

PRO flexconvert

Magazine for Converting Professionals

- ➔ Winding Technology & Knives
- ➔ Rollers & Sleeves
- ➔ Automation, Handling & Software

Companies in the
converting
SPOTLIGHT
ICE Europe, BOBST, COMAS

M2N MEDIA 
www.proflexconvert.com

M2N converting GIPFEL

25.-26. Juni 2026
east Hotel Hamburg

ZUKUNFT WIRD AUS MUT GEMACHT

Nachhaltige Trends und Strategien für die Converting-Industrie



INFORMATION



INSPIRATION



AUSTAUSCH

Seien Sie dabei, wenn sich die Key Player der deutschsprachigen Converting-Industrie zu zwei Tagen voller Austausch, Inspiration und zukunftsweisender Diskussionen treffen. Ob Geschäftsführung, Produktion oder Technik – hier kommen die Entscheider der Branche zusammen.

Freuen Sie sich auf spannende Impulse von hochkarätigen Speakern. Als Keynote-Speakerin ist Cordula Schulz, Geschäftsführerin der Schulz Flexgroup, mit dabei.



Cordula Schulz
Schulz FLEXGROUP



Daniel Zimmermann
Felix Schoeller



Anna Helgert
Dow Chemical Ibérica



Olga Mordvinova
incontext.technology

Schon jetzt im Kalender vormerken: Am 25. und 26. Juni 2026 geht der M2N Converting Gipfel in seine dritte Runde – im stilvollen Ambiente des east Hotels in Hamburg.

Wir freuen uns außerdem auf Anna Helgert von Dow Chemical, einen KI-Workshop mit Olga Mordvinova und Daniel Zimmermann vom Spezialpapierhersteller Felix Schoeller.

Nutzen Sie die Gelegenheit, neue Kontakte zu knüpfen, bestehende Netzwerke zu pflegen und gemeinsam die nächsten Schritte für die Zukunft der Converting-Industrie zu gestalten.

Der M2N Converting Gipfel 2026 ist das Event, das Sie nicht verpassen sollten. Jetzt anmelden und mit dabei sein!

JETZT ANMELDEN

Sichern Sie sich jetzt Ihre Teilnahme zum exklusiven Early-Bird-Preis von 1.050 Euro – nur bis Ende Dezember!



Empathy is needed!

Dear Readers,

Not so long ago, writing these editorials was somewhat easier than it is today: there were always one or more trends to write about – and the key players in our industry were usually in relative agreement about their assessment. Those days are over!

Take the recent K2025: I received a large number of messages, both praising and criticising one of my recent newsletter editorials – and some of them contained completely different assessments of the current market situation. Just yesterday, I heard from a well-known machine manufacturer that he was 'very satisfied' with the results of the world's leading plastics trade fair. A few days earlier, I had heard the complete opposite in another conversation . . .

We look back on a year of strong and weak trade fairs. We look back on a period in which some companies describe their situation as 'business as usual', while others have completely disappeared from the market – or are on the verge of this dramatic turning point. In addition, there are also those who have already made the transition and now want to make a fresh start – sometimes even with a new company logo.

As you can see, our work as a specialist media platform requires not only a constant finger on the pulse of the market, but also a great deal of empathy. Some younger people in our industry are probably experiencing their first real crisis right now – and 'old hands' may have to worry about their life's work shortly before their well-deserved retirement.

With this issue, we are once again attempting to put 2025 into perspective, however difficult that may be. We are also looking at our own company, M2N Media GmbH, which we will continue to build with determination in these challenging times. From the industry – for the industry! For you, we will continue to bring this motto to life every day in 2026.

On behalf of the M2N Media team, I wish you happy holidays and a healthy, trouble-free year 2026!

Yours

Martin Hirschmann
Editor-in-Chief



 **Martin Hirschmann**
Editor-In-Chief

martin.hirschmann@m2n-media.com
www.proflexconvert.com

 <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/pro-flexconvert>

*Join the
Converting Family!*



CONVERTING EVERY PRODUCTION NEED INTO EFFICIENCY

- Solution Coating
- Extrusion Coating
- Electrode Coating
- Printing

COMAS
a coesia company

SAM
SOLUTIONS START WITH SAM


sam-eu.com



PRO flexconvert

Magazine for Converting Professionals





Special

- 10 M2N Media GmbH
With perseverance and conviction – a very personal look at our status quo

Winding Technology & Knives

- 11 Kampf GmbH
New TitanSlitter SilverLine unveiled at K2025
- 12 Bäumler GmbH converting machines
“We must maintain and expand our technological lead!”
- 14 DIENES Group
Successful succession
- 16 Somatec Sondermaschinen GmbH
A spirit of optimism in Hamelin

Rollers & Sleeves

- 18 ESWE-FLEX Walzen GmbH & HAEHNE Elektronische Messgeräte GmbH
“Cooperation is no longer a nice-to-have, but a must-have!”
- 20 AST Beschichtungstechnik GmbH
Progress through investment and greater sustainability
- 22 August Dreckshage GmbH & Co. KG
Global outlook, local roots
- 24 INOMETA
Innovation partner – far beyond rollers

Automation, Handling & Software

- 26 EC-CONVERT
Added value, precision, performance, and automation – all in one line
- 28 KOCH Industrieanlagen GmbH
Expansion of the international sales network in China
- 30 Block & Mohr GmbH
Roll handling at all levels

Converting Spotlight

- 32 ICE Europe
“We want to be more than a trade show – we want to be an innovation community”
- 34 BOBST
“The industry is opening up – and we are accompanying our customers on this journey”
- 36 Comas S.p.A.
Engineering next-gen coating solutions for driving sustainable innovation

Events

- 39 Labelexpo Europe
Rebranding after successful Barcelona debut
- 40 FACHPACK
Converting meets Packaging
- 41 Editor's View
Strong together for the future
- 42 K 2025
Pole position confirmed

ConvertingPROs

- 43 Bischof+Klein
Strategic suppliers offer decisive competitive advantages

Converting Family

- 46 Munich Adhesives and Finishing Symposium
A proud anniversary

Neuenhauser Vorwald strengthens sales team with Oliver Funk

Oliver Funk has joined the sales team at Neuenhauser Vorwald, a leading manufacturer of clamping elements, on 1 November 2025.

Funk has been known as an industry specialist for many years. "New colleague, new potential. We're off to a flying start," emphasises Gerd Bouwer, Head of Business Unit at Neuenhauser Vorwald.

Neuenhauser Vorwald aims to further expand its market position and technologies thanks to Funk's expertise, his customer focus and his many years of technical experience in winding technology. Vorwald has been manufacturing clamping elements for the paper, film and plastics industries for decades – generally for all markets in which web-shaped materials are processed.

In addition to clamping shafts, clamping heads and knife rolls for cutting, the company manufactures glass-hard, chrome-plated or coated rolls in all shapes and sizes. Other areas of business include the handling and transport of clamping elements and the transport of finished goods with trough wagons, as well as insertion and removal devices (including FEM and CE conformity). The portfolio is rounded off with winding cores for all materials with diameters from 100 mm to 800 mm and lengths up to 5,000 mm made of aluminium or steel. "Nothing is impossible (as long as it is technically feasible)," says Gerd Bouwer.

With Oliver Funk, Neuenhauser Vorwald intends to further expand its product range, customer support and technical project planning.



Oliver Funk

 www.vorwald-neuenhauser.de
Image source: Neuenhauser Vorwald

Management transition shapes the future of GEW



(from left) Rob Rae, Ele Neill, Malcolm Rae and Gillian Rae

GEW has recently announced several key changes to the Senior Management of its operations, headquartered in West Sussex, England. These changes mark the transition of leadership of the family-owned company to the next generation. Rob Rae becomes Managing Director of the global GEW business and is President of GEW Inc. in Ohio. He continues to lead the company's Sales, Marketing and R&D functions. Ele Neill (née Rae) becomes Company Secretary and is Global HR Director. She now oversees all financial matters within GEW as well as her HR role.

Both Rob Rae and Ele Neill have gained a wealth of experience in their 13-year careers with GEW. Rob has gained invaluable experience of all GEW products.

He has introduced scientific rigour to the R&D department resulting in the development of GEW's ground breaking AeroLED and LeoLED LED curing systems. Under his leadership sales at GEW have grown steadily in all market sectors across the globe.

Ele Neill has rounded experience in all operational areas of the business. Her energy and drive have been vital in global recruitment of the very best people available, as she remarks: "Only through our staff can long term success be realised."

Malcolm and Gillian Rae, company founders and owners, will continue as Executive Directors of GEW. They will maintain a strong interest in the business and provide advice and guidance as required.

 www.gewuv.com
Image source: GEW



Raymond Baran

Maxcess appoints Raymond Baran as Interim CEO

Maxcess, a global leader for automation in the web handling industry, announced that Odd Joergenrud will step down from his position as Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately.

Since joining Maxcess in 2019, Joergenrud has led the company through several significant achievements, including merging Maxcess and RotoMetrics, enhancing the global leadership team, leading two impactful business acquisitions, and increasing the company's focus on new product development. Maxcess thanked Odd Joergenrud for his contributions and wished him the best in his future endeavours. Effective immediately, Raymond Baran has been appointed Interim CEO. He brings a long history with the Berwind Group, which acquired Maxcess in 2018. In addition to working closely with the Maxcess leadership team since its acquisition by Berwind, Baran has held numerous roles across Berwind and its operating companies over the past 26 years. He will work closely with the Maxcess leadership team to ensure a seamless leadership transition and align the organisation on a clear and defined future direction for the company.

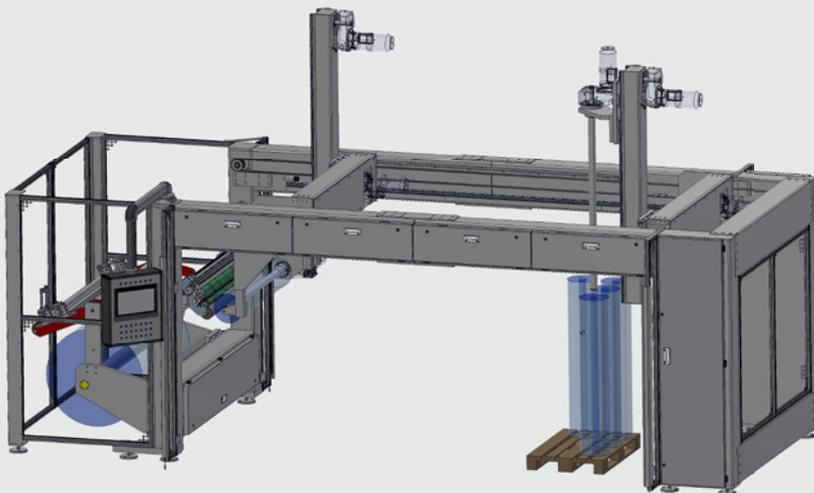


www.maxcessintl.com

Image source: Maxcess/Berwind Group

**Wir bringen die Rollenkonfektion
auf ein neues Level**

***We bring the short roll production
to a new level***



Bäumer GmbH
converting machines

MultiFLEX **NEW!**

All in One, patentierte Lösung
für alle Logrollen-Hersteller mit
integriertem Rollenhandling auf Palette.
Zweiter Arbeitsschritt wird gespart.

*All-in-one, patented solution
for all log roll manufacturers with
integrated roll handling on pallets.
The second step is eliminated.*

Request a non-binding offer:
Phone +49 5458 / 93661-0 or
E-Mail: vertrieb@b-ft.de
Hauernweg 5, 48496 Hopsten – Germany
www.baeumer-converting-machines.de





FACHPACK 2025

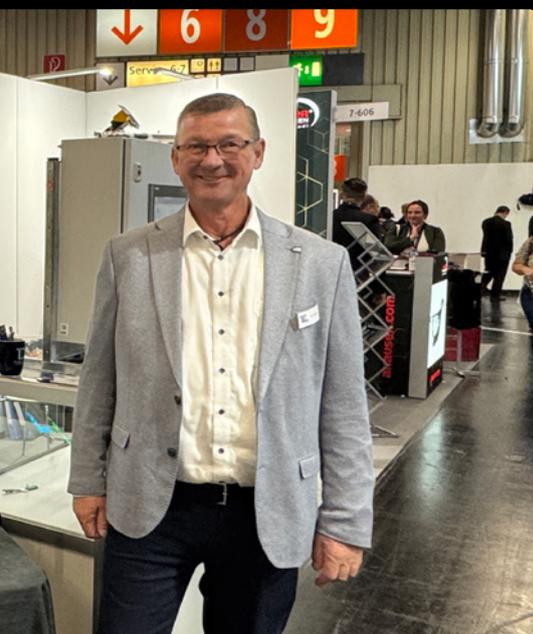
Successful premiere

As a joint project between NürnbergMesse and M2N Media, our 'Converting meets Packaging' Pavilion was successfully launched at FACHPACK 2025. A total of nine key players from the converting industry took advantage of the opportunity to network with the packaging industry. We are already looking forward to the next edition in 2027!

You can find more information about FACHPACK on pages 40-41.



Image source: Martin Hirschmann
www.fachpack.de



Special – M2N Media GmbH

With perseverance and conviction – a very personal look at our status quo

When we launched M2N Media GmbH in early 2024, we knew that starting a new business was no sprint. Building a company means finding your rhythm – just like in endurance sports: staying focused, overcoming setbacks, pacing yourself – and pulling ahead at the right moment. It is precisely this attitude that has carried us successfully through the past two years.

“We recently entered a relay team in the Frankfurt Marathon, which finished the 42.195 kilometres in 4:09:50,” says Martin Hirschmann, Managing Director and Editor-in-Chief. “Many people in the industry know that I am a passionate marathon runner. For me, this experience perfectly reflects how we work at M2N: together, reliably and with a clear goal.”



From left to right: Martin Hirschmann, Nina Pirchmoser and Nadine Bauernfeind

Economically sound – significant increase in turnover

Nina Pirchmoser, Managing Director and Head of Sales, describes it this way: “From the very beginning, we set out to run an economically sound business – not too fast, not too slow, but steadily forward. And this approach has paid off. We were able to significantly increase our turnover in 2025 and are now more stable than ever in the market.”

This stability is no coincidence. This year, we made over 20 trips to trade fairs, company visits and conferences on behalf of M2N Media GmbH.

