

THE PACKMAN

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LABELEXPO INDIA 2022 REPORTS A SUCCESSFUL SHOW



In conversation with Sachit & Tarun Katyal of Anupama Printing Solutions



Flex Films exhibits its range of innovative packaging films at Pack Expo 2022



Chiripal commissions BOPET line and Bobst metallizer in Hyderabad

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INDIA NEEDS OVER 1000 WASTE COLLECTION CENTERS

If we are successful in collecting plastic waste, recycling will not be a problem – Ashok Chaturvedi

MAHAN HAZARIKA

At the 9th Speciality Films & Flexible Packaging Global Summit – 2022, Ashok Chaturvedi, chairman and managing director, UFlex, said, “There is no alternative to multi-layer flexible packaging. So, we have to look at the solutions to tackle its waste.”

Terming mono-layer packaging solution as yet another myth, Chaturvedi said that it doesn't help in reducing plastic waste. He cautioned in his keynote speech that if we keep believing that monomer is the answer to reducing waste, we will end up spending another couple of years in it before going back to square one because it will not reduce waste. “Flexible packaging waste will never get reduced unless we recycle it,” he said.

“Recycling is the only answer whether it is mechanical or chemical. Big companies are claiming that they are zero carbon neutral but still the waste is going up and it will continue unless we recycle waste,” he added. “Collecting flexible packaging waste is a mammoth task – but once you are able to collect it, you will be able to recycle it as well easily. I don't have any doubt that if recyclers can get the raw material [plastic waste], they can definitely recycle it. We did this 25 years ago and it is still working very well. At all our plants, we have set up a recycling center and all the waste that we produce and whatever we can get nearby, we are recycling it and producing new plastic items.”

During his speech, Chaturvedi lauded the strict EPR rules laid by the government. However, he said that the government should also help in plastic waste collection. Chaturvedi even urged the government to



*Ashok Chaturvedi, chairman and managing director, UFlex.
Photo: The Packman*

work with municipal bodies – of their own or under a PPP model – to collect plastic waste.

Highlighting the universal problem of the unavailability of plastic feedstock, Chaturvedi said that it's time we focused on waste collection. Solutions to recycle this waste – be it rigid plastic, monolayer or multi-layer plastic – are already there. Hence, recycling is not

the main issue. In his keynote speech, Chaturvedi even shared how his company's pyrolysis plant has been a failure and economically unviable due to the unavailability of plastic waste. India needs over 1000 waste collection centers. The responsibility of such centers will be to provide waste plastics, both flexible and rigid, to recyclers. “So, I request everyone to focus on collecting plastic waste.” ■

REPLACING ALUMINUM FOIL WITH POLYMER FILM FOR BARRIER

Flex Films exhibits its range of innovative packaging films at Pack Expo 2022

MAHAN HAZARIKA

Flex Films, the packaging film arm of UFlex displayed its range of BOPET, BOPP and CPP films at Pack Expo 2022, held from 23 through 26 October in Chicago. The highlight of the company's exhibit included transparent, coated, metalized BOPET, BOPP and CPP films. Transparent and high barrier BOPET, BOPP and CPP are the new products that UFlex group has added to its portfolio recently, targeting the barrier films market in a new way using the latest technology and process. Traditionally, barrier property on BOPP is added using offline coating methods and is very much popular in the Anglo-American and Anglo-European markets. In addition, the company also displayed its range of CPP packaging films.

Speaking about the new Barrier BOPP film, Apoorvshree Chaturvedi, director EU operations and sustainability, UFlex Group said, "At present, adding barrier properties on BOPP involves multiple steps. So we are trying to consolidate these production steps for creating the film with barrier properties that offer best-in-class OTR and WVTR values. We are focusing both on producing best-in-class barrier and productivity in terms of speed on the filling line as well as the speed in which the equipment can run."

Chaturvedi added, "Using metalized laminate with aluminum foil is the best barrier quick-fix but it is not easy to recycle. In contrast, polymer films always had a good barrier but they never had best-in-class barrier properties (like aluminum foil). So what we are envisioning is a new film that will replace certain flexible packaging structures where aluminum foils are being used as a barrier and we can replace and



Flex Films's stand at Pack Expo 2022

use a polymer film with a barrier that has OTR and WVTR values close to aluminum foil."

Chaturvedi said that replacing aluminum or metalized foil with a polymer film for the barrier will make the structure fully recyclable. "If you have PE as barrier and printing layers, then you have a



Apoorvshree Chaturvedi, director EU operations and sustainability, UFlex Group

"At present, adding barrier properties on BOPP involves multiple steps. So we are trying to consolidate these production steps" - Apoorvshree Chaturvedi

homogeneous flexible packaging structure. In addition to fulfilling the sustainability requirements, these structures can provide more yield – you can do packs of different sizes because polymer films serve as a barrier and are easier to handle when compared to aluminum foil. It is a future-ready product that answers both the questions of sustainability and performance. Aluminum foil can crack and can be difficult to handle in small pack sizes."

Launch of the new barrier film in India, however, will take some time as the Indian packaging market has different barrier requirements. "We are focusing on barrier property for BOPP in India in a different manner. We have the technical capability to produce it at our Indian facilities anytime without requiring to depend on imports from our overseas plants. However, in India, the barrier requirements are not as advanced as what is required in the global markets. I think the standards and requirements will change by 2025 considering the kind of capital investment people are doing in packaged food and branded beverages. Right now, we have a full low-key manufacturing solution for the Indian market," said Chaturvedi. ■



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