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Tetra Pak's 36-Year Journey in India



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(L-R) *Packaging South Asia* editor Naresh Khanna; Sanjeev Sharma, regional head of the holography business at UFlex; Girijesh Srivastava, global supply chain manager at Sun Pharmaceutical Industries; and Raman Sharma, IT head, Fasiculus. Photo PSA

■ A multiplicity of technologies needed to stay ahead of the curve

Inventory optimization & authentication in the pharma supply chain

The first PACK.Nxt conference in Mumbai on 18 January 2024 had several panel discussions on Authentication and Security. The panel that discussed packaging hurdles, design and anti-counterfeiting, blockchain and transparency, particularly with reference to pharmaceutical products, was moderated by *Packaging South Asia* editor Naresh Khanna. Priyanka Tanwar reports

The panelists included Girijesh Srivastava, global supply chain manager at Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, who said that inventory optimization is very important for the pharma supply chain. “We have come up with a number of methodologies that help us identify the constraints in the supply chain to find out the bottlenecks that result in counterfeiting of products. These methodologies help us to track the inventory of the product from formulation till it reaches the end user.”

Khanna said many pharma manufacturers now practice IoT within their pharma plants to track the authenticity of active pharmaceutical ingredients or APIs. While counterfeiting of pharmaceutical drugs is a major challenge from the manufacturing point of view, Srivastava added that several solutions such as blockchain and track and trace serialization are addressing these. “There is a specific time frame for testing pharma ingredients and drug formulations which also has a direct impact on the life cycle of pharmaceutical drugs,” he said.

“We need to understand how counterfeiting works in the pharmaceutical market,” said Sanjeev Sharma, regional head of the holography business at UFlex, adding, “Counterfeiters work in parallel to the main supply chain and you always find counterfeited products in shops and outlets that don’t make it a point to authenticate and stock the original products. Secondly, counterfeiters don’t work on technology but completely rely on the jugaad system. In order to deal with the counterfeiting ecosystem, pharma manufacturers need to incorporate more than one technology in their packaging.”

UFlex offers a variety of holographic solutions to the pharma industry, Sharma said, adding that the holographic industry has incorporated a host of new technologies from the time the first generation holograms were introduced. “UFlex adds security features on the surface of the packaged pharma products, which

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are easily identifiable by the end users at the time of purchase." The company mainly focuses on covert features that are easily identifiable without the use of gadgets such as mobile phones.

Raman Sharma, IT head, Fasiculus, added, "Being a solutions provider, we always maintain that in addition to the covert and overt features, we need to have some additional features which can be easily authenticated by the end-customers. If we empower the end-users, they can self-authenticate the products that they purchase."

The discussion then moved back to Srivastava where he said that there are numerous challenges in blockchain technology for the pharmaceutical industry. While quality is the topmost priority of the pharma industry, he said every country has its specific regulatory requirements for pharmaceutical packaging and validation of patents. "Blockchain is a robust technology which helps us to address the end-to-end product packaging, making it tamper-proof," he added.

Collaboration is needed to create an ecosystem within the pharma industry to make blockchain technology more effective, Khanna suggested, adding that standardization of the packaging for various consumer segments could be one way to ease the identification of materials and get them into the right waste streams for recycling. ■

Paperization as an alternative to plastic packaging

Sustainability in packaging design

Priyanka Tanwar

Paperization and sustainable packaging options were meaningfully discussed by the panel "From Concept to Shelf, to Recycling to Recyclates in the Design of Packaging," at the maiden PACK.Nxt conference at Mumbai on 18 January 2024. The session was excellently moderated by plastic recycler Banyan Nation's director, business development and sales, Rashi Agrawal.

PN Shridharr, general manager, of sustainable products and packaging, ITC, gave the example of the one-kilogram pack of Aashirvaad Atta for demonstrating the switch from plastic to paper packaging. "Paperization seems to be the trend globally. The key aspect of this switch from plastic to paper was enhancing the barrier properties of paper, which is a very porous material and cannot easily match the properties offered by plastic. What we did was reduce the overall amount of plastic in the packaging of the 1 kilogram pack of Aashirvaad Organic Atta to 40% by switching from a 100% plastic laminate to a mix of paper and plastic laminate."

