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UPDATE

NEWS OF BETTER PACKAGING & PROCESSING

FOCUS

The DNA of
Better Packaging & Processing

INNOVATIONS & PRODUCTS

Solutions for full-wrap labelling of packs

Flexible end-of-line solutions
for loading packs into boxes

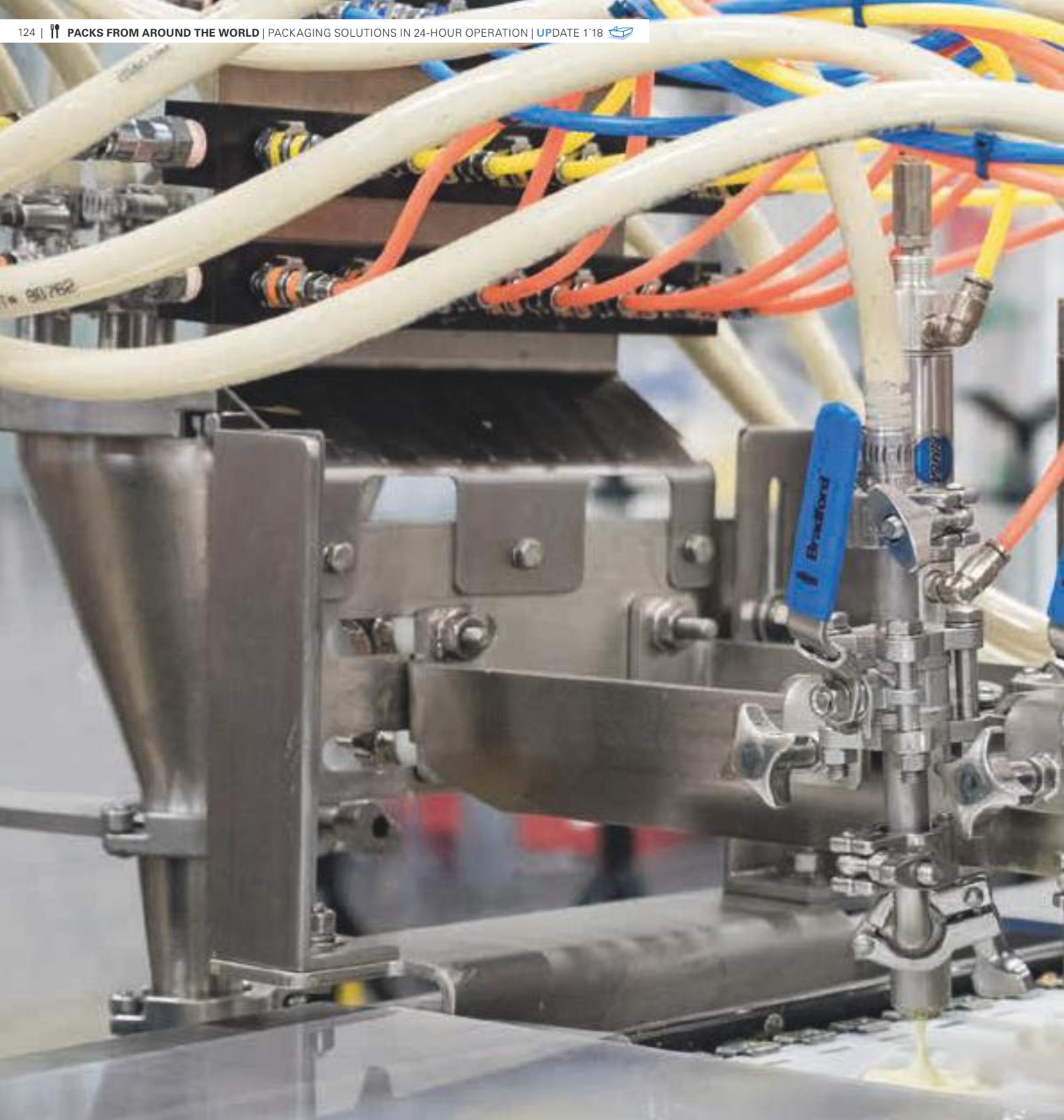
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RELIABLE PACKAGING SOLUTION IN 24-HOUR OPERATION

Operating under contract to well-known brand owners, T.H.E.M. packs a wide range of different food and non-food products in 24-hour operation. The US Company has been supported in this since the middle of 2014 with a R 535 thermo-former by MULTIVAC. But MULTIVAC is more than just a machine supplier – the two companies are bound by a strategic partnership.

