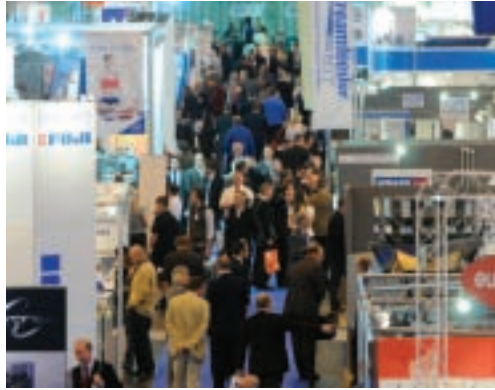


Bucking the trend in an economic crisis

Recessionary influences seemed not to affect the show world during 2008. In the autumn the PPMA Show 2008 was a rip-roaring success with an audited registered visitor attendance up by almost 3,500 on the 2006 event*. Some 9,775, which includes 3,580 visitors who crossed over from interplas, attended the



show giving rise to real optimism and says the organiser was a tremendous achievement given the global economic crisis.

The complete figures showed a total visitor attendance of 11,607 including the press, exhibitors and organisers.

Chris Buxton, CEO, PPMA, said: "We are very pleased with the success of the show and the positive reports on PPMA 2008. Equally important is that this adds weight to the fact that while the economic downturn is challenging it is not as bad as the 'gloom-mongers' in the popular press insist on reporting.

"Unlike the softer financial sector, our industry is used to navigating turbulent waters - we

have been operating in a challenging market for years. The British machinery suppliers will come through this phase with the same grit, innovation and determination that they have on all of the other occasions."

"The excellent attendance is clear evidence that even in difficult economic times exhibitions have a valuable role to play. When it comes to large investment decisions, people like to buy from people and nowhere was that clearer than at the PPMA Show 2008," said show director Liz Finlay.

Bookings for the 2009 show are reported to be well ahead of the same time last year.

Across the pond in Chicago

Pack Expo International held in November 2008 also fared well with attendance down by only 3 per cent to 44,115.

Charles D. Yuska, president and CEO of PMMI, the show's organiser, said: "In today's economic conditions, having a slightly lower attendance than the 2006 show is the

reality. The good news is that the leads data clearly indicates that attendees came with specific projects in mind and focused their time and attention on finding suppliers that can address their immediate packaging concerns."

Both events show that visitors came with projects in mind and money in their back pockets.

**There was no show during 2007 when the PPMA event was combined with Total Processing & Packaging.*

PPMA Show 2009 will take place from 29 September - 1 October 2009, NEC Birmingham.

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BUSINESS BRIEFS

GEA Group has acquired the International Cooling Group (ICG), of Fareham. ICG manufactures evaporators and condensers for the industrial refrigeration market under the brand names Searle, Raffel and Dawmec in the United Kingdom, France and Germany.

GEA has also acquired Deichmann Umwelttechnik a manufacturer and supplier of industrial particle-removal filtering systems

GEA Niro division of GEA Process Engineering in the UK has relocated to a newly expanded facility in Warrington, following the closure of its Abingdon office.

www.geagroup.com

Marchesini Group, a supplier of complete packaging lines and machines to the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industries, has acquired 100 per cent of Neri, an Italian self-adhesive labelling machinery manufacturer.

The acquisition has excellent synergies with the rest of the group, says Marchesini, and will bring annual turnover of the Italian group of companies to about €200m.

www.marchesini.com

Riggs Autopack, a UK manufacturer of depositing and filling machines, is extending its Nelson-facilities by 300m² to accommodate the increase in its product portfolio.

The company hopes to gain extra production efficiency as well as providing a training area for engineering apprentices. Riggs Autopack has also appointed Neil Doran as design engineer. His brief is to expand the company's product range by developing innovative equipment to attract new customers, while continuing to develop existing machinery.

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UKTI doubles your money?

UKTI, the Government organisation responsible for delivering help and support to SMEs for overseas trade and investment, has announced it will double the amount of TAP (Trade Access Programme) grants a company can claim from three to six in its lifetime.

The TAP scheme allows companies to apply for grants between £1,000 and £1,800 to exhibit at 400 eligible overseas

trade fairs each year. Making the announcement Gareth Thomas, the Minister for Trade and Investment, said: "In difficult business times businesses need to be flexible and innovative and seek out opportunities where they exist... UKTI is backing SMEs by allowing them to explore more markets abroad."