Whether ICE Europe, Print4All, Labelexpo Europe, LOPEC, K 2025

or specialist conferences such as the Munich Adhesives and Finishing Symposium and PLACE – M2N was on site where the innovative power of the industry is generated. We talk to mechanical engineers, material manufacturers, research institutes and start-ups. We report where the key players in the converting industry and printed electronics are setting the pace.

Visual profile sharpened

A clear visual profile is needed to ensure that all these impressions find their way into videos, news articles, posts and magazine features. Nadine Bauernfeind, Managing Director and Head of Design, sums it up as follows:

“We want our content to not only inform, but also convey the energy of this industry. Design is the key driver for this. We have consistently developed our corporate design and reached a level that meets our high standards of quality and relevance.” In terms of content, we have established ourselves as the voice of the converting industry and printed electronics. Our community is growing, our reach is increasing, and more and more companies see M2N as a crucial partner that classifies developments, makes people visible and communicates technology in an understandable way.

Close to people – close to markets and machines

“We want to cover the topics of this industry with journalistic depth – close



The M2N Runners at the relay marathon: Julia Scharr, Tobias Reich, Samantha Maifeld and Martin Hirschmann

to people, close to machines, close to markets. The fact that we are now perceived as an established player is not a matter of course, but the result of many discussions, long journeys and a passion for technology journalism,” emphasises Martin Hirschmann. Our conclusion after this year: we are on the right track. We have found our pace. And we know that the most exciting kilometres are still ahead of us. Building M2N Media GmbH remains a marathon – but that is exactly what makes this journey so rewarding.



<https://m2n-converting.com>

Image source: M2N Media

Kampf GmbH

New TitanSlitter SilverLine unveiled at K2025

Kampf GmbH kicked off K 2025 in Düsseldorf with a double innovation highlight: the premiere of the newly developed TitanSlitter SilverLine and the presentation of the enhanced PrimeSlitter BlackLine with a working width of 12.3m marked two strategic milestones – designed for different requirements in the field of web-shaped materials, yet built on the same foundation of technological excellence.



The Kampf team at K2025

Right on time for the start of the trade fair, the Kampf exhibition team unveiled its latest development: the TitanSlitter SilverLine – a slitting machine specifically designed to meet the needs of a new customer segment.

Compact design, easy operation

The launch of this machine series represents an important step in the expansion of Kampf's product portfolio. The TitanSlitter SilverLine series stands out with its compact design, easy operation, and proven Kampf quality – ideal for modern converting companies that seek high product standards and precision in an economical format. With slitting speeds of up to 700m/min and material widths of up to 1,750mm, the series covers a wide range of applications – from films to coated

papers and laminates. Two configurations – Duplex or Turret rewinding, each available with integrated or separate unwinders – offer maximum flexibility for various production environments.

“With the TitanSlitter SilverLine, we are strategically addressing new market segments – without compromising on quality or service,” says Barrie Homewood, Head of Sales Flexible Packaging. “Modular in design and available with options such as laser positioning, automatic knife positioning, or edge trim extraction, the machine offers a high level of configuration and adaptability.”

High-performance processing of BOPP and BOPET films

Strong interest is also being drawn to the upgraded PrimeSlitter BlackLine, which sets new standards in high-performance processing of BOPP and BOPET films – with a working width of up to 12.3m (already prepared for 13m), a speed of 1,500m/min, and unwinding capacity up to 50 tons. As a full-solution provider, Kampf has also showcased new digital services, automation solutions, and the innovative human-machine interface EMMI, offering a completely new operator experience.

.....
 www.kampf.de
Image source: Martin Hirschmann



The new TitanSlitter SilverLine was officially unveiled in Düsseldorf

Bäumer GmbH converting machines

“We must maintain and expand our technological lead!”

What lessons can be learned from the experiences of the past K 2025? Alexandra Mönch, Technical Sales Manager at Bäumer GmbH, met with us for an interview – and did not mince her words.

PRO Flexconvert: Ms Mönch, as a representative of a medium-sized machinery manufacturer, how did you perceive K 2025?

Alexandra Mönch: Compared to previous plastics trade fairs in Düsseldorf, this time we were invited much more frequently by exhibitors to visit their stands. These included suppliers of web edge controls and rollers. The increasing internationality was also striking: US companies were particularly well represented, many of them with very large stands. There was also an extremely broad presence from Asia. On a positive note, there were no significant empty spaces at the exhibition centre – which speaks for an overall stable market development.



Alexandra Mönch and Martin Birsner from Bäumer GmbH converting machines



Plastics Europe – press release

PRO Flexconvert: During the trade fair, Plastics Europe published a press release that painted a rather bleak picture of the European plastics industry (we reported). How do you see the situation in mechanical engineering – especially in the converting sector?

A. Mönch: I think that plastics manufacturing is often misunderstood. In many respects, its processes are more environmentally friendly than most people assume. The requirements for film production are very strict and are monitored. The plastics industry has made great strides in recent years. Many manufacturers now frequently use recycled materials. For us as machine builders – especially in the field of winders – these recycled materials sometimes place high demands on precision and process control. In addition to plastics and paper manufacturers, we also pay close attention to energy efficiency, for example by using high-performance motors, energy recovery systems or energy-optimised heating systems when required. In addition to the issue of sustainability, there is another challenge for the market: many manufacturers of plastics and tapes report that their customers are increasingly buying in Asia. The decisive competitive factor here is price – and Asian suppliers can often score points with significantly lower offers.

PRO Flexconvert: What strategic conclusions can you draw from this at Bäumert? How can medium-sized machinery manufacturers position themselves in the competitive environment?

A. Mönch: One key is to clearly differentiate ourselves in terms of technology and efficiency. We must maintain and continuously expand our technological lead. Solutions with a high degree of automation are in demand both in Europe and the USA. In addition, there is also demand for technologies that can cover several areas even more efficiently, such as winding and destacking in a single machine. The capacity advantage cannot be denied. As a specialised machine manufacturer, we hardly ever produce 'off-the-shelf' products, but rather develop individual solutions that always incorporate innovation. Our competitive advantage lies in the fact that we use a 'modular principle'. By combining the modular components in the right way, it is not always necessary to develop something completely new.

PRO Flexconvert: Some observers say that companies from Europe or the USA have a 'guilty conscience' when they buy machines in Asia. Does this attitude still exist?

A. Mönch: Yes and no. There are certainly companies that deliberately choose European manufacturers and communicate this openly. This observation was recently confirmed to me by a Spanish manufacturer I spoke to. On the other hand, many buyers now have such a high level of technical expertise that they carry out any necessary retrofits on Asian machines themselves – for example, in the areas of electrical engineering, safety or CE certification. Some even take care of these steps entirely on their own. Asian manufacturers are not required to install safety devices on the machines; this is the responsibility of the operator. European and American manufacturers are obliged by CE/UL-CSA to install appropriate safety devices before the machine is delivered. In this case, the operator of the plant firstly has less effort to make a machine safe and secondly also receives the warranty from the machine manufacturers who build according to the CE and/or UL-CSA machine directives.

PRO Flexconvert: Let's talk about Bäumert specifically: What projects are you currently focusing on, and what makes you confident?

A. Mönch: Our approach is to focus on the entire system: It's not just about manufacturing the roll, but about the entire process chain – from finishing and labelling to packaging.

We recently applied for a new patent for a machine concept based on optimal utilisation of the winding point/winding shaft. Until now, winding shafts have only been used to wind the material webs. In our MultiFlex machine concept, we not only wind, but also enable finished roll handling with the winding shaft. This handling includes stacking the finished roll that has just been wound on this winding shaft, either eye to sky – upright stacking on a pallet, for example, or lying down. However, this winding machine can also be used to perform other steps, such as banding or feeding to a cutting machine, and much more. It is also a single control system without interfaces to robot applications or packaging machines, making the MultiFlex an all-in-one concept. This eliminates the need for manual handling by the operator. This is exactly the kind of automation we have been talking about – another step towards maximum efficiency and process integration. This allows us to continue positioning ourselves as a technical solution provider that offers its customers comprehensive machine concepts with a high degree of innovation.



www.baeumer-converting-machines.de

Image source: Martin Hirschmann

AHAUSER®
GUMMIWALZEN
One step ahead!

Great solutions often come with a secret.

We'll keep it safe. We promise!



ahauser.com

Ahauser Gummiwalzen Lammers GmbH & Co. KG
Heisenbergstraße 8 • 48683 Ahaus • Germany



Rüdiger Uhlitz,
Maja Supe-Dienes and
Martin Geveke

DIENES Group

Successful succession

After nearly five decades with the company, Dipl.-Ing. Rudolf Supe-Dienes, Managing Partner in the third generation, will retire at the end of the year. With his inventive spirit, technical expertise, and entrepreneurial foresight, he has played a key role in shaping the DIENES Group and driving its development into an internationally leading provider of industrial slitting and knife holder technology – a process that continues today.

Rudolf Supe-Dienes began his professional career at DIENES at the age of 16, completing vocational training as a toolmaker. Early on, he worked closely alongside his father and later jointly managed the family business with his brother Bernd Supe-Dienes (†25.09.2021). Together, they expanded the product portfolio, opened up international markets, and steered DIENES with foresight – always keeping the family succession in mind.

Generational change initiated early and proactively

The brothers planned and initiated the generational change early and proactively, ensuring that DIENES will continue to operate as a family-owned company and grow steadily, guided by long-term vision and family values. In 2021, Rudolf's son Julian Supe-Dienes joined the company as Head of Sales, and two years later, the group

was pleased to welcome him as an additional family member in the management team. His sister, Maja Supe-Dienes, started in 2023 as Project Manager in Corporate Development and is now part of the management of Messerfabrik Neuenkamp, a 100% subsidiary of the DIENES Group. Together, the siblings – initially with their uncle (†25.09.2021) and their father – have in recent years set the course for the company's future, creating a solid foundation on which they will continue to build. Both siblings are eager to follow in the large footsteps of the previous generations and actively shape the company's future together with their international team. They rely on the employees' extensive know-how, dedication, and expertise while simultaneously driving key changes: In economically challenging

times, they are advancing the development of the company’s sites, investing in modern machinery, and realigning personnel structures – measures that are already showing positive effects today.

Market leader in knives and slitting systems

The DIENES Group is a market-leading provider of knives, knife holders, and slitting systems for industrial applications, with a history spanning 112 years. Today, DIENES employs around 500 people across 9 locations. Around 100 national and international patents continue to set global standards in slitting across various industries. The company is regularly listed in the “Encyclopedia of Global Market Leaders” (Lexikon der Weltmarktführer) and recognised by the F.A.Z. Institute as “Germany’s Innovation Leader.”

.....
 www.dienes.de
Image source: DIENES Group

100 years of Messerfabrik Neuenkamp

2025 marks a very special milestone for Messerfabrik Neuenkamp: The company celebrates its 100th anniversary and has realigned its management team for the future.

Over the past century, they have grown together with employees, partners, and customers. What began as a small company in Remscheid has developed into a globally leading manufacturer of high-precision tools for slitting and trimming systems used in the processing of steel and non-ferrous materials. Founded in 1925 in Remscheid, the name Neuenkamp has stood for quality and precision from the very beginning. In 1976, the company became part of the family-owned DIENES Group, and in early 2019, it moved into a modern production site in Hückeswagen, featuring more than 4000 m² of state-of-the-art manufacturing space. Both were key milestones that have opened up new opportunities and further strengthened their position in the market.

Two new members have now been added to the management team. Together with Rüdiger Uhlitz, who has been with Neuenkamp for 30 years – 22 of them as part of the management board – Martin Geveke and Maja Supe-Dienes will actively shape the company’s future.



Rudolf Supe-Dienes (middle) with Maja Supe-Dienes and Julian Supe-Dienes

Martin Geveke joins as Technical Director, bringing over 20 years of leadership experience, a practical and solution-oriented management style, and outstanding technical expertise. He will take over, among other things, the responsibilities previously held by Sebastian Dörmbach, who has left the company and is no longer part of the management team.

For the first time in Neuenkamp’s history, they are also welcoming a member of the founding Dienes family to the management. Maja Supe-Dienes takes on the role of Commercial Management at Messerfabrik Neuenkamp. After completing her Master’s Degree in Management at ESMT Berlin, she initially worked for a leading management consultancy and has been part of the DIENES Group since 2023. Together with her brother Julian, she will continue to lead the Group into the future as a fourth-generation family business – with foresight and a strong sense of family values.

Somatec Sondermaschinen GmbH

A spirit of optimism in Hamelin

During our visit to Somatec Sondermaschinen GmbH in Hamelin, we spoke with Managing Director Thorsten Kuhlmann about an eventful year, the integration of new business areas and a significantly expanded product portfolio.

PRO Flexconvert: Mr Kuhlmann, how would you describe the past few months at Somatec? What were your main areas of focus?

Thorsten Kuhlmann: We are in a very active phase – and have therefore placed a clear focus on sales. We have hired new colleagues, established additional agencies, including in Turkey and Scandinavia, and expanded our telemarketing activities.

In short, we have moved from a rather passive, existing customer-driven sales approach to an active, structured sales approach. This has kept us very busy over the past twelve months – and it has paid off. With Rolf Schlüter, we have also gained another sales expert for the new machine sector.

PRO Flexconvert: Let's move on to the takeover of the Kampf LSF portfolio. What prompted Somatec to take this step?

T. Kuhlmann: Kampf decided to close LSF – even though LSF had a technically strong portfolio in the field of special-purpose machines and battery applications. As the products were not identical but very complementary to our own, this presented us with an ideal opportunity.

We were able to take over the portfolio, the spare parts business and the established customer base. Above all, we are expanding our market presence: LSF was strong in Europe, while Somatec has traditionally been very active in Asia.

The acquisition will enable us to gain additional customer segments and build an attractive service network. Some LSF concepts – such as the shaftless winder – are technologically outstanding and deserve to be continued.

PRO Flexconvert: Is a portfolio like LSF's perhaps better suited to a company size like Somatec's?

T. Kuhlmann: In many cases, yes. Some customers want flexibility even during the project – for example, for special requests, adjustments or unusual process requirements. As an agile company, we can respond to this more directly. LSF traditionally had many special solutions in its range, which fits in very well with our culture. There are great opportunities in the service sector in particular: LSF machines are used by renowned adhesive tape manufacturers, many of them with complex special concepts. We want to continue this expertise.

