More design options

Smart packaging solutions for food

For the first time, In-Mould Labelling has been combined with embossed elements.

Food packaging requirements are extremely tough and demand high levels of convenience, attractiveness and hygiene. The Weidenhammer Packaging Group (WPG), Europe's leading supplier of composite cans, composite drums and rigid plastic packaging, has recently pioneered several innovative packaging solutions for dry and fresh foods.

■ Rigid and modern packaging for consumer goods, made of cardboard or of plastic are the company's core business. In over five decades, Weidenhammer composite cans have become established in many market segments as a standard form of packaging. Their benefits combine convenience with optimal product protection and freshness. Compared with conventional tin cans, they reduce packaging costs while offering more design options, more convenience and improved recyclability. Thanks to these advantages, composite cans have surpassed conventional metal cans in several market segments. However, this dominance has mainly been concentrated on products like instant drinks, soups and sauces with barrier requirements in the hygroscopic range. In the segment for highly sensitive foods, i.e. powdered milk and some coffee products, the composite can soon reached its limits because it did not provide sufficient gas tightness.

With its new closure, the Peel-off Top, the company has developed a secure, gas-tight packaging solution for highly sensitive food products. The closure is similar in appearance and handling to standard closures for metal containers. However, instead of being joined to the composite can body, the new aluminium membrane is attached to a special metal ring connected to the can body. This is said to ensure an extremely gas-tight closure and to give the composite can essentially the same barrier properties as a metal can. It reliably protects oxygensensitive contents and enables consumers to easily open and close the packaging. An additional resealable plastic overcap protects the contents after initial opening.

Lightweight and completely recyclable, the composite can is said to have a smaller carbon footprint across its entire lifecycle than a conventional metal can. The cost factor is another positive aspect. Unlike the commodity prices for steel, which are subject to dramatic fluctuations and have increased significantly over the past few years, material costs for composite cans are proportionately much lower.

WPG is primarily focusing on the market for powdered milk products. This segment places extremely high demands on packaging with regard to tightness, hygiene and safety.

Attractive look and feel

Another recent innovation is PermaSafe, the "reinvention of the can for pasteurisation", which also offers outstanding market potential. PermaSafe is the world's first packaging product to bring all the advantages of plastic packaging to the processed foods market, which was previously completely dominated by glass jars and tin cans. As well as offering far more creative options in terms of package shape and design, PermaSafe provides consumers with greater convenience.

The packaging is resealable, suitable for microwave ovens and ideal for foods packed in single portions. It is extremely lightweight and can be easily stacked for transportation. This offers advantages in terms of logistics, storage and distribution. PermaSafe also uses significantly less energy during production and transportation compared to glass or metal packaging. Müller's Hausmacher Wurst was the first German food producer, who choose PermaSafe to package and protect its paté products. Since July 2011, delicatessen manufacturer Appel / Germany is selling the fish specialities in PermaSafe.

Information

Weidenhammer Packaging Group
With 12 production sites, 1,000 employees and projected annual sales of over GBP 200 million in 2011, the Weidenhammer Packaging Group is one of the world's two leading suppliers of composite cans, composite drums and rigid plastic containers. Its customers include international brand product manufacturers Nestlé, Unilever, Kraft, Procter & Gamble, Rügenwalder Mühle, Imperial Tobacco and BAT.