The Sponsors' Alliance, which represents a large number of associations and industry

bodies which run TAP schemes said: "This does nothing to address the fundamental faults within UKTI. More than 75 per cent of its £295m budget is spent on admin and overheads.

The TAP scheme has had its budget slashed from £19.5m in 2004/5 to just £8.5m last year. It is time for an urgent overhaul of UKTI services to provide more direct support to our exporters." www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk



Mark Prisk

Creating Confidence

Supporting technical developments across the packaging supply chain in the face of an economic downturn will be given a thorough airing at the Starpack Summit 2009.*

Mark Prisk, shadow minister for trade and investment, will propound Tory Party thinking on investment in innovation, manufacturing and training. "Finding the right marriage between encouraging entrepreneurship and stimulating business will ultimately benefit the national economy," states Prisk.

Expect to hear more about the Tory's nationwide survey on how government can help exporters.

The role of machinery will be examined by Bosch Packaging Technology's Jacob van Kogelenberg, Product Manager - secondary packaging, who will look at the technical interface between machines and packaging and how advances in machine technologies and automation can make a real difference to sustainability, particularly in secondary packaging operations.

Speakers include: Procter & Gamble; IGD; Tesco; Flexible Packaging Europe; WRAP; and The Futures Company.

*May 21 2009, IOM³ Offices, 1 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1.

To register visit:

www.iom3.org/events/summit09

E: rachel.brooks@iom3.org

Organised by MAJIC on behalf of IOP: The Packaging Society.

Strong export sales but future prospects are set to amber



Sales of UK packaging and weighing machines to overseas markets continued to show strong growth in the year to September, according to figures from the PPMA.

However, the recessionary influences are not likely to show until the first quarter of 2009. Deliveries topped £201m, 33 per cent ahead of the same period in 2007 (£150.3m) with weighing machines sales making up £35.1m of the total (2007: £28.5m), but process machinery exports dipped by 11 per cent to £108.5m (£120.4m).

Purchases of overseas equipment by UK companies also held up well, although the decline in the value of Sterling will have had an impact. Imports of packaging and weighing machines reached £254.5m (2007: £252.2m) while processing machine deliveries were £104m (£93.2m).

The USA continued to be the strongest market for British machinery, although sales were

only slightly ahead of 2007.

Sales to the Republic of Ireland were also strong, up from £8.1m to £14.6m.

The strong performance in Europe evident from the June half year figures continued with France the Netherlands and, particularly, Germany well ahead of 2007. India also purchased more UK equipment valued at £4.2m (£2.0m) and China re-entered the 'Top 20' with purchases of £3.2m. Poland more than doubled its orders of UK machines to £8.4m (£3.2m).

Overseas sales of processing equipment were down to the USA at £15.8m (£17.3m), but up to Ireland, France and Turkey.

Both the packaging and processing machine import lists were dominated, as usual, by Germany. Deliveries to the UK were £97.4m (£92.5m) and £21.7m (£21.3m) respectively.

In the packaging list Italy also performed well, as did Sweden

and Switzerland. But Japanese equipment sales dropped dramatically by almost 50 per cent to £5.6m (£10.1m).

China also improved its performance to £4.3m (£2.8m) as did Switzerland at £3.5m (£1.4m). Purchases from France, the Netherlands and Denmark were steady.

Commenting PPMA's CEO Chris Buxton said, "It is good to see UK manufacturers still performing well. It also proves capital investment is continuing in the UK. However any effects from the economic slowdown may not be apparent until at least the first quarter of 2009."

CBI warns of capital spending cuts

Richard Lambert, CBI Director-General, has called on the Bank of England to restore credit flows across the economy as a matter of urgency.

"The Bank of England's latest Credit Conditions Survey paints a bleak picture of the impact of the credit crunch on businesses and families. The availability and the cost of credit have both deteriorated in the final quarter of 2008, and are expected to get worse in the next three



months," states Lambert.

"Moreover, the shortage of trade finance is affecting output across a broad swath of industry, and led a number of firms to extend their period of shutdown over the Christmas/New Year season. Inventories are being cut back, and the Bank of England's survey indicates a marked cutback in capital spending programmes over the past three months."