T.H.E.M. specializes in the production of attractive and innovative disposable packs for food and non-food products. The abbreviation stands for Technical Help in Engineering and Marketing. The private company, which was founded in 1973 as one of the first suppliers of innovative packaging solutions with its headquarters in Marlton, New Jersey, has a very diverse range of activities. The company is registered with the FDA and has Safe Quality Food (SQF) certification. This means that the contract packer is among those companies, which manufacture, process and handle food to the highest possible standards.

Some of the company's most important products are stick packs for powders, paste-like products and liquids. T.H.E.M. was not just one of the first suppliers of such packaging solutions in the North American market, it has since become the leading supplier. With a total of eight lines, the company can process quantities between 10,000 units and 100 million. The spectrum of products ranges from portion packs of mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard and barbecue sauce through to packs of syrups and cooking oils and right up to nutraceutical and cosmetic products.

A MASSIVE VARIETY

In addition to this however, a wide range of food products, drinks, cosmetics, and nutraceuticals, THEM has opened a second facility where non-food items are filled and packed in film pouches and other packettes at an output of up to 2,400 packs per line per minute. The variety of products and packs at the two facilities is enormous, and the filling volume ranges from 1 to 70 milliliters. The Ranch salad dressing for example is packed in units of 1.5 fluid ounces (approx. 44 milliliters), while a typical liquid plant food is packed in a weight of 2 ounces (approx. 59 milliliters) and a Bug Killer concentrate in a film pouch of 14 milliliters (approx. 0,47 ounces).

"Up to now we have not had the right equipment to be able to serve those new customers, which we wanted to gain in the market. The packaging procedure had to be changed and optimized, so that we could tap new customer potential," explains Tom Martin, Vice President and General Manager at T.H.E.M.

INDIVIDUAL PACKS OF HIGH QUALITY

Only small quantities of disposable blister packs had been produced up to that point. This was due to change with the acquisition of packaging machines from MULTIVAC. The initial challenge was primarily to find reliable high-output models, which could operate faultlessly in 24-hour operation and guarantee a high level of availability and efficiency, as well as being capable of being converted quickly to different formats. The machines also had to be capable of being combined with filling and weighing equipment. They also had to meet all the relevant requirements on formats, pack designs, hygiene and pack quality. "We match all our packs precisely to the particular needs of the customer. This means that we also take into account all visual and sensory aspects of the packs, as well as the functional elements such as opening aids like 'Snap & Peel', 'Snap open' and 'Peel back'," explains Tom Martin.

The packs produced on the different MULTIVAC lines use a wide range of packaging materials. The shelf life of the packaged products ranges from nine months to two years.

FOOD PRODUCTS PACKED ON THERMOFORMING PACKAGING MACHINE

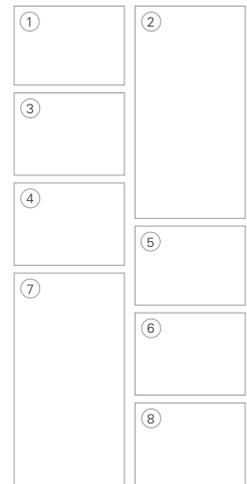
Since December 2016 a freely configurable R 535 thermoforming packaging machine, complete with gas flushing system, has been in use in the company's food packing sector. At that time, T.H.E.M. already worked with a R 535 thermoforming packaging machine that allowed customers to prototype, test-market and produce Snapsil and portion packs at low or medium volumes. Thus, the company opted for a second thermoforming packaging machine that was purpose-built to produce five different salad dressing packages, three with Snapsil feature. The R 535 offers the highest level of efficiency thanks to the lowest possible consumption of packaging material and energy. With the most comprehensive range of equipment options on the market, the machine enables complex pack shapes to be produced at a high cycle output. The newest R 535 at T.H.E.M. is also equipped



R 535* THERMOFORMING PACKAGING MACHINE

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Cut-off length (mm) | < 1,300 |
| Forming depth (mm) | < 210 |
| Output (cycles/min) | < 20 |
| Hygiene standard | MULTIVAC Hygienic Design™ |

*Depending on the equipment



- ① A member of staff loads the MULTIVAC Tray Carrier™ system.
- ② The trays are filled with plant nutrient.
- ③ The trays are sealed with upper web.
- ④ The finished packs are removed manually.
- ⑤ The film trim lattice is discharged.
- ⑥ The packs are labelled on the back.
- ⑦ – ⑧ Finished portion packs are removed manually and packed into boxes.