PRO Flexconvert: At the beginning of the year, you took over the knife holder division from Engel. Can you already give us an interim assessment?

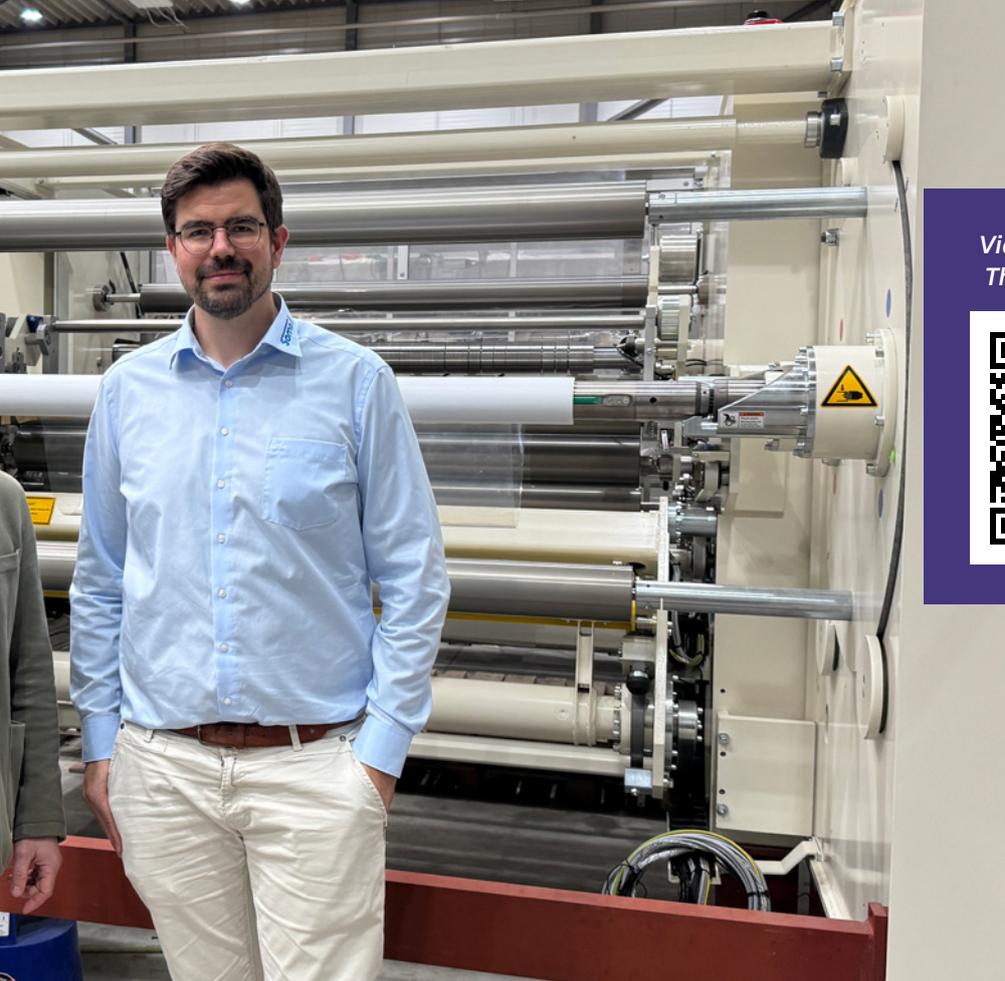
T. Kuhlmann: Yes, and it's a positive one. Sales are good and the purchase price has already been amortised. However, integration into our design and ERP systems is challenging – we are transferring the entire portfolio into our own system environment.



We have also streamlined and clearly structured the range: standard holders on the one hand, special holders on the other. The aim is always to combine attractive prices, good delivery times and – in the case of special solutions – individual advice.

PRO Flexconvert: Isn't it unusual for knife holders and winders to come from the same manufacturer? What are the advantages of this?

T. Kuhlmann: This is actually a unique selling point. We use the holders ourselves. Just recently, we integrated a complex knife system with Engel holders into a slitting and winding project for a film manufacturer. This clearly shows how well the interaction works – for example, when knife positions and winder control are directly linked. We now also offer slitting tests: one of our employees wrote his bachelor's thesis on this topic and designed a test device for this purpose. Customers can send us samples (approx. 1 × 1 m) and we test



Arthur Holzmann (left) and Thorsten Kuhlmann in front of a Somatec machine

various holders, heated/unheated, shear or crush cut. This gives the customer a clear recommendation for their optimal cutting concept.

PRO Flexconvert: Do you want to focus more on new customers in 2026?

T. Kuhlmann: Yes, definitely. We will expand the knife holder business in a targeted manner. Many new customers are looking for combined solutions – and here we benefit from the expertise of the Engel constructions. The advantage is that a knife holder is a highly complex component. The backbone construction, drilling patterns, surfaces, air flow – all of this has been perfected over many years. This expertise was immediately available with the takeover. With our own design, we are further optimising the system, making it more flexible and attractive – both technically and in terms of price.

PRO Flexconvert: Another current topic is your winding system for TPO roofing membranes. What makes this project special?

T. Kuhlmann: The special feature is the combination of a large web width (almost 4m) and extremely short cycle times – less than a minute. The combi-winder makes it possible to produce finished short rolls inline, bond them completely and package them. At the same time, production reliability is maintained: in the event of a malfunction, we can switch to the large roll position at any time without having to cut the web. This is a real added value for the customer.

PRO Flexconvert: To summarise all these steps – Somatec is growing and significantly expanding its portfolio. What is your outlook?

T. Kuhlmann: We are entering the coming months in a stronger position. With our expanded product portfolio, we believe we are very well positioned. Of course, the political

Video interview with Thorsten Kuhlmann



environment is challenging – tariffs, trade conflicts with China, the war in Ukraine. This is weighing on the willingness of many customers to invest. We would therefore like to see clear signals to strengthen Germany as a business location. At the same time, our focus is shifting more towards Europe. The Asian market remains important, but it will no longer have the same dimension as before. In the USA and Canada, on the other hand, we see interesting prospects again if the customs issue calms down.

PRO Flexconvert: How have you organised yourselves internally to cover the new areas efficiently?

T. Kuhlmann: We have clearly divided the responsibilities:

- » Rolf Schlüter and I jointly manage the new machine business.
- » Arthur Holzmann is taking over the Engel division completely and will continue to develop it.
- » My brother, Hauke Kuhlmann, is responsible for service and spare parts.

This internal structure allows us to respond very specifically to market requirements.

.....
 www.somatec-hameln.de
 Image source: Martin Hirschmann



The new MWB measuring roller

ESWE-FLEX Walzen GmbH & HAEHNE Elektronische Messgeräte GmbH

“Cooperation is no longer a nice-to-have, but a must-have!”

ESWE-FLEX and HAEHNE made their first appearance as a team at K 2025 with a jointly developed solution for integrated web tension measurement. What began as a logical combination of two areas of expertise has developed into a partnership that is designed to directly benefit both machine manufacturers and end users. We spoke to Thomas Ziegler, Sales Manager at ESWE-FLEX, and Guido Herper, Head of Sales and Business Development at HAEHNE, about how this collaboration came about, their new product – the MWB measuring roller – and their view of the state of the industry.

PRO Flexconvert: Mr Herper, Mr Ziegler – how did the collaboration between ESWE-FLEX and HAEHNE come about?

Guido Herper: The term “web tension measuring roll” basically encapsulates the entire logic behind the collaboration: a roll that measures. And a measurement that requires a roll. On the one hand, we have our expertise in web tension measurement, and on the other, ESWE-FLEX’s roller technology know-how. The roller body, the coating, the mechanical design – all of this is extremely close to the process in practice and requires real expertise. As machine manufacturers increasingly want integrated assemblies rather than individual components, it quickly became clear that a joint solution would create real added value for them.

Thomas Ziegler: For us, the cooperation is also a logical addition. Our customers want to purchase complete, functioning systems from a single source, without additional interfaces. By working with HAEHNE, we can do just that. We also had the right personal connection, which is a huge help in projects like this.

PRO Flexconvert: The core of your collaboration is the new MWB measuring roller. What makes this product special?

G. Herper: The MWB is an integrated measuring roller concept in modular form. The roller body is designed according to the web width, and we equip it with two internal force measuring pins. Both sides are connected via an axle. This results in an extremely compact unit that can be integrated directly into the machine frame using two screws. The measurement can be taken as an average value or separately for the left and right sides – important, for example, if loose web ends or asymmetrical tension distributions occur.

T. Ziegler: We are targeting two groups: machine manufacturers who want to simplify their systems and reduce the number of components, and end users who are looking for robust, flexible solutions for upgrades or retrofits. The MWB can be used directly at many guide roller positions – without additional measuring bearings on the outside of the machine frame. This is a real advantage, especially in harsh operating conditions.

PRO Flexconvert: You made your first joint trade fair appearance at K 2025. What was the reaction like?

T. Ziegler: Very positive. Many visitors knew us separately, but not as a team. Now they could experience first-hand how roller construction and measurement technology complement each other. Our stand was open and inviting – and we were able to pass

contacts back and forth. It made things much easier for customers because they could get answers about rollers and measurement in one place.

G. Herper: Both brands have been on the market for decades. Many customers already use rollers from ESWE-FLEX and measuring systems from HAEHNE. For them, the cooperation was a logical next step. The feedback was very encouraging – especially the statement that we are filling a real gap in the market with the MWB.

PRO Flexconvert: How do you assess the market situation – both at K and overall?

G. Herper: We are seeing very different developments in Europe. Sectors such as automotive and battery cell manufacturing are under pressure, and our customers are feeling the effects. At the same time, there are many segments in which investment remains strong – for example, in the processing of continuous webs or in retrofit projects. We don't see a crisis there. Things have been looking up for many years since 2010. Now we are seeing cyclical shifts, but we ourselves are not feeling the crisis in our own order intake.

T. Ziegler: That coincides with our perception. The mood at K was much better than expected. Of course, we are also hearing critical voices from individual niches. But overall, our order situation is stable, even positive. The broad positioning of our customer segments helps in this regard.

PRO Flexconvert: Will we see ESWE-FLEX and HAEHNE working together more often in the future?

T. Ziegler: I certainly hope so. The collaboration works excellently, both professionally and personally. The synergies are noticeable for both sides – and even more so for the customers.

G. Herper: Yes, absolutely. We are in a phase where cooperation is necessary in order to serve the market efficiently. Entrepreneurial independence remains important, but synergies bring speed, technical depth and proximity to the customer. Our partnership demonstrates exactly that – we have found a very charming connection with both companies!

 www.haehne.de
www.eswe-flex.de

Image source: HAEHNE/ESWE-FLEX



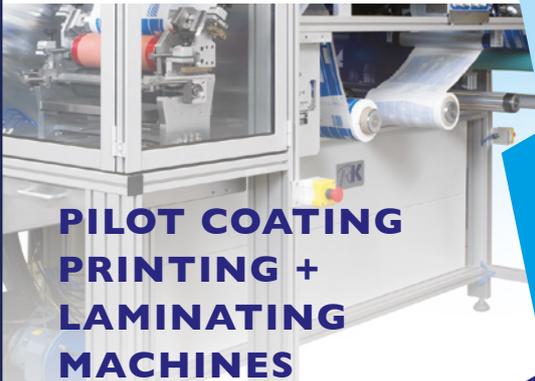


 REPEATABLE SAMPLES

 RESEARCH + DEVELOPMENT

 QUALITY CONTROL

 GLOBAL SUPPORT



PILOT COATING PRINTING + LAMINATING MACHINES

With the ability to print, coat and laminate all types of flexible webs applying various coatings by multiple application processes, the VCML is ideal for research + development, quality control, and small scale production for low volume of a specialised product. Various options available include slot die, rotary screen, gravure, flexo, hot air drying, with the ability to add flash sintering and plasma treaters.

RK PRINTCOAT INSTRUMENTS LTD
sales@rkprint.com +44 (0)1763 852187

THE FIRST NAME IN SAMPLE
PREPARATION EQUIPMENT




AST Beschichtungstechnik GmbH

Progress through investment and greater sustainability

During our on-site visit to Rot am See, Managing Director Alexander Kleinert gave us a tour of the production facilities at AST Beschichtungstechnik GmbH. In our conversation, he talked about a challenging but successful 2025, new technologies and his view of the industry.

PRO Flexconvert: Mr Kleinert, you have just given us a tour of the production facility. How did 2025 go for AST – and where do you stand at the moment?

Alexander Kleinert: 2025 was an interesting and very insightful year. We had many challenges to overcome, but we mastered them. Overall, we came through this year well and were able to maintain our position.

PRO Flexconvert: What were the main focuses of your customer enquiries? Where did production go?

A. Kleinert: Due to the economic situation, the market has become smaller overall. Quality, delivery time and price are therefore much higher in the ranking than before. We have focused on precisely these points: working more effectively, optimising processes, being even closer to customer requirements. That was crucial in 2025.



Alexander Kleinert (left) in an interview with Martin Hirschmann

Soon on our website:
The video interview with
Alexander Kleinert



PRO Flexconvert: What does a medium-sized roller manufacturer in Germany need in 2025 to be successful? And what would you like to see from politicians?

A. Kleinert: I would like politicians to pay more attention to small and medium-sized enterprises. In our industry, however, the most important thing is still the network – the close relationship between customers and suppliers. For us, this means spending more time with customers again, listening to them and taking note of their requirements. This proximity is more important today than ever before.

PRO Flexconvert: You have invested in new machine technology for your production. What was the reason behind this?

A. Kleinert: There is a motto that I like to follow: 'No progress is the same as standing still.' That's why we have commissioned a new CNC grinding machine, which we are very proud of. For us, this is an important milestone in terms of efficiency and sustainable manufacturing.

PRO Flexconvert: Sustainability is also an issue for roller manufacturers. What is AST doing specifically?

A. Kleinert: On the one hand, we generate part of our own electricity with our photovoltaic system. On the other hand, we invest in efficient machines to save energy and costs. Every optimised system helps us to reduce our use of resources.

PRO Flexconvert: What are your goals for the coming year?

