

CONTRACT PACKAGING

Print-registered film wrapper brings co-packer new business

As the demand for multipacks of multiflavored aseptic juice boxes continues to grow, this contract packager invests in machinery to keep up with the trend.

Among the key drivers behind today's ongoing growth in contract packaging is the continued expansion of club stores and other mass



SHRINK WRAPPING. Film is applied in register by this single-curtain shrink wrapper/tunnel combination system, whose small footprint was among the features so attractive to CEA.

merchandisers. Their impact on packaged goods manufacturers varies depending on product category. But in one category, that being juice manufacturing it sometimes brings about a layered arrangement of contract packagers. At least it does where contract packagers Johanna Foods and Center for Educational Advancement (CEA) are concerned. Both firms are in

Flemington, NJ. Johanna Foods, which has juice brands of its own, sometimes does contract packaging for Apple & Eve, a large branded juice manufacturer based in Port Washington, NJ. But when Apple & Eve receives an order from a mass merchandiser that calls for mixed-flavored juice boxes in a 36-count shrink-wrapped tray, Johanna outsources that labor-intensive job of sorting and tray packing to contract packager CEA. Johanna Foods sends pallets of case-packed juice boxes to CEA, where workers break down the pallets and cases and then sort the primary packs into the assortments of flavors Apple & Eve's customer requires.

A not-for-profit organization that supplies employment opportunities and other services for people with disabilities, CEA has lately been investing in new Polypack (www.polypack.com) shrink wrapping equipment as Apple and Eve has added another wrinkle to its approach to



multipacking. Where once they were content with clear shrink film, now they sometimes specify printed film that must be applied in register. To meet this request, CEA bought a Polypack twin-curtain shrink-wrapping machine in late 2002. Then, as the trend showed no signs of abating, CEA installed a single-curtain system, Polypack's Cha Cha Cha-24A wrapper/tunnel combo, at the end of 2004.

"Johanna foods has had good experience themselves with Polypack equipment, and they suggested we give it a look," says CEA president Michael Skoczek.

"Polypack came to our facility and showed us their capabilities. In both cases, the systems met our needs, and both have worked out well."
"Where once they were content with clear shrink film, now they sometimes specify printed film that must be applied in register."

The twin-curtain system, which wraps two bundles of juice boxes per cycle, is capable of 20 trays/min. The single-curtain system reaches only 14/min, but its smaller footprint made it attractive because Skoczek had a specific location in his facility where he wanted the machine to fit. The relatively low-speed Cha Cha Cha system also costs considerably less than the high-speed systems often found in large beverage packaging operations.

The printed film, supplied by Exopack, is a 2-mil high-density polyethylene printed flexo in seven colors.



TRAYPACK DISCHARGE. The brightly decorated film, a 2-mil high-density polyethylene, is printed flexo in seven colors.