Cama shapes new ideas

Cama Group opened its doors recently to show off several new machines under construction for blue chip clients, many of them in the UK, and to demonstrate its strategy for the development of its machine ranges for the future. Cama's subsidiary in the UK is Cama 3, based in Swindon.

Automation, particularly in the area of robotics, is high on the agenda and the company has worked closely with Bosch Rexroth to come up with new architecture for its delta robots to standardise each unit for its carton and case packing machines. Initially the company focused on larger, two axis high speed robots, but, over time, explained Daniele Bellante, who runs the company with his sister Annalisa, smaller, less complex units have been developed. These he says are more suited to dairy applications.

Currently Cama is producing about 60 robots/year and is intent on continuing its robot development because of the specific requirements and functionality of the packaging sector. "We wish to take the principles and add our own technology, not hybrids," added Daniele.

The company has invested heavily in R&D and increased



Chris Rayner

its technical development department from 11 to more than 30 staff. It used its acquired expertise in robotics to develop an integrated control and vision system for the Delta Triaflex and the success of technology developments in this area has led to 20 orders for robotic systems since interpack.

A number of projects require bespoke design, an area in which Cama specialise, said Chris Rayner, Cama's UK operations director. A recent order required a wraparound case for a Retail Ready solution and to remain efficient the machine had to be made more robust to cope with speeds up to 30-35 packs/minute rather than the normal 18-20 a standard machine produces.

Flexibility of the equipment is paramount and another project

required a machine able to handle both cartonboard and corrugated board. The machine is able to end load cartons with a flow wrapped pet product at 170 packs/minute but can also pack the cartons into corrugated cases ready for palletising at 50 cartons/minute.

Other innovations include a special opening system for a hexagonal carton for a coffee pod product, fitted to a standard cartoning machine.

As well as working with Bosch Rexroth the company has developed partnerships with other suppliers, notably PFM, which offers weighing and flow wrapping expertise and enables the company to offer complete lines.

Daniele Bellante has the final word, "Our philosophy is to innovate and shape our ideas to customers' needs. The best designers in a market do not force ideas on customers." • Chris Rayner has been appointed operations director of Cama 3 in the UK, a fully owned subsidiary of CAMA Group. Along with this new operational responsibility Chris will continue to develop Cama Group's packaging equipment and systems sales in the UK.

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IN BRIEF

Climate change success

The Food and Drink Federation reports that the UK food and drink industry has reduced its CO₂ emissions by 17 per cent since 1990.

It makes the claim in a new report entitled 2008 Five-Fold Environmental Ambition Progress Report.

The publication says the reduction is equivalent to an average of 58,000 tonnes less carbon dioxide produced annually and is equivalent to taking 22,000 cars off the road.

Food and drink is the UK's largest manufacturing sector and, says the FDF, is on target to meet its commitment to reducing CO₂ emissions by 20 per cent by 2010.

See our *Environmental Special* pages 34-36

www.fdf.org.uk

Barr & Paatz has been appointed as a systems integrator for Festo's electrical drives business.

Festo, a global manufacturer of pneumatic and electromechanical systems, components and controls for industrial automation, is aiming to expand its presence in the electrical drives and controls in markets including food, processing and packaging.

The Barr & Paatz appointment is one of only four agreements in the UK.

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Pilz GmbH & Co has officially opened the Peter Pilz Technology Centre Ostfildern, Germany as part of its 60th anniversary celebrations. The new facility houses the research and development department. The company says the centre will help it secure international competitiveness.

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Quality by design for pharma

Delivering business benefits through Quality by Design and applying tools and techniques such as risk assessment to manufacturing processes, was the message from the International Society of Pharmaceutical Engineers' (ISPE), UK annual conference.

Lindsay Wylie, Director of Design for GSK, focused on delivering business benefits

through QbD, (Quality by Design) claiming that by applying tools and techniques such as process analytics and risk assessment, companies will be better able to focus development activities, ensure robust manufacturing processes are developed and enable lifecycle management.

George Craig and Andy Przybylko from Mettler Toledo's

process analytics division said the biggest challenge was how to make measurements inline once statistical requirements and process controls had been determined. It was important to select the correct sensors, engineer the sensors into the process and examine the need for on going diagnostics and maintenance of the system.

www.ispe.org