A. Kleinert: There will be changes in materials in 2026. Some materials are no longer available on the market. We are working intensively to develop alternatives

(right) The new CNC grinding machine at AST; (below) Rollers from the AST portfolio are supplied to world-renowned companies – and must meet the highest quality assurance requirements



so that we can continue to deliver the quality our customers are accustomed to. Research and experimentation are currently a major focus.

PRO Flexconvert: You travel a lot and know the converting industry network very well. What are you observing at the moment?

A. Kleinert: The market is becoming more competitive. Many companies are outsourcing abroad – a clearer

commitment to ‘Made in Germany’ would be desirable. At the same time, however, I see that cooperation within the industry is becoming stronger again. That is positive.

PRO Flexconvert: You were also at K 2025. How did you find the trade fair?

A. Kleinert: Very positive. You could see how much effort the exhibitors had put into promoting their sector again. Expectations for K were high, and in my view they were met: good discussions, good contacts, good exchanges. The next few quarters will show whether this is also reflected in the figures – but my overall impression was very good.



www.thermcoat.de

Image source: Martin Hirschmann



ASHE converting equipment



ASHE Converting Equipment supply slitting and rewinding machinery for both narrow and wide web applications.

Our narrow web machines include a range of inspection slitter rewinders, inline and offline turret rewinders and full converting lines for self adhesive label production

Our wide web range includes 4 duplex machines and 2 duplex turrets to meet the demands of all converters of flexible substrates, along with doctor rewinding machines.



ASHE Converting Equipment
Bluestem Road, Ransomes Euro Park,
Ipswich, IP3 9RR
United Kingdom

www.ashe.co.uk

August Dreckshage GmbH & Co. KG

Global outlook, local roots

During our visit to August Dreckshage GmbH & Co. KG in Bielefeld, we spoke with Managing Director Christian Steffen and Sebastian Sewöster, Business Unit Director Technical Rollers. The focus was on the development of the company, the rapidly growing spreader roller business and its strategic positioning in turbulent times.

PRO Flexconvert: Mr Steffen, Dreckshage can look back on over 100 years of history. What constitutes the company's DNA?

Christian Steffen: It all started with the steel trade – and these origins continue to shape us today. Over the decades, other business areas have been added, always based on market demand. One example is linear technology, which initially started out as a pure trading product, but quickly required ready-to-install services. This gave rise to what defines us today: step by step, we evolved from a mere trading company into a thriving trading and manufacturing company that offers a broad portfolio of mechanical engineering products from a single source.

PRO Flexconvert: Your slogan is 'A paradise for mechanical engineers'. What is behind this?

C. Steffen: Our goal is to offer as many ready-to-install products as possible from a single source – technical rollers, plastics according to drawings, linear components and even semi-finished products from the steel trade. Ideally, a mechanical engineer receives a complete solution from us in a single delivery, and with short response times. In some areas, such as the steel trade, we are regionally anchored, but roller technology in particular is now a global business.

PRO Flexconvert: Mr Sewöster, your spreader roller is a growth driver for your company. What makes it so successful?

Sebastian Sewöster: We introduced the EcoStretchRoll seven years ago and have consistently developed it further. Its great strength lies in the fact that it stretches extremely thin and sensitive materials gently and without leaving marks, without additional drives or complex settings. This makes it interesting worldwide – for film manufacturers, nonwovens, tapes or the energy sector. Today, we work with around 20 international trading partners who directly serve their markets. In addition, the special rubber coating is patented and available exclusively from us.

PRO Flexconvert: What technical trends are driving demand in your company?

S. Sewöster: Material savings are a global issue. Substrates are becoming thinner, processes more sensitive, and at the same time, surfaces must remain flawless. Our rollers work just as well at 30µm as they do at 4µm – without leaving any marks. This is a clear advantage, for example, for battery applications or precision films.



Video interview with
Sebastian Sewöster



PRO Flexconvert: Mr Steffen, the current economic conditions are difficult. How are you dealing with this?

C. Steffen: Of course, political uncertainties, trade conflicts and political crises are affecting our markets. But our structure helps us enormously: we are broadly positioned and, in special machine construction, we are not purely in price competition, but in solution competition. And the roller business in particular is in global demand. Many markets – for example in Asia or parts of South America – are growing faster than Europe. We are focusing on internationalisation, not as a reaction, but as a long-term strategy.

PRO Flexconvert: We are here in Leopoldshöhe – not far from the actual headquarters in Bielefeld. How would you characterise your location strategy?

C. Steffen: Our main locations here in the Bielefeld area have been continuously expanded since 2012. In addition, we have set up an assembly facility in the USA together with a long-standing partner in order to be able to serve the market more quickly. American customers need short-term solutions. With local capacities, we can guarantee this.

PRO Flexconvert: What exactly does this commitment in the USA look like?

S. Sewöster: We continue to manufacture the base of the spreader roller in Bielefeld. But our partner keeps all the necessary

components on site and assembles the rollers independently. This enables extremely short delivery times – a decisive competitive advantage in North America.

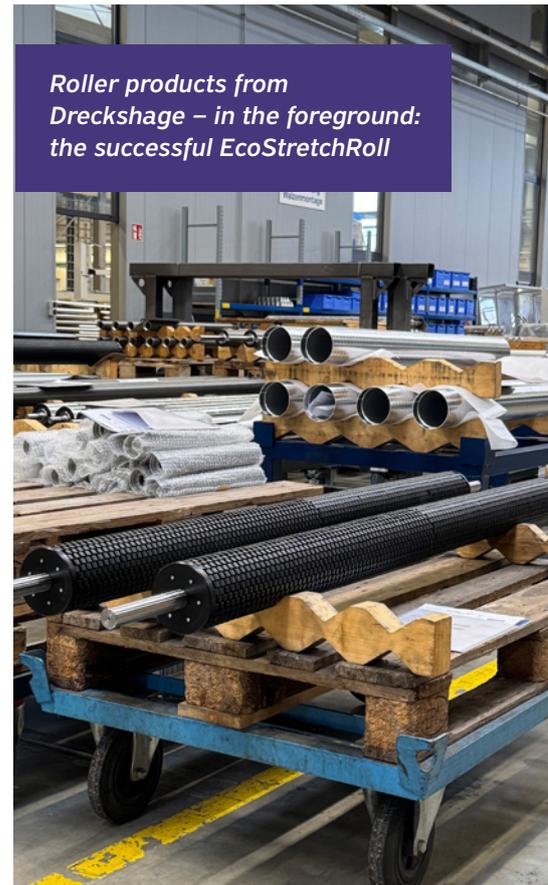
PRO Flexconvert: Mr Steffen, in conclusion: what is your outlook?

C. Steffen: We are optimistic about the coming months. Of course, there are external factors that we cannot influence. But our orientation – broad expertise, strong niches, international presence – is a solid basis for further growth. And regardless of political turmoil, our solutions are needed worldwide.



www.dreckshage-rollers.com

Image source: Martin Hirschmann



VETAPHONE
Corona & Plasma

ADVANCED SURFACE TREATMENT SOLUTIONS

FOR PRINT AND FLEXIBLE PACKAGING COMPANIES WORLDWIDE.

ENGINEERED BY VETAPHONE
GUARANTEED BY VETAPHONE
LOCAL SUPPORT BY VETAPHONE



SCAN ME
BOOK OUR VIRTUAL SHOWROOM & TEST LAB FOR YOUR BUSINESS

sales@vetaphone.com

www.vetaphone.com



THE ONLY CHOICE FOR SURFACE TREATMENT

INOMETA

Innovation partner – far beyond rollers

The ever-growing demands of the battery market and the complex processes involved in film transport require machine elements that redefine precision, speed and efficiency. Particularly when processing highly sensitive and extremely thin substrates such as electrode foils or separator films, components with minimal starting torque and low inertia are required to avoid web tension peaks and material damage. INOMETA, as a leading specialist in rotationally symmetrical components in lightweight construction, addresses these challenges with a new generation of low-friction rollers, the production of which sets new standards in the state-of-the-art Smart Factory in Herford, Germany, and which are complemented by the digital product identity INOid.



In the new smart factory at INOMETA in Herford

A self-supporting cantilever roll



Precision for the battery market and film transport

The manufacture of lithium-ion battery cells, in particular the coating, calendaring and slitting of electrode foils, places the highest demands on web guidance. Even the slightest deviations in web tension can lead to wrinkling, stretching or damage to the sensitive materials, thereby significantly reducing the quality of the finished cell. INOMETA's smooth-running rollers are specially designed for these critical applications: the consistent use of lightweight materials such as aluminium or CFRP (carbon fibre reinforced plastic) reduces the inertia of the rollers to a minimum. This enables extremely fast acceleration and braking processes without significant inertial forces, which is essential for dynamic web tension control. High-precision, low-friction bearings and perfect concentricity are crucial. A minimal starting torque ensures that the roller is set in motion even with the slightest tensile force of the web and does not introduce unnecessary tension into the material, which is particularly critical with very thin films and low web tensions.



Use of cantilever rollers

Cantilever rollers are often used for film transport and web guidance. These single-sided rollers are essential when quick and easy roller replacement is required or when the roller must be accessible across the entire web width. Here, too, lightweight construction is of crucial importance: the lower mass and inertia reduce the load on the bearing and the entire machine unit, minimise vibrations and enable higher working speeds, thus increasing production efficiency.

High-performance series production with the highest quality

At its site in Herford, INOMETA operates a state-of-the-art smart factory characterised by fully automated production facilities. High-precision turning, milling and grinding centres as well as robotics take care of all process steps – from raw part clamping and machining to final measurement and quality control. Production allows for maximum flexibility with variable roll lengths of up to two metres and different diameters. This automation not only significantly increases production

capacity, but also guarantees seamless process monitoring in real time. This ensures that quality remains at a consistently high level, even for series with a wide variety of batch sizes.

Digital product identity with INOid – digitalisation reimaged

With its digital solution INOid, INOMETA is transforming the classic roller into an intelligent, networked asset. Each roller is given a unique digital ID that provides access to comprehensive product-specific data via QR code or RFID. Measurement reports, material certificates, delivery notes and maintenance histories are available digitally and clearly arranged at any time. INOid enables modern asset management that minimises errors during installation and service and forms the basis for condition monitoring and predictive maintenance systems. This increases operational reliability and significantly extends the service life of the rolls.

Tailor-made coating technologies for the most demanding requirements

Another aspect of INOMETA's innovative strength is the development of functional coatings (PROTEK). These are specially tailored to properties such as sliding characteristics, traction and wear resistance. Electrically conductive variants also play an important role, preventing electrostatic charges, especially in dry and clean room environments. These prevent potential material contamination and sticking, thus improving process quality in the long term.

Sustainable development and responsibility

In addition to technological innovation, INOMETA attaches great importance to sustainability and resource conservation. The use of lightweight materials not only reduces material consumption, but also lowers the energy requirements of the machines due to lower inertia.

Conclusion: INOMETA as a holistic development partner

INOMETA's portfolio encompasses much more than the construction of individual rollers. The combination of innovative lightweight construction, maximum manufacturing precision, digital networking and comprehensive development support makes INOMETA an indispensable partner in complex manufacturing processes. The company delivers sustainable performance, efficiency and quality from a single source – from prototyping to series production, from product identification to process optimisation. INOMETA positions itself as the development partner that machine builders and users trust when it comes to innovation and future viability.



www.inometa.de

Image source: INOMETA

EC-CONVERT

Added value, precision, performance, and automation – all in one line

In an increasingly competitive converting market, manufacturers demand faster, smarter, and safer production lines that combine high precision with full process control. In response to this challenge, EC-CONVERT has developed the SLT2-140, a fully automated slitting and rewinding line that integrates laser perforation, automatic labelling, and robotic palletising, offering a complete end-to-end solution for flexible packaging converters.

A new standard in automation with high flexibility

The SLT2-140 has been engineered to deliver continuous, flexible, and highly efficient production with minimal operator intervention. Its dual-turret nonstop rewriter ensures high working speeds and maximum uptime, achieving up to 30% more productivity compared to conventional systems, while automatic knife positioning, reel-closure gluing system, and automatic core positioning reduce setup times and ensure consistent rewinding quality.

A high-efficiency algorithm controls the positioning of both circular and razor knives, minimising changeover time, eliminating errors, and guaranteeing slitting precision.



Josep Orozco

The integrated laser module enables micro-perforation, macro-perforation, window cutting, and easy-open applications at high speed, adapting seamlessly to different materials and packaging formats. But the real innovation lies in its flexible total automation concept. From roll extraction to palletising, the line incorporates a self-adjusting system powered by servomotors, automatically adapting every operation to the roll's diameter, weight, and destination. All operations are performed automatically: transporting, labelling, weighing, wrapping, and palletising, including the automatic placement of cardboard sheets between layers. This not only increases productivity and operator safety, but also ensures a stable, repeatable process with minimal downtime.

Smart production and full connectivity

The SLT2-140 offers complete control of production parameters, integrating ERP data directly and maintaining full roll traceability throughout the entire manufacturing process. A key challenge was automating without losing flexibility, a goal achieved by enabling multiple production orders within the same roll and incorporating fast changeover capability. With IoT connectivity, real-time monitoring, quality control, traceability, and advanced data analytics, the system adapts easily to different environments and customer needs, delivering maximum OEE performance. Its intelligent architecture allows data analysis and the application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) engines to optimise processes, enabling data-driven, highly efficient production.

This level of smart automation significantly reduces setup times and operating costs, offering converters a new benchmark in efficiency, traceability, and process control.

Modular design, ready to grow

Built on a modular and scalable platform, the SLT2-140 can be configured with different levels of automation to meet each customer's production requirements. Whether integrated into an existing process or operating as a standalone system, every module communicates seamlessly to ensure synchronised line speeds, precise tension control, and consistent quality throughout the operation. Its modular design also supports future expansions and upgrades, making it a long-term investment that evolves with production needs.

SLT2-140 overview with full automation and key applications



The human side of innovation

According to Josep Orozco, Co-Founder & Business Development Manager at EC-CONVERT, "The SLT2-140 represents our vision of what modern converting should be: fully automated, connected, and designed around the customer's needs. It combines cutting-edge technology with practical engineering to deliver measurable improvements in productivity, precision, and flexibility."

