

From startup to well respected specialised provider

Just in time for the 10th company anniversary Swiss Can Machinery AG presents itself at Interpack as an international successful supplier of can filling and seaming machines.



The two managing directors of Swiss Can Machinery AG: CEO Michael Grabher (left) and his brother Marc as CTO

Within a remarkably short time of nearly ten years Swiss Can Machinery AG (SCM) has succeeded in positioning itself internationally as a leading specialist in manufacturing machines and complete lines to fill and close cans and jars with powder or dry products. That could be achieved not only by a deliberate successive build-up of its manufacturing capacities but also by a consistent orientation of the machine program to the needs of quite ambitious customers.

The retrospective on the history of the Swiss company shows a strategic planning as well as a continuous growth. Established mid 2013 in Au/St Gallen, a first step of expansion was realised by moving to neighbouring Berneck/St Gallen in the autumn of 2016 into a considerably larger production site including office building and showroom. A short time later, this location has been extended to 2,000 m² in total by an upgrading of an existing final assembly hall, another hall for pre-assembly and a new office for the automation division.

According to the dynamics of the company the two managing directors Michael and Marc Grabher have acquired a predominant young team of currently 27 employees. While Bsc. ME Michael Grabher (39), who successfully studied production and process technology, leads the commercial sector as CEO, his brother Marc (38), a graduated engineer, is responsible for the technical side as CTO.

From the beginning, it was the declared aim of the enterprise, to accommodate the fast-changing developments in view of "Industry 4.0". So, a great part of the seed capital was invested in software and a research and development department was established already early.

„We see enormous potential concerning digitalisation and we are well prepared to master the challenges of the future“, emphasises Michael Grabher. Therefore, the staff includes



The SCM site in Berneck/St. Gallen

a lot of mechanical and electrical engineers. To intensify continuous development of the machines a new office for the automation department was installed at the beginning of this year. Six highly qualified specialists work there. Moreover, there is a close cooperation with Siemens and other suppliers of high technology.

Despite all innovatic strength company philosophy is conservative in some way. „Our investments are well thought out and the slogan ‘cobbler stick to your trade’ seems to be quite reasonable. You should always keep a healthy economic basis in mind and for this reason, we are in a certain consolidation phase now“, explains Michael Grabher. He shows himself very satisfied with achieved growth, not excluding the constant effort to technical improvements.

Machine program with several USPs

The result is a homogeneous as well as modular portfolio with some unique selling propositions. In strict differentiation to competitors, there is a general focus on lower running machines. So SCM might have a leading market position concerning can filling and seaming facilities within a capacity range up to 100 pieces per minute.

In this segment the series V-Matic is offered, allowing processing under modified atmosphere. The type name indicates the additional

function of evacuating. It should be another USP of the Swiss company that with the help of its innovative gassing system, cans with less than 0.5 per cent residual oxygen are produced.

Numerous additional modules

Beside diverse can filling and seaming machines, the production program includes semi-automatic can seaming machines, UV- or Pulsed Light-disinfection systems, cappers, spoon dispensers, conveyors, and other

peripheral components. Moreover, numerous additional modules are in the portfolio. Such as a cleaning system, working with ionized compressed air and rotating nozzles. Furthermore, laser marking of cans – even from above and below at the same time – and a camera system to control and serialize products can be integrated.

Generally, SCM uses only high-grade aggregates and materials such as best steel qualities. To fulfill high hygienic standards the machines possess all necessary permits and are certified according to FDA and EHEDG regulations.



View into the final assembly hall where - at this time - a complete filling and seaming line was built in order of a Romanian producer of baby food



A young team is working in modern offices (photographs: Kimberly Wittlieb)

International cross-industry customers

Often the facilities are installed in clean rooms, because the most important customer group are producers of milk powder respectively baby food. Other clients come out of the dietary supplements, sweets, snacks, pharmaceutical and coffee industry. Meanwhile, even some well-known can producers are supplied.

Within all branches SCM generally concentrates on high-quality individual goods while neglecting mass products.

It is not astonishing that the Swiss company has a high export rate of more than 90 per cent. Worldwide there are about 20 representations. The Asian region is still very expansive, not only China. Currently the Japanese market is fast developing for SCM. In cooperation with a Nippon specialised German commercial agency

the delivery of two filling and seaming lines to a prestigious baby food producer is planned in 2023. But also a pleasing strong demand in Europe can be registered. At present a complete line for a Romanian customer is built in Berneck, consisting of a MAP closing unit as main component and all-important peripheral modules from depalletizer up to capper.

Enormous trade fair presence

From the beginning SCM was very active at trade fairs, participating in all important shows of food and packaging industry. At this year's Interpack the company will present itself at an enlarged booth of nearly 140 sqm. In Dusseldorf a V-Matic seaming machine in combination with a multihead weigher is to be seen, demonstrating the filling of smaller pieces of chocolate into cans. Within a get together at second event day, the 10th company anniversary will also be highlighted at the booth. The official jubilee celebration will take place at Berneck headquarter in the beginning of June.

Hall 7 A, Booth B 11

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NEWS

New partners for fine flavour cocoa from Ecuador and Colombia

Cocoa beans are the Import Promotion Desk (IPD) stand's focus at ProSweets Cologne, which is taking place simultaneously to ISM Cologne from 2nd 3 to 25th April. At the international supplier fair for the confectionery and snack industry, the IPD, a project of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), will present cocoa producers from Ecuador and Colombia. In addition to cocoa beans, they offer a wide range of cocoa products, including cocoa fruit pulp, powder, paste, butter, nibs and chocolate in the form of bars, pralines and couverture. As an import promotion initiative, the IPD supports European buyers in getting to know new trading partners and sustainably expanding their network. The exhibitors at ProSweets Cologne specialise in the production of fine flavour cocoa. In addition to cocoa beans, they also offer semi-finished products such as liqueurs, cocoa butter, fruit pulps, powder and pastes. They also produce finished products such as milk and dark chocolate bars, special bars, pralines and couvertures.

In Ecuador, the small and medium-sized companies process the Arriba Nacional cocoa variety. It is known for its special taste and is registered as a trademark in Ecuador. The Colombian producers use the Criollo and Trinitario cocoa varieties. In Colombia, the two varieties are distinguished by their diversity of organoleptic profiles since the cocoa comes from many different regions of Colombia. Depending on the growing region, the flavours vary and this diversity is appreciated. The companies in the IPD programme offer high product quality and ensure the traceability of their products. The range includes products from conventional cultivation as well as products in organic quality. ▲