients), and increased efficiency and flexible production."

These structural requirements are compounded by a tight cost situation. "The confectionery industry, and the chocolate industry in particular, is currently under massive cost pressure, primarily due to sharply rising raw material prices. This is increasing the demand for highly efficient and durable production facilities. At the same time, rising energy costs are forcing investment in modern technologies that significantly reduce energy consumption," says Klaus-Dietrich Franzmeier, Director of Sales & Marketing at Sollich. The company is exhibiting across more than 1,000 square metres in Hall 3, making it one of the largest exhibitors at interpack.

Against a backdrop of fluctuating raw material costs, staff shortages and growing uncertainties regarding trade and tariffs, Chris Isom, General Manager Food, Coperion Food, Health & Nutrition Division, emphasises the urgency of ensuring throughput and quality with fewer staff: "This requires stricter process control, faster changeovers, and more hygienic and consistent operations. Those companies that modernise intelligently will be successful, by utilising automation and integrated system improvements to increase product consistency, enhance flexibility and reduce total cost of ownership." Coperion can be found in Hall 4.

Strategic direction-setting in the spotlight at interpack

The question is therefore no longer whether modernisation is necessary, but how comprehensive it should be. Klaus-Dietrich Franzmeier of Sollich puts it plainly: "To remain competitive by 2030, companies must consistently rely on modern technologies. The use of artificial intelligence – both in development and in service – will be a decisive factor for success."

Matt Craig, Coperion Food, Health & Nutrition Division, also sees strategic investment as key: "Make investment decisions in line with the areas in which the industry is actually investing: modernisation and upgrades rather than solely the construction of entirely new production sites. Bakeries are prioritising packaging, software/IT/AI, robotics and automation, as well as key process steps such as mixing and material handling – because these investments deliver measurable improvements in quality, efficiency and plant availability."

Companies that want to be successful by 2030 must align their strategy along three core axes, says Thomas Bischof (Bühler): "1. Resilient and sustainable raw material and supply chains, 2. Healthier and differentiated product innovations, 3. Digital, efficient and flexible production. "Those who consistently combine these three dimensions can address costs, sustainability and consumer expectations simultaneously."

interpack 2026: A decision-making platform for investments

Bühler will also be showcasing these strategic approaches at interpack 2026. In the "Minimarket" and the "Food Sensation Lab", producers will find inspiration and ideas for new products. Bühler will also demonstrate how manufacturers can optimise their production processes and prepare for the challenges of a fluctuating market environment. The focus here is on digitalisation and flexibility. In addition, innovations in the areas

of chocolate mass and chocolate moulding, biscuit and wafer production, as well as cereals and extrusion technology, will be presented.

Sollich is also showcasing specific developments for confectionery production. The company will present a new generation of enroaching machines at interpack 2026. Furthermore, in collaboration with SweetConnect GmbH, machine learning functionalities are being further developed to provide plant operators with more targeted support for efficient and stable process control.