The biggest challenge that ITC had to overcome was to work on the way of handling the package and conduct a number of drop tests to ensure that it met the product handling and logistics requirements. "We also had a lot of support from our topmost management in meeting this goal," he said adding, "ITC is trying to move secondary packaging from plastic to paper as it doesn't require the same level of barrier properties. For Sunfeast biscuit packs, we have moved the secondary packaging to kraft paper packs."

"TooYum Foods has a gamut of product lines, where certain products are from our own brand and other brands are retailed as a part of Spencer's Retail and Nature's Basket," said Subhra Sankha Nandi, head – packaging commercialization of TooYum Foods, which is a part of the RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group. The easiest way to contribute to the environment without changing much is to shift from plastic

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APPLICATION:

These inks yield outstanding results on various substrates such as PET, BOPP and Nylon.

FEATURES:

- Low viscosity inks with reduced solvent consumption.
- These inks deliver excellent printability and dot transfer.
- Inks are versatile, supporting dry lamination with Solvent Based and Solvent-Free Adhesive, as well as extrusion lamination.

Flexglide NTK 6S Inks

APPLICATION:

Inks are formulated to work on a variety of substrates, including PET, BOPP, CPP, Nylon, and PE

FEATURES:

- It is a polyurethane-based non-toluene and non-ketone ink system specifically developed for gravure printing.
- Ink system is designed to meet the demands of sterilization processes, including pasteurization, and applications that require high bond strength.

CI Flexglide HB Inks

APPLICATION:

Designed for Flexo printing followed by adhesive lamination on chemical-coated PET for heavy laminates.

FEATURES:

- Designed for Flexo printing followed by adhesive lamination on chemical-coated PET for heavy laminates.
- They are suitable for sterilization, pasteurization, and applications demanding high bond strength.
- The ink system is aligned with global sustainability goals by avoiding PVC and CPP resins and reducing the environmental impact.



New rotogravure printing machine series planned

UFlex' Engineering combines virtual and actual CI Flexo demos

The UFlex stand at the PlastFocus exhibition in Dwarka in West Delhi, although not far from the company's engineering division in Noida, is still a daunting distance considering the traffic. Thus UFlex integrated virtual demonstrations of its machines at its stand with a tour of its production facility for interested business visitors.

The live feed of the running machines from its facility, made its stand a central point where it could connect with its customers and take them to the factory to experience the machine in real-time production, Sanjay Malik Sabharwal, joint president and COO of the UFlex Engineering business, told *Packaging South Asia*.

Explaining that it is not feasible for customers to understand the various features of the machines in depth at exhibitions, he said, "The touch and feel of the machine can only be given when it is in a real production scenario. We wanted to utilize this opportunity at PlastFocus and give this experience to our customers and potential buyers," he said.

The CI Flexo press is a star product of UFlex, according to Sabharwal, since it is part of its various sustainability initiatives on an international level, along with its Combi Laminators and big slitter-rewinders – all were highlighted at the event. "When the customers visit the factory, we make sure that we have the entire range of our machines available for their active viewing," Sabharwal said.

The company's CI Flexo has several USPs, including printing stretchable materials, he said. With people and markets moving towards single-family polymer and PE-based products, there cannot be a better decorating solution than a CI Flexo press, which comes with less manpower, less consumption of ink, short runs, and less wastage, according to him.

He added that the features of the CI Flexo press providing an economy of scale in production are included in the equipment at an Indian cost of manufacturing. He pointed to opportunities for the packaging industry provided by the allocations for the food and infrastructure sectors in the recent interim budget.

"The more people are on the move, the more will be the consumption. Hence, it is a win-win situation for the packaging industry," he added.

"The machine manufacturing industry has gone through several phases, from its infancy and to its current stage of sophistication and automation. Gone are the days when people used to dream that I should have an imported machine. Today, machines made in India are no inferior to their international counterparts, be it feature-wise or life-wise," he said.

He also revealed that UFlex intends to launch a new series of rotogravure printing machines with a targeted speed of 500 meters a minute, rubbing shoulders with the best world-class machines. ■

– Priyanka Tanwar



Sanjay Malik Sabharwal, joint president and COO of UFlex Engineering



UFlex CI Flexo machine.
Photo UFlex



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- Water repellent coatings FLEXCOAT WR COATING 1020 and FLEXCOAT WR COATING 1040 (High-viscosity version) designed for the outer side over printed surfaces with a water beading effect.



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