Engineering made in Spain

With the SLT2-140, EC-CONVERT reinforces its position as a leading Spanish technology company in the design and manufacturing of converting and flexible packaging machinery. Known for delivering custom, value-added solutions, the company helps manufacturers enhance their efficiency and competitiveness. More than just a machine, the SLT2-140 represents a new generation of intelligent, high-performance lines, designed to optimise every stage of the process, from slitting to palletising.

As Josep Orozco adds: "In a globalised and highly price-competitive environment dominated by technological giants, the only way to compete is by creating value through reinventing how products

are manufactured. To achieve this, it is essential to combine processes, integrate value-added solutions, and automate both operation and management. This creates value in the final products, reduces costs, and builds real barriers to competition." Automation, added value, precision, and flexibility, all in a single line. That is the future of converting, today.



www.ec-convert.com

Image source: EC-CONVERT

Video interview
with Josep Orozco
at K 2025



Reliable quality in every winding shaft.



- Suitable for film, paper, laminates and many other materials.
- Available in all common standard sizes or completely customised.
- Expert advice with over 30 years of experience.



winding technology components

IBD  **WICKELTECHNIK**
well engineered

www.ibd-wt.com

KOCH Industrieanlagen GmbH

Expansion of the international sales network in China

Establishing new contacts, strengthening existing partnerships and discovering current industry trends: With these goals in mind, Jan-Henning Röseler, Business Development Manager and converting expert at KOCH Robot Systems, visited this year's K trade fair in Düsseldorf – the international meeting place for the plastics and rubber industry.

The focus was on numerous discussions with customers to exchange information about current projects, discuss new developments or simply get back in touch personally. And this personal exchange was worthwhile in many ways – because at the stand of a long-standing partner, Jan-Henning Röseler came into contact with Phini Wang, an experienced industry professional who has been working for over ten years as a representative of one of KOCH's long-standing partner companies in the converting industry in China.

The discussions took place on an equal footing from the outset, and it quickly became apparent that both sides were thinking along the same lines and that there was great potential for closer cooperation. "Sometimes you just meet the right people at the right time – and at the K trade fair, it clicked immediately," says Jan-Henning Röseler enthusiastically.

New partnership with vision

The initial contact at the trade fair quickly led to concrete cooperation: in the same week after the K trade fair, Phini Wang was already visiting KOCH in Dernbach to get to know the team and gain a deeper insight into the company's work. This speed shows that both sides knew immediately that the chemistry was right. With his company JW Extrusion Winding Film Technology, Phini Wang will act as the regional representative for China, building bridges between KOCH Robot Systems and the Chinese converting industry. The aim of the collaboration is to strengthen KOCH's presence in the Chinese market and support local customers with innovative automation solutions.

"In the converting sector in particular, it is crucial to really speak our customers' language – both technically and culturally," emphasises Jan-Henning Röseler. "With Phini Wang, we are not only gaining an experienced market expert, but also someone who builds bridges – linguistically, professionally and personally."

Focus on China – a market with great automation potential

China is now one of the largest and fastest-growing markets for industrial automation worldwide. Studies show that demand for automation solutions there has been rising steadily for years, with annual growth rates of around 8 to 10 percent. The reason: Chinese companies are also increasingly facing the challenge of finding qualified specialists.

Automation is therefore no longer a luxury, but the logical response to rising production requirements – especially in the converting sector, where efficiency, precision and flexibility are crucial. "We see enormous potential in the Chinese converting market in particular. The demand for efficient, flexible solutions is growing rapidly – and this is exactly where we can score with our experience and our modular system solutions," explains Jan-Henning Röseler.



Jan-Henning Röseler (left) with Phini Wang (middle) and Jan Hoffmann

Strong solutions, clear advantages – the KOCH Big Five

With his many years of experience in the field of slitter rewinders and extrusion, Phini Wang brings valuable expertise and a strong network to the partnership.

KOCH Robot Systems, in turn, wants to convince its customers and partners in the Chinese converting industry of the benefits of the KOCH Big Five – five standardised, combinable automation modules that can be individually adapted to any production process: unloading, labelling, packaging, palletising and load securing.

These modules form the core of many KOCH solutions and enable a wide variety of production processes to be designed efficiently, economically and with a view to the future. With their modular system architecture, both simple and complex processes can be mapped – a clear competitive advantage for companies that focus on quality and productivity.

For the converting sector in China in particular, this combination opens up new opportunities to optimise production processes in a targeted manner and increase the level of automation step by step. “Phini Wang is the perfect “connector” for us – he knows the

market, the people and the machines. Together, we can really make a difference in China,” says Jan-Henning Röseler with a wink.

Stronger together – globally networked

With its new regional representation in China, KOCH Robotersysteme is further expanding its international sales network. The company has been working successfully with external partners in Austria, Turkey, Poland and Germany for many years – these partners primarily serve the food, chemical, packaging and pharmaceutical industries. With Phini Wang as its representative for the converting sector in China, KOCH is now specifically adding a specialist for this market to its network. “Phini Wang is the perfect addition to our global network,” says Jan-Henning Röseler. “He understands the dynamics of the Chinese market – and knows what really matters in the converting sector. Together, we will provide exciting impetus there.”



www.koch-roboter.de

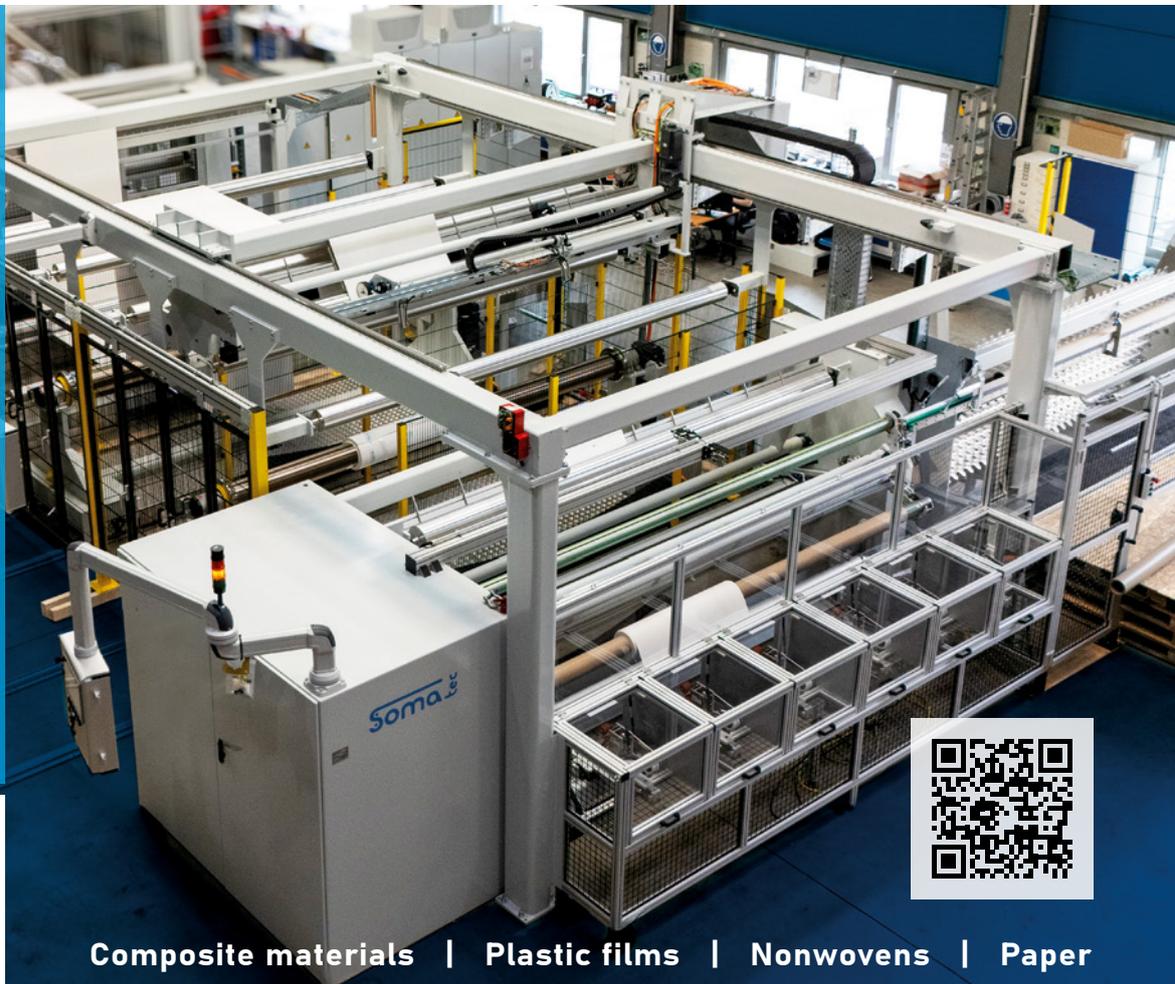
Image source: KOCH Industrieanlagen GmbH

Our new Combiwinder

- » for 12 ft. TPO roof topping material
- » 50m Accumulator
- » Jumbo roll winder for semi-automatic roll change
- » 3-station roll winder for cycle under 1 minute

SomaTec

The world of winding



Composite materials | Plastic films | Nonwovens | Paper

Sondermaschinen GmbH | info@somatec-hameln.de | www.somatec-hameln.de

A roll handling system
from Italian manufacturer
ARMANNI Carrelli elevatori

Block & Mohr GmbH

Roll handling at all levels

The German converting specialist Block & Mohr is delighted to announce the delivery and commissioning of two different roll handling systems – both with the same objective: to transfer rolls from the machine onto a pallet or to the subsequent production process.

There are two basic approaches to this – floor-based or crane-based. In August, a highly efficient floor-based roll lifting, turning and transport trolley was delivered to a renowned manufacturer of packaging material for medical products. The roll handling system from Italian manufacturer ARMANNI Carrelli elevatori in Bergamo, model name CP-Light evo, has a special clamping head that can be inserted into the sleeve using camera and monitor-guided remote control – even with high pallets and difficult visibility conditions. Rolls weighing up to 325kg and with an outer diameter of 600mm can be easily manipulated and transported.

Direct handling at slitting and winding machines

Overhead or crane-based systems for the direct handling of rolls at slitting and winding machines are widely used, popular and frequently employed. Systems such as the RH200 TA model from DOTECH, a Dutch partner of Block & Mohr with particular expertise in handling applications on rewinders, slitter-rewinders and packaging systems, can achieve cycle times of two rolls per minute. This enables the operator to palletise or dispose of materials without any significant physical strain. This criterion



is becoming increasingly important in times of fewer and older workers, as occupational safety requirements are also becoming ever more stringent. A special portal system enables work to be carried out on three levels over larger areas.

New roll manipulator for nonwoven fabric manufacturer

Block & Mohr GmbH, the German-speaking distributor and project developer based in Ibbenbüren near Osnabrück, is delighted with the recent installation and commissioning of a new roll manipulator at a global nonwoven fabric manufacturer in Germany.

A special feature of this project is the comprehensive support provided by Block & Mohr GmbH: In addition to providing advice, the company also took on a large part of the project planning and part of the assembly of the gantry, which was attached overhead to a steel ceiling structure in the hall. The handling system from DOTEK in the Netherlands impresses with its ergonomics, even when handling nonwoven rolls with a diameter of almost 2,000mm and a weight of up to 200kg. Rolls with different core diameters, such as 3" or 6", can be set up in less than 30 seconds using the Easy-Click quick-change adapter system.

Andreas Mohr, Partner and Managing Director of Block & Mohr GmbH, looks back on these two successful projects and emphasises: "Roll handling does not always have to result in 100% automation – we repeatedly find that many of our customers can already significantly increase productivity and employee satisfaction with manual, customised solutions."



DOTEK's roll manipulator contributes to greater ergonomics and occupational safety



www.block-mohr.com

Image source: Block & Mohr GmbH

YOUR EXPERT IN SECURE RETROFITTING



- ✓ Enhance plant accessibility through strategic modernization
- ✓ Increase production output optimized processes & reduced downtime
- ✓ Intuitive operation is achievable contemporary control & user interface concepts
- ✓ Improve product quality more accurate results
- ✓ Upgrade functional safety current standards & guidelines
- ✓ Networking & Remote Maintenance rapid assistance available 24/7

lebbing
Jagenberg Group



Automation



Drive technology



CE-Safety



Lebbing Automation & Drives GmbH
Konrad-Zuse-Straße 16
46397 Bocholt,
Germany



info@lebbing.com



+49 (0) 28 71 2412 100



+49 (0) 28 71 2412 0

ICE Europe

“We want to be more than a trade show – we want to be an innovation community”

PRO Flexconvert met with the new leadership of ICE Europe: Charlotte Leitner, Exhibition Director, and Rebecca Moorcroft, Product Marketing Manager at RX. Together, they are responsible for the strategic development of the show, which will return to Munich in March 2027. One message becomes clear very quickly: ICE Europe is set to evolve into a year-round innovation platform, driven by a close and active community.

A fresh management team with clear goals

Charlotte Leitner has been with RX for more than six years, working across various international B2B and B2C events. After starting her career as a dual student, she moved into event management and later into strategic roles, including at the ALUMINIUM Exhibition, where she helped launch initiatives such as “Women With Metal - The ALUMINIUM Awards.”

“What I learned during that time is how essential true partnership with the industry is,” Leitner says. “Successful trade shows are always a collective effort involving organisers, exhibitors, visitors and associations. ICE Europe is a team project – and that team extends far beyond RX.” Her vision for 2027 is clearly defined: “I want to position ICE Europe as a strong platform for innovation and cooperation. We want to uncover growth potential – not just during the three days onsite but through continuous dialogue with the industry.”

Her colleague Rebecca Moorcroft brings 15 years of B2B marketing and event experience, including roles at Informa. Her current position, Product Marketing Manager, is still

relatively new in the trade fair world. “My role sits at the intersection of marketing, insight, and strategy,” Moorcroft explains. “The event itself is where our work comes together and we shape it based on data, not assumptions. Our work starts with understanding what exhibitors and visitors really want and need.”

Supporting an industry in transition

The converting industry is undergoing significant transformation, driven by sustainability requirements, digitalisation, automation, and complex supply chain dynamics. Leitner, however, sees strong momentum behind these challenges: “Despite rising material and energy costs, the industry’s innovation power remains remarkably strong,” she says.