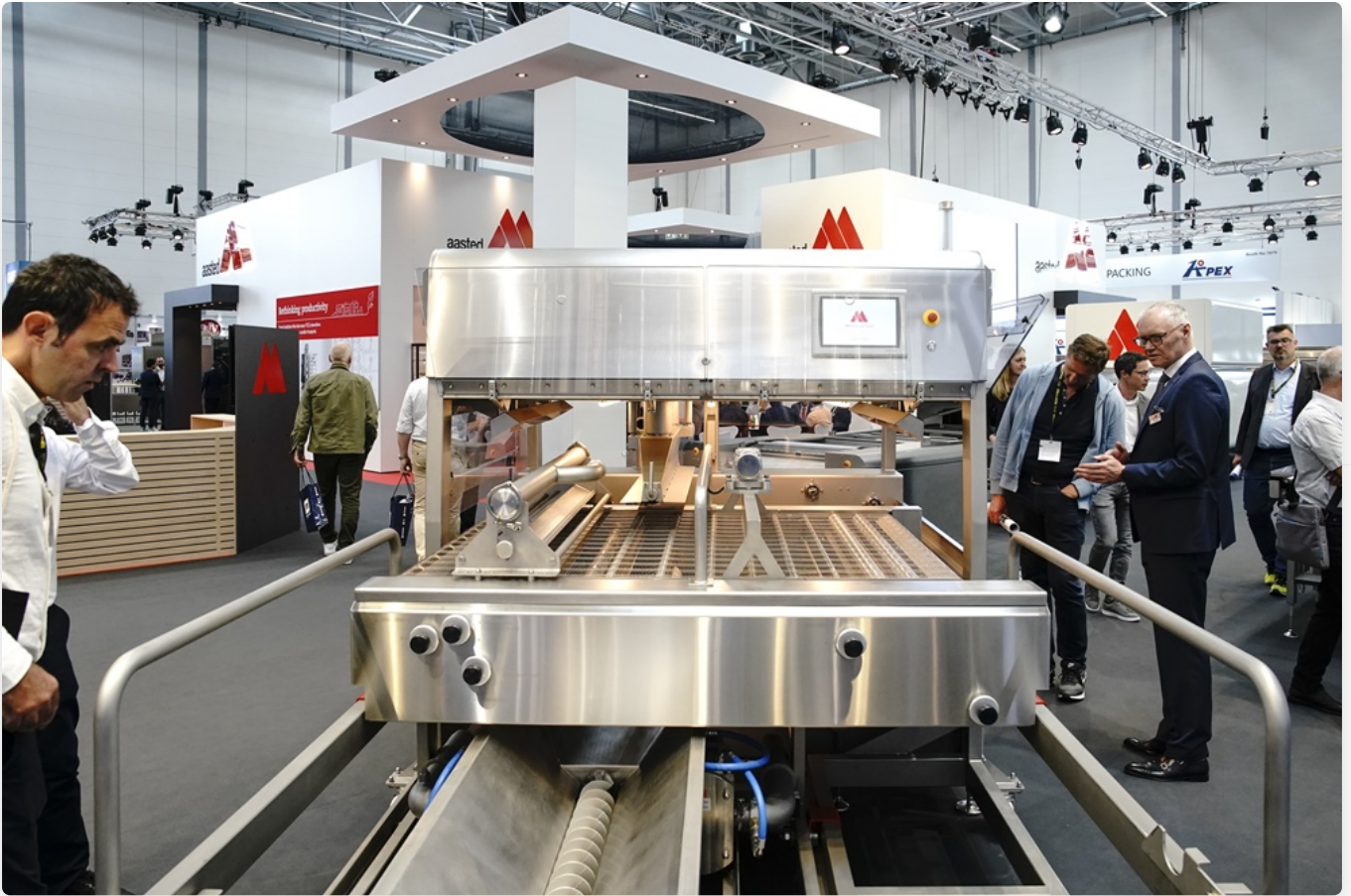
Coperion is focusing on integration. Equipment, control systems and automation are linked in such a way that modernisation projects deliver tangible results – such as greater product consistency, faster changeovers, improved hygiene and a robust data foundation.

At interpack 2026, the company will showcase solutions for modernising existing production lines. These include hygienic mixing technologies such as the DIOSNA spiral mixer, application technologies such as Bakon Disc Spraying, and flexible depositing solutions featuring the Unifiller MultiStation. The SBX platform will also be presented for extrusion applications.

Visitors can find further details on all participating companies and their solutions in the exhibitor and product database: <https://www.interpack.com/vis/v1/en/search>.



 THE CONFECTIONERY INDUSTRY, AND THE CHOCOLATE INDUSTRY IN PARTICULAR, IS CURRENTLY UNDER MASSIVE COST PRESSURE.



📷 THE OUTLOOK IS POSITIVE DESPITE NUMEROUS CHALLENGES.

👁️ EDITOR: SBR

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New powerB Pressure Accumulator System



 KESLA POWERB INTEGRATES SEAMLESSLY INTO THE EXTENSIVE KESLA XTIMBER PRODUCT FAMILY.

bio-fibre MAGAZINE

The growing market need to enhance the performance of lightweight thinning harvesters and excavator-based harvesters without increasing engine power has accelerated the demand for new solutions. Kesla's new powerB pressure accumulator system provides an effective response to this challenge by delivering significant additional power during critical work phases. The solution improves harvester performance, productivity, and fuel efficiency without the need to increase engine power.

Light thinning harvesters and excavator-based harvesters often face challenges such as low feed speed and limited sawing power, which reduce work efficiency and make handling difficult trees more demanding. KESLA powerB addresses these challenges by efficiently utilizing load fluctuations in the hydraulic system.

In harvester operations, the power demand of the hydraulic system varies continuously, and rapid changes also cause pressure spikes that are detrimental to the system. The PowerB pressure accumulator system is

connected to the harvester's pressure line, where it stores energy. At the same time, the system smooths pressure variations and filters pressure spikes, improving the durability and reliability of the hydraulic system and hoses. The stored energy is utilized at moments when the harvesting head's energy demand is at its highest, such as during sawing and feeding.

The core of the PowerB system is its valve and control logic, which manages energy charging and utilizing cycles with millisecond-level precision at exactly the right moments. The control system also ensures operational safety by discharging the accumulator energy in a controlled manner when the harvesting head is not active, ensuring safe machine operation and maintenance.

"Thanks to precisely controlled charging and discharging cycles, the accumulator capacity enables up to nearly 50 kW of instantaneous additional power for sawing and delimiting feed. What is particularly significant is that the energy stored in the accumulator is immediately available, without the delays associated with hydraulic system of the base machine," says Mika Tahvanainen, Director of Product Management at Kesla Oyj. "In addition, the impact on fuel efficiency is positive: the additional power does not require extra fuel. As engine load is balanced, hourly fuel consumption is even reduced while work productivity increases."

