

Packing the World: The Story of Wolf Verpackungsmaschinen

By Wolfgang Promchainun

ASK A German about 'Lich' and the answer will most probably be: beer. The reason is that one of the most innovative advertising campaigns carried out some 20 years ago made this then-private local brewery famous and became the foundation stone for its nationwide distribution. Put the same question to any major confectionery or snack maker around the world and the answer for sure will be: Wolf Verpackungsmaschinen, a very innovative maker of packaging machines that is also based in the town of Lich, some 60 km north of Frankfurt, a stone's throw away from the Frankfurt/Bremen/Hamburg Autobahn and a 40 minutes drive to the Frankfurt International Airport.

It all started in the year 1988 when the founder and present owner, Guenter Wolf, then aged 38, rolled up his sleeves and decided to go his own way hands-on. If you meet Guenter today, the very same attitude is still there, even if he is wearing a short-sleeve shirt. He is all ears and all smiles to learn about your packaging problems and then with a few targeted questions he will go to the heart of the issue: offering Western experience and 'can do' combined with a ready smile and understanding of Asian needs – the best of both worlds.

Guenter came to Asia in 1991, after being in business for only 3 years. Five years ago he opened an office in Malaysia. Other sales and service subsidiaries have since been established in Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and Philippines, with China expected to host the next outpost of Wolf

Verpackungsmaschinen. There may even be an assembly line based in the region in the future.

Guenter's close relations with his customers is part and parcel of his success: which has resulted in more than 1,000 packaging machines and lines installed around the world, including more than 400 in Asia. This also explains the participation of Wolf at all major packaging fairs in Asia with a big booth.

Vertical as well as horizontal packaging machines for dry and powdered goods are the core business of Wolf. In the food sector many multinational companies use their machines for coffee, creamer, milk powder, baby food and similar items, filling and packing bags or pouches from 1 g to 50 kg each. Confectionery and candy packaging machines designed and built by Wolf are also in use by all major players in this sector. The second biggest customer group for Wolf is the chemical industry.

The latest innovations from Wolf are automated packaging lines for frozen goods such as pizzas and ready-to-eat meals. Wolf's in-house research and development division is constantly looking for new solutions in all fields of packaging with the goal to offer not only a machine but a complete line, including checkweighers and other equipment as most customers prefer this service. All this is done in close contact with the customer so that each finished machine and line is a product of long experience and technical know how, completely tailor-made to the

specific needs of the customer: "From the storage room to the pallet/container, all technology for all processes from one hand" is the motto.

For centuries Germany has enjoyed a reputation for engineering excellence and Wolf Verpackungsmaschinen today is at the forefront when it comes to packaging. High precision, higher efficiency, innovation – all the features that have made 'Made in Germany' famous can be found with each and every one of their products. The latest example is 'Presenter', a totally new kind of stand-up bag with enormous marketing potential, allowing for a broad choice of reclosure systems, controlled pouring and a uniquely designed top. From pilfer-proof to tamperproof and zipper bags and pouches, nearly nothing is impossible for the 92 staff working at the Wolf factory where new facilities are under to constructions right now to serve the processing world even better. To learn more, please visit: www.wolf-pack.de. This website is in English, German and Chinese and is updated whenever Wolf has something new on offer.

However, Wolf is not only doing well because of close contacts with the customers, but also because of close contacts with suppliers. Only the finest components will do: SEW for drives and Siemens, Allen Bradley, B&R and Mitsubishi as control systems. 'State of the art' is an expression often used, but for Wolf Verpackungsmaschinen it is daily routine for each and every part of each and every machine and line.

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