“Mechanical engineering, process control, material development – everywhere we see new approaches. We want ICE Europe to reflect and accelerate this progress.”

For her, the exhibition is above all a neutral, technology-driven meeting place, where machine manufacturers, material experts and converters come together to develop solutions.

Moorcroft adds: “We are fortunate to have inherited an





*Charlotte Leitner,
Exhibition Director, ICE Europe*

event that is more than a trade show – it is a genuine community. That atmosphere onsite in March really surprised me. It’s something very special, and something we want to preserve and strengthen.”

2026: a year dedicated to listening, analysis and strategic development

The “off year” before the 2027 edition will be crucial for the new leadership team. Leitner outlines the priorities: “We’re using 2026 to drive the strategic development of the show. That means deepening relationships with exhibitors, associations and media partners. We’re analysing growth markets, researching new technologies, and building a stronger understanding of how visitor needs are evolving.” This includes understanding future job roles, decision-making processes and content expectations.

Moorcroft emphasises the importance of real dialogue: “We’re doing a lot of talking – formal interviews, informal conversations, phone calls, meetings. We want to know how companies are doing, what they’re planning, what challenges they face. All these insights help us design campaigns, themes and features that genuinely support the industry.”

Beyond a trade show: ICE Europe as a year-round platform

Both managers stress their ambition to further develop the event into a continuous innovation hub. “ICE Europe is no longer just a three-day show,” says Leitner. “We want to be visible and relevant throughout the entire year – through partnerships, content formats, networking and sector insights.”

New thematic areas may also be addressed in the future, from sustainable packaging to flexible electronics or battery technology, as long as they are genuinely connected to the converting value chain.

“Our aim is to preserve the strong technical foundation of ICE Europe while opening the door to new synergies,” Moorcroft says. “The event should grow – but without losing its relevance or its community feel.”

“The community remains our compass”

For Moorcroft, the guiding principle is clear: “We want to advance the event without compromising its identity. Technical depth, credibility and real usefulness – that’s our foundation. The challenge is balancing growth and community spirit. But with the help of the ICE community and our key partners, I’m confident we’ll get it right.” With this approach, the path towards a successful ICE Europe 2027 is set – and the new leadership team is demonstrating a clear commitment to working closely with the converting industry to shape the future of the show.

 www.ice-x.com
Image source: RX



Non-Stick



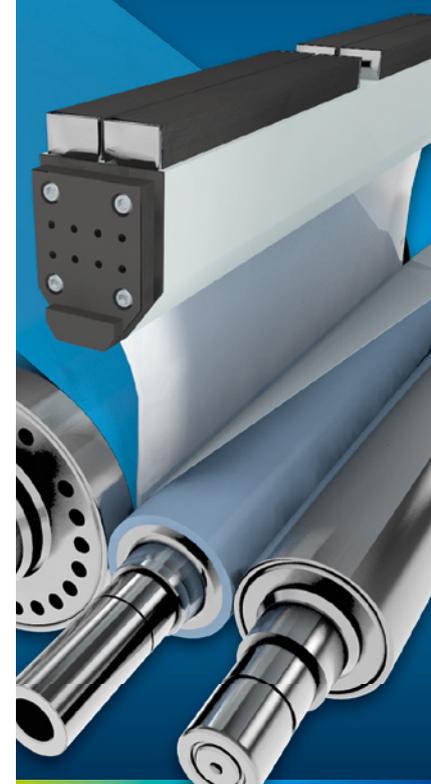
Low-Maintenance



High Thermal Conductivity

WEROSIL-TTC

Roller Covering for NIP-Rollers



#TECHTIPP NO. 4



Is it possible to remove melt residues from the roller surface without damage?



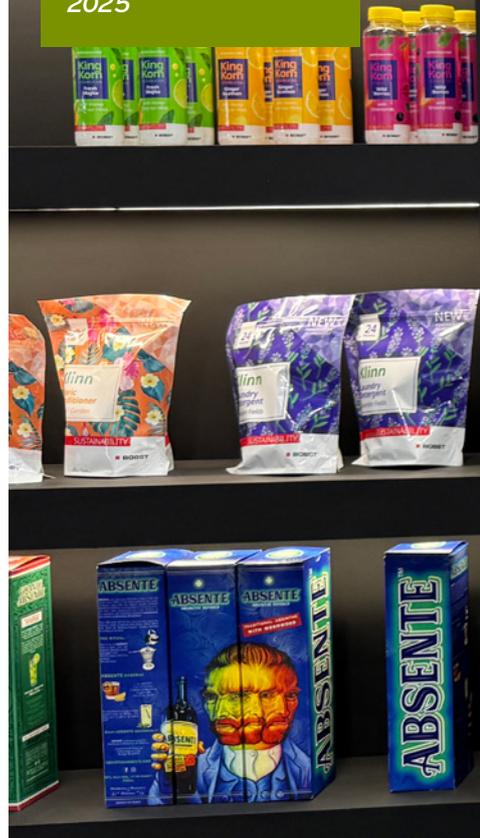
YES, due to the excellent non-stick property. Cleaning is carried out without leaving any residues.

BOBST

“The industry is opening up – and we are accompanying our customers on this journey”

During Labelexpo Europe 2025 in Barcelona, we met Christian Zeller, Head of Marketing, Business Unit Printing & Converting, at the BOBST stand to talk about the reorientation of the trade fair, technological trends in label and packaging printing, and the company's strategic approach.

Christian Zeller and Gudrun Alex at the BOBST booth at Labelexpo Europe 2025



PRO Flexconvert: Mr Zeller, the renaming of Labelexpo to LOUPE was announced in advance. The trade fair is thus opening up more towards flexible packaging and folding cartons. How does BOBST view this step?

Christian Zeller: From our point of view, this is an absolutely logical and consistent step. Many of our customers are currently very keen to experiment and are opening up new business areas related to flexible packaging or folding cartons. Labelexpo – or LOUPE – is thus following a market trend that we have been observing for some time.

PRO Flexconvert: Have you already noticed visitors from the folding carton segment here in Barcelona?

C. Zeller: Yes, and we expect this group to grow even further. Interest in flexible packaging is already extremely high. That's why we have set up a separate section for application management in flexible packaging at our stand for the first time. Many converters are looking at how they can use their existing machine portfolios to enter

additional applications. This is not a new topic, but we have seen a sharp acceleration in interest over the last year or two. That is why we have also introduced the Digital Master 55, which is designed with technology for both labels and stiffer materials and enables various production methods from roll-to-roll to roll-to-sheet operation.

PRO Flexconvert: Can you take us on this 'journey' that visitors to the BOBST stand will experience?

C. Zeller: Visitors to our stand automatically walk past the applications – and that is no coincidence. Our customers are primarily interested in: What can I produce with these technologies? What applications can I offer my market? How can I differentiate myself? Greater print quality, a wider range of materials or an additional substrate can represent real competitive advantages for converters. Our application management team supports them in this – from material selection and the business case to the production strategy. This applies to flexible packaging as well as folding cartons. At the stand, we also address two core requirements that we hear time and time again:

tilayer from short to long runs single pass



_Color consistency across technologies & applications

35

Shrink sleeve

- Flexo oneECG
- PETG Transparent



Wrap around

- Flexo oneECG
- BOPP White



Pressure Sensitive Label

- BOBST UV Inkjet Technology
- PE White



Colour consistency: Thanks to end-to-end processes and coordinated technologies, we can ensure that a print image – whether in digital, flexographic or gravure printing – can be reproduced identically on different substrates. This is a game changer for brand owners.

Production excellence: This is about reproducible quality, stable processes and maximum machine availability. Our BOBST Connect ecosystem plays a central role here:

- » Real-time productivity data
 - » Job and recipe management
 - » Maintenance management and service integration
- Nothing works without this digital level today. That's why it's also the focus of our stand.

PRO Flexconvert: Sustainability is one of the big topics at the trade fair. How is BOBST positioning itself?

C. Zeller: We made a conscious decision not to transport any large machines to Barcelona. This was for environmental reasons, but it also fits in with our aim of focusing on applications rather than hardware. In terms of content, we are focusing on:

- » Monomaterials
- » Recyclability
- » Linerless labels
- » Resource-efficient processes

For us, sustainability is not just an ecological principle, but an economic opportunity: less energy, less waste, less material, faster processes, less manual intervention. All of this brings our customers measurable benefits – and makes them fit for the future.

PRO Flexconvert: What is the mood among visitors?

C. Zeller: Very positive throughout. Our approach without machines means that we very quickly get into real business discussions – you don't get lost in technical details. Visitor numbers are high, in some cases even higher than in Brussels. The change in visitor structure is also interesting: we are seeing more Spanish visitors – which is logical, as this is where the trade fair is taking place – but also many Asian guests. Overall, public interest is very strong.



www.bobst.com

Image source: Martin Hirschmann

Comas S.p.A.

Engineering next-gen coating solutions for driving sustainable innovation

Thanks to the acquisition of SAM Europe in September 2024, Comas S.p.A., part of the Coesia Group - a multinational network of 20 companies, over 8.000 employees and a turnover of € 2,4 billion – stands as a global leader in advanced coating, laminating, and printing technologies for roll-to-roll industries. Combining Italian engineering excellence with Coesia's multinational expertise, Comas delivers next-generation equipment designed for superior precision, sustainable processes, and efficient digital intelligence. The mission is to empower customers by producing eco-conscious, recyclable, and high-performance materials, shaping the future of the converting industry. Reflecting this commitment, Coesia achieved the EcoVadis Gold Medal last month, ranking in the top 5% globally for sustainability performance.

Advanced technology for every industry

Comas provides advanced, tailored solutions for the most demanding roll-to-roll industries. High-precision wet and extrusion coating technologies, integrated with state-of-the-art printing systems, enable manufacturers to achieve superior performance, tighter tolerances, and reduced environmental impact. Modular machine architecture and deep process expertise ensure fully customisable configurations – including unwinders, coating stations, drying systems, rewinders, and quality control units. Finally, smart automation and digital data collection enhance efficiency and flexibility, across every manufacturing stage.

Smart & proven solutions for flexible packaging

Comas lines combine specialised coating stations and energy-efficient dryers for aluminium foil and all polymer substrates, with optional extrusion coating and rotary gravure printing sections. Extrusion heads and precision melt control process bio-based and mono-material structures (PLA, PHA, PE/PE) in line with the recyclability and sustainability standards. Advanced melt metering and closed-loop coat-weight regulation ensure barrier and seal-layer uniformity as well as minimise waste, while optimised dryers reduce curing times and carbon footprint.

Reliable release liners for consistent materials

Release-liner production is enhanced by 5- or 6-roller solventless silicone stations for single, simultaneous or double-sided coating. Comas lines process solventless, water-based, and solvent-based silicone formulations, meeting the growing demand for sustainable release systems. Integrated sensors ensure precise coat weight and optimal curing.

Durable labels for demanding applications

Comas offers high-precision coating lines for pressure-sensitive labels, handling wet and Hot Melt/UV adhesives. Slot-die, curtain, or gravure stations with pressurised chambers ensure fast, accurate application. Automation and BUS-based control maintain consistent thickness at high speeds, while energy-recovery dryers significantly reduce VOC emissions and boost sustainability.



An extrusion coating line from Comas





Tailored solutions for single and double-sided tapes

Comas designs coating lines for adhesive tapes capable of processing solvent-based, hot-melt, and waterborne adhesives on a variety of substrates, including paper, PET, and polyolefins. Equipped with slot die or comma bar coating stations and multi-zone drying modules, these lines ensure uniform, bubble-free coating even at high web speeds. Tailormade configurations enable the production of single- or double-sided adhesive tapes, in one seamless step, maximising efficiency and flexibility.

Compliance in pharma packaging

When it comes to pharmaceutical films and transdermal patches, precision isn't optional, it's essential. That's why Comas develops coating systems designed to meet the highest standards of accuracy, repeatability, and regulatory compliance. The cleanroom-ready lines use temperature-controlled slot-die and roller technologies for consistent thickness and full batch traceability. Built to meet GMP standards, Comas helps manufacturers deliver safe, high-quality products every time.

Barrier coatings that protect, perform, and preserve

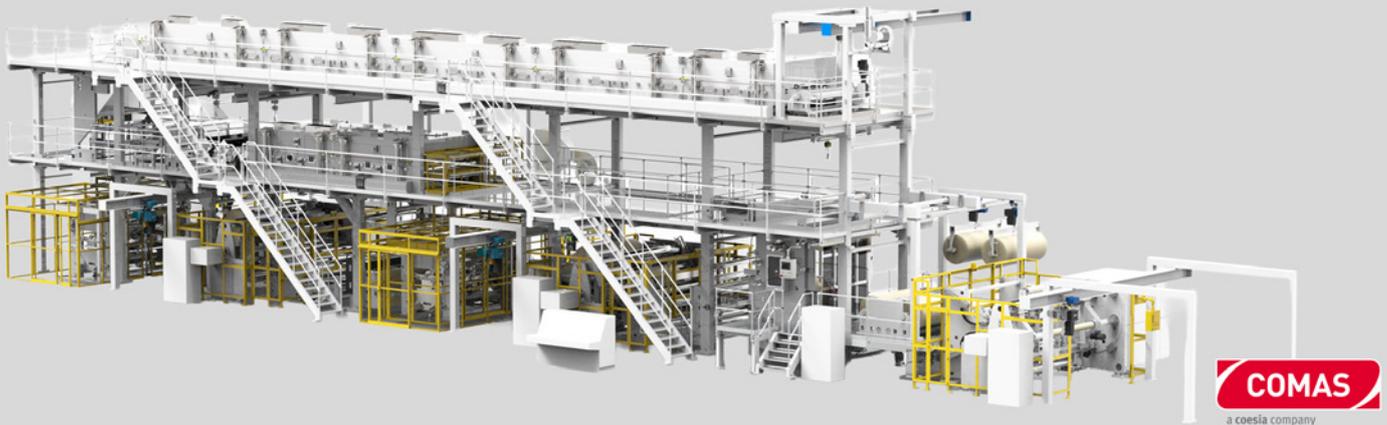
In today's dynamic packaging market, performance begins at the surface. Comas develops high-efficiency coating and laminating lines for EVOH, PVOH, and bio-polymers, enabling ultra-thin barrier layers that protect against oxygen, moisture, and aroma – while remaining recyclable. Hybrid setups with precision wet coating and optional extrusion ensure top material performance, supported by integrated control and data-driven automation for consistent quality, efficiency, and sustainability.