Kesla is one of the market leaders in excavator-based harvester solutions, and KESLA powerB integrates seamlessly into the extensive KESLA xTimber product family for excavator harvesters. The system is also ideally suited for lightweight thinning harvesters with limited engine power.

The KESLA powerB system is available for all KESLA harvester heads controlled by KESLA proLOG, xLogger, or Dasa control systems.



 THE CORE OF THE POWERB SYSTEM IS ITS VALVE AND CONTROL LOGIC.

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 IMAGES: KESLA OYJ

 SOLAR POWER AND RECYCLED PACKAGING

Cortec® Helps European Manufacturers Cut Carbon



 AS EUROPEAN COMPANIES WORK TOWARD "NET-ZERO" GOALS, MANY ARE REALIZING THAT THEIR BIGGEST CARBON FOOTPRINT COMES FROM THEIR SUPPLY CHAIN.

bio-fibre MAGAZINE

As European companies work toward "net-zero" goals, many are realizing that their biggest carbon footprint comes from their supply chain. EcoCortec®, a producer of green corrosion protection packaging and Cortec's European subsidiary, is offering a way to solve this with a closed-loop recycling system. This keeps plastic out of landfills and enables a full circular economy model.

For many industrial giants, the majority of their greenhouse gas emissions come from "Scope 3", the indirect emissions associated with the transport and production of materials. Importing high-performance packaging from overseas adds thousands of miles of carbon-heavy freight to a product's lifecycle. By manufacturing within the EU and by launching its recycling program, EcoCortec® provides a short-route alternative that

cuts down on CO₂ from transport. This offers a clear advantage for any business tracking its environmental impact. In addition to its recycling efforts, EcoCortec[®] has taken a massive step toward energy autonomy by becoming the first VCI plant in Europe to generate its own electricity from solar panels. This investment allows the facility to power its extrusion lines with renewable energy, directly reducing the carbon intensity of every roll of film produced. Both the instability caused by the geopolitical situation and high energy prices have influenced the company's decision to utilize its own energy resources as much as possible. CorteCros[®] is another Cortec[®] facility that has embraced renewable energy. This logistics and manufacturing hub located near the coastal town of Split has its own solar power system installed. By using this system, CorteCros[®] is able to achieve energy cost savings as high as 97%. Solar panels provide a practical way to produce electricity for many applications, and this renewable energy system can provide power for upwards of three decades if properly maintained. "Cortec's operations across Croatia, from the fields of Baranja to the Adriatic coast, operate under a unified green mandate. Together, our facilities provide a sustainable network for European distribution. As a company whose mission is to pioneer circular economy models within the corrosion protection industry, we wanted to make sure that our solutions are not only eco-friendly in their chemistry but also in the way they are manufactured and moved," says Cortec's CEO, Croatian-American entrepreneur Boris Miksic.

Closing the Loop: In-House Recycling and PCR Content


EcoCortec[®] is a European manufacturer of VCI/VpCI[®] films with state-of-the-art in-house recycling center. This facility allows for the immediate reprocessing of production scrap and used materials into high-quality resins. Through this vertical integration, EcoCortec[®] significantly reduces its reliance on virgin resins. By incorporating PCR content into products like VpCI[®]-126 PCR, the company lowers the carbon footprint of petroleum-based polymers and prevents waste from landfills, transforming it back into high-performance protective packaging. One of the most successful parts of Cortec's recycling initiatives is a partnership with its German distributor, company Jakob Schober GmbH. This isn't just a basic recycling plan; it's a "closed-loop" system that actually works. Schober uses its existing truck routes to collect used VpCI[®] films from customers and transport them back to the EcoCortec[®] plant. Because these trucks would otherwise be returning empty, this process adds almost zero extra transport emissions. Once the old film arrives at the plant's in-house recycling center, it is processed into high-quality recycled resin. This material is then used to create new films. Because recycling plastic uses 80% less energy than manufacturing new plastic from oil, this partnership creates a massive win for the environment.

Through localized production, energy autonomy, and circular partnerships, Cortec[®] is providing the corrosion protection industry with the tools it needs to turn sustainability goals into reality. By integrating green technology directly into the supply chain, Cortec[®] Corporation is setting a new standard for performance, one that acknowledges we cannot completely eliminate environmental impact, but proves we can decrease it.



 EcoCORTEC® PROVIDES A SHORT-ROUTE ALTERNATIVE THAT CUTS DOWN ON CO₂ FROM TRANSPORT.



 EcoCORTEC® IS A EUROPEAN MANUFACTURER OF VCI/VPCI® FILMS WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART IN-HOUSE RECYCLING CENTER.



 THE FACILITY ALLOWS FOR THE IMMEDIATE REPROCESSING OF PRODUCTION SCRAP AND USED MATERIALS INTO HIGH-QUALITY RESINS.

 EDITOR: SBR

 IMAGES: CORTEC