Accurate coating for displays & optical films

In high-end optical and display film applications, sub-micron coating precision is key to flawless visuals. Comas offers advanced solutions with servo-driven tension control, closed-loop thickness feedback, and high-precision coating stations for diverse formulations. Cleanroom-ready modules ensure a contaminant-free process, delivering consistent quality, clarity, and reliable performance.

Powering performance: advanced coating technologies for membranes & fuel cells

In filtration, separation, and energy applications, precision defines performance. Comas delivers coating systems engineered for uniform porosity and functional-layer control, ensuring reliability where it matters most. Their lines feature slot-die and knife-over-roll coaters for polymeric and inorganic membranes, integrated with



A solution coating line from Comas

high-efficiency dryers and solvent-recovery units for sustainable operations. Advanced inline optical sensors monitor film homogeneity in real time, improving yield and reducing waste to achieve consistent quality and maximise productivity.

Striving for continuous innovation in electrode manufacturing

In the intricate landscape of energy storage systems production, Comas, together with other Coesia companies, is the first European machinery supplier to cover the entire battery-cell manufacturing chain: from slurry mixing to coating, drying, calendaring, final cell assembly and filling. Comas electrode coating lines feature slot-die, comma-bar and roller systems designed for wet- and dry-electrode manufacturing. High-precision web-handling ensures tight thickness tolerances and uniform coatings, essential for consistent cell long-term durability. Beyond coating, drying is a critical processing phase requiring stable, controlled temperatures for flawless foil or winding. Thanks to precise temperature control, the Comas coating dryer meets this challenge by maximising energy efficiency and reducing footprint.

Accelerating the future of organic photovoltaics (OPV)

In the fast-emerging OPV sector, Comas applies its expertise in precision coating to produce solution-processed thin films using roll-to-roll slot-die and gravure systems in inert environments, ensuring consistent deposition of conductive and photoactive layers.

Automation, quality control, modularity, and sustainability define Comas' technological DNA: fully digital, remotely accessible, and energy-efficient lines help converters meet ambitious environmental goals.

Future horizons: Global challenges and industry trends

The coating and laminating machinery market is undergoing a deep transformation due to economic instability, rising energy costs, strong Asian competition, and supply chain challenges. Customers seek flexibility and faster ROI with limited investment. Comas turns these pressures into innovation: by maintaining production in Italy, it ensures fast service, cost-effective sourcing, and product excellence. Its modular platforms and smart, data-driven tools – including digital twins and predictive maintenance – boost uptime and shorten delivery times. Beyond new solutions, Comas also upgrades existing equipment through retrofits, components, and software updates to improve reliability and output. Through the group's global network, the company provides comprehensive training and after-sales support worldwide, reflecting its commitment to staying close to customers everywhere. Backed by Coesia's research – Italy's top patent applicant in both 2023 and 2024 – Comas aims to lead the converting industry toward a smarter, more efficient future.



www.comasitaly.com

Image source: Comas

Labelexpo Europe

Rebranding after successful Barcelona debut

Labelexpo Europe 2025, held for the first time in Barcelona in its 45-year history, concluded as the biggest show to date, both in exhibition space and attendance, including the highest international participation.

Show statistics revealed it was the largest Labelexpo event to date, with over 43,000 net sqm of exhibitor space. The event also broke attendance records with over 37,000 attendees. Key statistics include an increase of 18 percent in top decision makers, 49 percent increase on 2023 in South American visitors and 28 percent increase in North American visitors. Spain dominated the list of top visiting countries alongside Italy, Germany, France and the United Kingdom.



“Strategic milestone”

Andy Thomas-Emans, Strategic Director at Labelexpo Global Series, said: "The move to Barcelona for Labelexpo Europe 2025 is a strategic milestone in the show's 45-year history. Breaking records in both exhibition space and attendance demonstrates the industry's continued growth and the global appeal of the new location. We are particularly encouraged by the significant increase in international participation, especially from the Americas, which validates our commitment to creating a truly global platform for the labels and package printing industry. We witnessed an industry embracing automation, sustainability, and the beginnings of AI integration. All signals of a vibrant sector that continues to evolve and innovate."

Labelexpo becomes LOUPE

This year, Labelexpo Global Series announced a major rebrand across the event portfolio, transitioning into the new brand, LOUPE, in 2026, starting with the Americas show in September. The LOUPE portfolio remains labels-focused while acknowledging the industry's expansion and diversification in the past decade into flexible packaging and in-line folding cartons.

Jade Grace, Managing Director Labelexpo Global Series, concludes: "The decision to change the name of the show comes after two years of consideration and consultation with trusted partners, industry associations and key clients. Over the last decade, we have seen in-line and digital flexible packaging become an integral part of Labelexpo shows. Now we see the same trends happening in the folding cartons market with in-line, digital and hybrid set to disrupt this key package printing sector. Labels remain at the very core of the LOUPE portfolio, and we look forward to supporting the continued evolution of the industry." The next Europe show will return from 5 - 8 October 2027 as LOUPE Europe 2027.

.....
 www.loupe-global.com
 Image source: Martin Hirschmann

Impressions from
FACHPACK 2025



FACHPACK

Converting meets Packaging

The Nuremberg Exhibition Centre became a city of its own with 72,000 people united by a single mission: to advance their respective companies and industries and lead them into the future. At the exhibition stands and in the supporting programme of FACHPACK, the community exchanged ideas on trends and innovations and discussed important issues relating to the circular economy, regulations, automation, digitalisation and AI.

“The European packaging industry is undergoing change and presented itself at FACHPACK as extremely innovative and solution-oriented,” said Phuong Anh Do, Director FACHPACK at NürnbergMesse, proudly. The next FACHPACK will take place from 21 to 23 September 2027 at the Nuremberg Exhibition Centre. The atmosphere in the halls was consistently good. “The quality of the trade visitors was excellent. It is this special hands-on mentality that characterises the industry and plays into the hands of FACHPACK’s motto: We are shaping the future together,” said Do, summarising the mood at FACHPACK 2025.

Visitor countries: All of Europe as guests in Nuremberg

Once again, FACHPACK presented a diverse range of solutions and innovations relating to packaging, packaging technology and processes. The Nuremberg Exhibition Centre became a meeting place for trade visitors from all over Europe. The international share of guests was 37 percent. The visitors came mainly from key industries such as food and feed, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and medicine, cosmetics, retail, automotive, electrical and electronics, non-food, logistics and packaging.

Converting meets Packaging at FACHPACK

As a collaborative project by NürnbergMesse and M2N Media GmbH, the “Converting meets Packaging” Pavilion in Hall 7 brought together leading companies from the converting industry to showcase their solutions and products to the FACHPACK audience. “Our premiere at FACHPACK 2025 was a great success,” underlines Martin Hirschmann, Editor-in-Chief of PRO Flexconvert and Managing Director of M2N Media. “We saw a strong visitor turnout at the different pavilion booths and had many in-depth discussions with visitors.”



www.fachpack.de

Image source: NürnbergMesse

Strong together for the future

Many visitors, intensive discussions and a palpable spirit of optimism: the joint pavilion 'Converting meets Packaging' at FACHPACK 2025 was an extremely lively meeting place in Hall 7 of the Nuremberg Exhibition Centre. For three days, eight companies from the converting industry presented themselves side by side with us – and made it clear how closely innovation and cooperation are now intertwined.

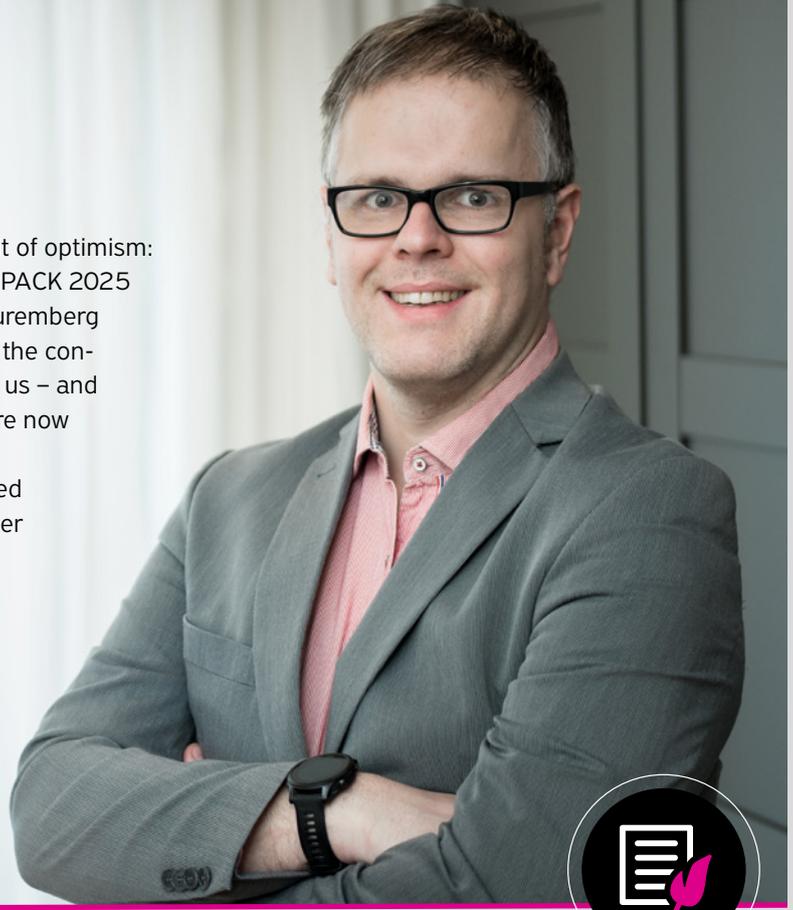
The concept has already proven itself: the pavilion offered suppliers and machine manufacturers in the field of paper and film processing and finishing a shared stage – in the midst of an environment that traditionally brings together the most important manufacturers of flexible packaging solutions. This not only made the entire process chain visible, but also highlighted the growing importance of the interfaces between material, machine and application.

Visitor numbers were correspondingly high. In addition to many familiar faces, numerous new contacts took the opportunity to find out about technological developments, sustainability solutions and new business models. Already during the trade fair, it was clear from the participating companies that the next joint appearance at FACHPACK 2027 is to be even bigger – a strong signal for the acceptance and dynamism of the format.

Cooperation as a response to global challenges

Discussions in the pavilion made it clear that the packaging industry is facing a period of profound change. Competitors from Asia are pushing into the market at an enormous speed, while economic and trade policy uncertainty in the USA is creating new dependencies and risks. For many European companies, it is becoming clear that the decisive factor for success lies in close networking along the entire value chain.

The converting sector in particular plays a key role in this. Without the further processing of web-based materials – i.e. the coating, laminating, slitting or printing of papers, films and composites – many modern packaging solutions would not exist in their current form. Innovations in these process steps are increasingly determining how sustainable, efficient and marketable packaging can be in the future.



Meeting point with added value

The 'Converting meets Packaging' pavilion impressively demonstrated how fruitful the dialogue between material manufacturers, machine builders and packaging producers can be. Our editorial coverage and the many discussions on site also made it clear that the future of the packaging industry can only work through cooperation. Issues such as resource efficiency, material substitution and recyclability can only be advanced collectively – by looking beyond the individual process stages. We share this conviction with the FACHPACK organisation team, who put their heart and soul into supporting the implementation of our pavilion in the best possible way.



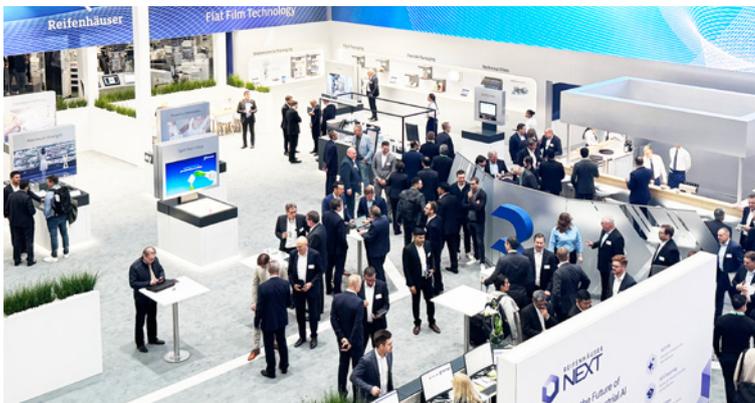
Written by Martin Hirschmann,
Editor-in-Chief

K 2025

Pole position confirmed

K 2025, the most relevant trade fair for the plastics and rubber industry worldwide, drew to a successful close on 15 October 2025 after 8 days. In view of the current difficult economic climate, many companies in the plastics and rubber industry travelled to Düsseldorf with rather subdued expectations. But the mood prevailing across the fully occupied exhibition grounds proved outstanding on all trade fair days. The plastics and rubber industry presented itself as more innovative, international and determined than ever to actively shape the transition to more sustainability, digitalisation and social responsibility.

“K has demonstrated once again just how much innovative power and dynamism this sector holds. The enormous international interest, the high demand for information and the multitude of concrete investment conversations all the way to many contracts concluded right on site underline the importance of this trade fair as a global platform for pioneering solutions and partnership-based exchange,” emphasises Marius Berlemann, Chief Operating Officer at Messe Düsseldorf, and adds: “K is an indispensable compass in uncertain times and once again succeeded in confirming its role as the most important impulse provider and launch platform for the global plastics and rubber industry, where numerous companies have unveiled their innovations to the global public for the first time.”



Impressions from K 2025

Green – Smart – Responsible

Under the strapline “The Power of Plastics! Green – Smart – Responsible” 3,275 exhibitors from 66 nations presented forward-looking technologies, products and processes along their entire value chain across 18 exhibition halls and outdoor areas. Over 175,000 trade visitors from around 160 countries travelled to Düsseldorf, meaning that K attendance remained stable. K provided impressive proof of its position as the industry’s most global trade fair: 73% of all visitors came from abroad, and over one third of these from overseas. A particularly strong representation was seen from China (6,300 visitors) and India (6,400 visitors). A total of 10,000 visitors travelled from the US and Brazil to K 2025. The trade fair again stood out with an above-average ratio of decision-makers (67%). “The environment we currently have to navigate remains enormously challenging,” explained Ulrich Reifenhäuser, Chairman of the

K 2025 Exhibitor Advisory Board. “But it is especially in such times that the strength of our industry becomes visible. Every three years, the global plastics sector comes together here – and for good reason: K is the place where innovations are launched, partnerships are forged, and visions turn into reality. Plastics have been – and will remain – the most important material of our time. They fuse lightweight design, utility, energy efficiency, with versatility, serving as pioneers of progress in many applications – from medical technology to mobility and energy supply.” With its three central key topics “Shaping the Circular Economy”, “Embracing Digitalisation” and “Caring about People”, K 2025 struck exactly the right chord with the spirit of the times. Machine and plant builders impressively showed how efficiency, precision and resource savings can be linked through their ultra-modern manufacturing systems and live demos. The segment of raw and auxiliary materials also convinced the audience with its innovations: from bio-based materials to recycled compounds to new additives that fuse functionality with sustainability, the exhibitors showcased an impressive panoply of solutions for tomorrow’s material development.

High satisfaction levels

This year’s event was characterised by high satisfaction levels. According to preliminary survey results, 95% of visitors stated that they had achieved their objectives at the trade fair. 98 per cent of trade visitors rated the range of products and services on offer as excellent or were very satisfied with it. Visitors were especially impressed with the strong presence of market leaders and the multitude of innovators.

The next K will be held in Düsseldorf from 18 to 25 October 2028.



www.k-online.com

Image source: Martin Hirschmann



ConvertingPROs – Bischof+Klein

Strategic suppliers offer decisive competitive advantages

The Konzell site has played a central role for Bischof+Klein SE & Co. KG for many years. As one of the leading converters in Europe, the company works closely with the Italian machine manufacturer Nordmeccanica, which is represented in the DACH region by megapak. On the occasion of the first Supplier Day in Konzell, we met Mike Schätzler, Managing Director of megapak, and Tobias Nautsch, Category Manager / Group Procurement at Bischof+Klein, for an interview.

PRO Flexconvert: Mr Nautsch, why does a producing company like Bischof+Klein invite its most important suppliers to its own location? What was your motivation?

Tobias Nautsch: We in the purchasing department had wanted to hold a supplier day for quite some time. First, we had to decide which location would be suitable and what the appropriate framework would be. The choice quickly fell on Konzell, which has modern and spacious premises and is also relatively close to FACHPACK, which was taking place at the same time. In the end, we focused on strategic suppliers within the respective product groups and welcomed around 60 guests.

PRO Flexconvert: What makes the Bischof+Klein site in Konzell so special?

T. Nautsch: Konzell is a real showcase location within our group of companies – and the second largest plant after our headquarters in Lengerich. Here we produce modern packaging solutions for consumer goods. These include, for example, aroma protection films for food or bags for hygiene products. Bischof+Klein in Konzell has received numerous awards, including the Climate Protection Award of the Straubing-Bogen district, the district's Training Award and the designation as a TOP Company in Lower Bavaria.



Mike Schätzler (left) and Tobias Nautsch at the Bischof+Klein Supplier Day in Konzell

PRO Flexconvert: What were the main topics of discussion at Supplier Day – and what role did megapak play in this?

T. Nautsch: Under the motto ‘Strong Partnership. Smart Solution.’, selected partner companies came together at the Konzell plant to discuss key future topics with our purchasing team. Among other things, the discussion focused on market and business development, supplier management and the circular economy in the packaging industry. One question that was discussed intensively was how sustainable, strategic partnerships can be specifically structured at various levels. This was illustrated using practical examples. Input from external guest speakers and an interactive section in the form of a World Café ensured a lively exchange between the participants. Our suppliers are a central part of our value chain. They not only supply the materials for our products, but also ideas, innovations and valuable

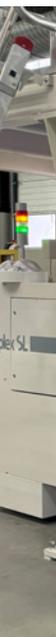
expertise. For Bischof+Klein to be successful in the long term, we need partners we can rely on – and who can rely on us.

PRO Flexconvert: Mr Schätzler, what were your impressions of Supplier Day?

Mike Schätzler: First of all, I would like to emphasise that the term ‘Supplier Day’ could possibly be misunderstood: there was not a single mention of prices. The atmosphere was very positive, and we did not feel like traditional suppliers, but rather like strategic partners. The focus for us was on how we can give Bischof+Klein a real competitive advantage. I find it particularly interesting that Bischof+Klein manufactures exclusively in Europe – where labour and tax costs are high. This makes it clear to everyone involved that it is not the price that matters, but the quality. A key topic was recycling and the associated megatrend of sustainability: how can we keep materials in circulation? How can the requirements of the PPWR be met at an early stage? And what will the packaging of the future look like?

PRO Flexconvert: How does the partnership between B+K and Nordmeccanica/megapak work in practice?

M. Schätzler: We have been working with Konzell for around two decades and the collaboration is very valuable for both sides. A total of five Nordmeccanica systems are in operation there. Over the years, we have succeeded in achieving extremely high precision in adhesive application, thanks in part to the excellent support of the local laminating department. We are talking about such low tolerances that we were able to reduce the application weight by about 0.1 to 0.3g/m² without compromising performance. This means that if we apply 1.3 grams instead of 1.5 or 1.6 grams, the adhesion in the composite remains completely intact. It is therefore only logical that we are now installing the same application technology at the British Bischof+Klein site in Telford, where laminating



is currently being started. This brings several advantages: cost reduction, material savings, greater sustainability – and the solution can be easily transferred to other sites.

PRO Flexconvert: At Supplier Day, other suppliers with their own expertise were also present in the auditorium. How did the exchange go? Is there potential for more cooperation?

M. Schätzler: I found the presentation by a recycler who deliberately chose to locate his site near Konzell particularly exciting. The short distance enables an extremely efficient and low-CO₂ regranulation process – and the regranulate can be returned directly to Bischof+Klein. This form of customer proximity was a new and very convincing approach for me.

T. Nautsch: We have already received feedback from companies that are very interested in a possible continuation of the format. Our supplier base is broad, and we were unable to represent all of our strategic partners at one event. We are already considering

how we can further optimise the potential for exchange in the future.

PRO Flexconvert: How can your partnership develop in the future – and what topics are on the agenda?

M. Schätzler: One clearly formulated goal on the part of Bischof+Klein is to achieve the PPWR requirements at an early stage. This gives the company a strong position in the market. As already mentioned, it is no longer just about supplying machines. Rather, we are collaborating in working groups to develop solutions that combine ecological and technological requirements.

T. Nautsch: We have taken many steps in the right direction, but we must not rest on our laurels. The Supplier Day was a great success – now it's time to work together to remain fit for the future.

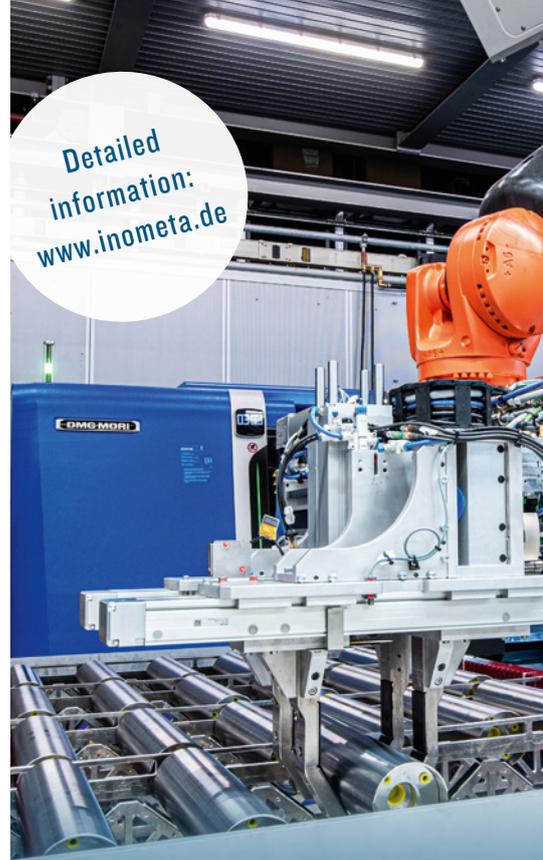


www.bischof-klein.com

www.megapak.de

Image source: megapak

Detailed information:
www.inometa.de



ONE STEP AHEAD

With high-tech, automation, and digital connectivity, we are strengthening our role as an innovation driver in roller manufacturing.

Maximum precision and high production capacity enable top-level series production – efficient, cost-reducing, and groundbreaking.



From left:
Michael Schwarzfischer,
Vincenzo Cerciello,
Dr Markus Prommesberger
and Mike Schätzler

INOMETA

WWW.INOMETA.DE

Converting Family –
Munich Adhesives and Finishing Symposium

A proud anniversary

For 50 years, the Munich Adhesives and Finishing Symposium has been a fixture in the calendars of many key players in the converting industry. PRO Flexconvert was on-site live at the anniversary edition – and met organiser Stephan Hinterwaldner for an exclusive interview.

PRO Flexconvert: Mr Hinterwaldner, Munich Adhesives and Finishing Symposium celebrated its 50th anniversary. What are your thoughts on this impressive milestone?

Stephan Hinterwaldner: First of all, I think of the founding father and long-time organiser Prof Knut Nitzl. Even he could not have imagined what has become of what he started back in 1976 as a seminar for his students, among others. From a technical point of view, as I mentioned in my opening speech this year, I think of all the revolutionary achievements and changes that have taken place during this period. If you look at mechanical engineering in the converting industry in the 1970s and today, for example, it is fascinating to see how adaptable and innovative the industry had to be in order to keep pace with requirements. From paper and simple PP and PE films to today's complex and sustainable multilayer materials. Today, we see effective process optimisation via data models instead of trial and error or analogue measurements. We

are also seeing enormous progress in terms of quality, reproduction and speed, to name just a few of the improvements. In my opinion, we are currently on the verge of a huge leap forward in terms of AI.

PRO Flexconvert: And what does this mean for the future of this traditional event?

S. Hinterwaldner: The Munich Adhesives and Finishing Symposium has the task of accompanying this leap forward and ensuring a happy landing in the future. For me, this means, first of all, selecting the relevant topics when acquiring and selecting specialist lectures, presentations and posters. Secondly, I want to ensure a good interdisciplinary networking platform. So, remain objective and open to new ideas, discuss controversial topics and question existing assumptions. Because if you want to actively shape the future, you have to be prepared. Transformation is not a risk. It is an opportunity. And in addition to our consulting services, we can support the

world of adhesives and converting with our two annual events, the in-adhesives symposium and the Munich Adhesives and Finishing Symposium.

PRO Flexconvert: How would you sum up this year's event?

S. Hinterwaldner: 50 years is quite a milestone. Of course, I am proud of what is associated with the Munich Adhesives and Finishing Symposium – and of the many national and international congratulations from science, industry and associations. The feedback was consistently positive! I am grateful for the personal exchanges with all the interesting people. Once again, there were many new, young faces this year. This shows me that the next generation is coming through. I like that! And it reinforces my commitment to continuing both conferences consistently and sustainably in line with our motto 'by the industry, for the industry'.



www.mkvs.de

Image source: Nina Pirchmoser



Stephan Hinterwaldner at the lectern



Stephan Hinterwaldner (2nd from left) with Nina Pirchmoser (2nd from right) and his team

i

Preview PRO Flexconvert 11 - March 2026

Advertising deadline: 17.02.2026
Publication date: 18.03.2026

- » Nonwovens
- » Web Inspection & Measurement
- » Converting meets Composites

PaintExpo, 14.-17.04.2026,
Karlsruhe
Techtextil, 21.-24.04.2026,
Frankfurt am Main



In every issue, you will also find reports, company portraits and current topics from the industry.

PRO flexconvert

Magazine for Converting Professionals

Imprint

PRO Flexconvert No 10
December 2025 | 2nd edition

Published by

M2N Media GmbH
Walter-Meindl-Siedlung 4
91622 Rügland
GERMANY

☎ +49 9828 911 3080
✉ info@m2n-media.com
www.proflexconvert.com

Managing Directors:
Martin Hirschmann, Nina Pirchmoser, Nadine Bauernfeind
Registered in the Commercial Register of the Local Court Ansbach: HRB 8298

Editor-In-Chief/Publishing Director

Responsible for the content (according to § 55 Abs. 2 RStV)

Martin Hirschmann
☎ +49 9828 911 3082
✉ martin.hirschmann@m2n-media.com

Head of Sales

Nina Pirchmoser
☎ +49 9828 911 3081
✉ nina.pirchmoser@m2n-media.com

Free Subscription

✉ info@m2n-media.com

Head of Graphics/Production

Nadine Bauernfeind
☎ +49 9828 911 8266
✉ nadine.bauernfeind@m2n-media.com

Magazine Specifications

Front cover picture: Somatec Sondermaschinen

Printed by: Pinsker Druck und Medien GmbH
Frequency of publication: 5 issues per year
ISSN 2943-7024

Support us

Support independent and dedicated journalism
for the converting industry!



M2N MEDIA



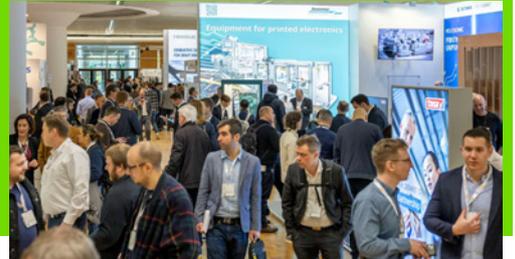
2026 UPCOMING EVENTS



LOPEC 2026

25.-26.02.2026
Messe München

lopec.com



in-adhesives

Symposium on Innovations in
Adhesives and their Applications

in-adhesive symposium

03.-04.03.2026
The Westin Grand Munich

www.in-adhesives.com



PaintExpo 2026

14.-17.04.2026
Messe Karlsruhe

www.paintexpo.de



techtexsil

Techtextil

21.-24.04.2026
Messe Frankfurt

www.techtexsil.messefrankfurt.com



Interpack

07.-13.05.2026
Messe Düsseldorf

www.interpack.de



Save the Date!

M2N Converting Gipfel

25. - 26.06.2026
east Hotel Hamburg

m2n-converting-gipfel.de

