

INVESTMENT CONTINUES AT ARABIAN PACKAGING

FOLLOWING THE INSTALLATION OF THE FIRST SEVEN COLOUR GÖPFERT OVATION IN 2016, DUBAI, UAE-BASED ARABIAN PACKAGING HAS TAKEN ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD, INSTALLING A SECOND CORRUGATOR AND MORE STATE-OF-THE-ART CONVERTING EQUIPMENT.

DANIEL BRUNTON REPORTS FROM THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.



Our first visit to Arabian Packaging came in 2004, shortly after the business (which was established back in 1982) moved into a greenfield site in the Jebel Ali Industrial Area. A massive warehouse had been built and housed a new corrugator and wide array of converting equipment, all of which had been supplied by leading OEMs. A 2.8m corrugator from BHS Corrugated, two Martin 618 four colour flexo folder gluers, a Martin 924 six colour rotary die-cutter, a four colour BGM 2.8m casemaker, five colour Göpfert Evolution Rotary die-cutter, an Isowa three colour rotary die-cutter and a Bobst SPO die-cutter were in operation. A complete materials handling system was installed by Dücker.

We were then invited back a little over a decade later, in 2016 – this time to see the first seven colour, high quality flexo post print line from

Göpfert to be installed in the region. The company had been looking for ways in which to help customers achieve high quality print, but without turning to litho-laminating, as this was relatively expensive. So they opted for the offline printing machine from Göpfert. The printing process is handled by the seven colour Göpfert Ovation high board line machine, equipped with inter-station IR dryers from JB Machinery and a final dryer at exit. Printed stacks of board are then transferred to the Bobst SPO or the stand-alone Göpfert Evolution rotary die-cutter, equipped with two Dücker Corrpal breakers and palletiser.

Investment continues at this market leader, not content to rest on its laurels, Arabian Packaging once again pushes the boundaries of what can be achieved with corrugated, this time installing an additional corrugator and converting lines, specifically to target the micro flute market.

“WE WANTED TO HAVE A MACHINE THAT WOULD BE CAPABLE OF RUNNING THE HIGHEST QUALITY PAPERS AND PRODUCE EXCEPTIONALLY FLAT BOARD. WE ALSO WANTED TO HAVE A MACHINE THAT WAS CAPABLE OF RUNNING FINE FLUTES, SUCH AS F, G AND N AT HIGH SPEEDS.”

ISSAM FETEHA, GENERAL MANAGER, ARABIAN PACKAGING

Market Leader

At the heart of the investment project was the need to create a clear advantage in the market, allowing Arabian Packaging to stand out from the crowd. “When we installed the Göpfert Ovation back in 2016, we expected to run about 10% of its capacity on HQPP work, with the rest being standard flexo,” explains Issam Feteha, General Manager, Arabian Packaging. “However, the reaction from the market was so positive, that within a year, over 70% of the capacity was for HQPP work.”

But the biggest problem that the company faced was its corrugator – it had reached its capacity, which meant that for the company to continue growing it needed to add another machine.

“By the end of 2016, following the installation of new converting equipment, we realised we were very close to maximum capacity of the corrugator,” continues Mr Feteha. “We decided the time was right to add a new machine, but we didn’t want to just install a standard machine – we wanted to have a machine that would be capable of running the highest quality papers and produce exceptionally flat board. We also wanted to have a machine that was capable of running fine flutes, such as F, G and N at high speeds.”

Mr Feteha and his technical team set about specifying a machine. In their minds, they knew that a combination of several suppliers would give them the flexibility to get the machine they needed. The result was a 2.5m corrugator, featuring two Mitsubishi 60H belted single facers, MarquipWardUnited glue machine, pre-conditioner, pre-heater and MWU Infusion plus pre-heaters,



The 2.5m Mitsubishi MWU corrugator



One of the MHI 60H single facers

MarquipWardUnited double backer with Simon S-Press loading system, Mitsubishi 67H-V slitter scorer (which is the first of its type to ever be



The first MHI 67H-V outside of Japan

installed outside of Japan) and the MarquipWardUnited Fusion cut-off knife and stacker. The line is equipped with EFI Escada’s Syncro process



The new corrugator is equipped with E+L Corraligner



The control room on the new corrugator

control, Escada Process control and an E+L Trim Master and bridge control units. Steam is produced by a Baviera system and starch is mixed in an SRP Europe starch kitchen. The new line has a capacity of 160 million sqm of board per year.

“We chose the Mitsubishi single facers as we wanted belted machines,” explains Mr Feteha. “In addition, we have been most impressed with the S-Press from Simon and had good experience with the system that we retrofitted to the BHS Corrugated line. The S-Press is helping us produce board with no pressure marks. This is critical when running coated liners for high quality printed packaging.”

“We have been very happy with the start up,” confirms Mohamed Saif Al Ghurair, Chairman. “Our technical team chose a corrugator that they felt would be best fit for purpose and their confidence has paid off. The quality of the board is superb and reaction from our customers, particularly those who are specifying fine flutes, has been really encouraging.”

Orange Season

It is clear to see that in the Middle East colour on packaging helps sell product. “Although we are considered a small territory in terms of annual corrugated capacity, it is interesting to see how important colour is to our customers,” explains Mr Feteha. “We filled our first Göpfert quickly, because when the first customers started to use the HQPP packaging, their competitors were quick to react and followed the lead. Today, the majority of our HQPP boxes are printed in five or more colours and usually with varnish, even if the box is just transporting bottles of mineral water or fruit.”

The busiest time of the year for Arabian Packaging is the orange season. “The citrus fruit season is an important time of year for us and we pretty much operate 24/6 during the season,” confirms Mr Al Ghurair.

“WE ARE PROUD OF WHAT WE ARE ACHIEVING. WE WORK CLOSELY WITH OUR SUPPLIERS – PAPER, INKS, MACHINERY – TO ENSURE WE GET THE BEST POSSIBLE RESULTS FOR OUR CUSTOMERS. WE HAVE ADDITIONAL EXPANSION PLANS ON THE HORIZON, BUT THAT IS A STORY FOR ANOTHER DAY.”

MOHAMED SAIF AL GHURAIR, CHAIRMAN

“The majority of boxes we make for the fruit farmers are printed in six or seven colours/varnish and we produce almost 10 million boxes of this type.”

“With the Göpfert Ovation printers we are able to print at the highest quality and speed and then feed multiple flat bed die-cutters,” says Mr Feteha. “We opted for this route, as we feel that flat bed die-cutting gives us the best results and this then ensures the folder gluers are able to run at high speed, thanks to the accurately die-cut blanks. We are also under a lot of pressure from our customers who want precision folded boxes to run on their case erecting and filling lines. They want exact quantities with zero defects.”



Issam Feteha, General Manager, Arabian Packaging and Mohamed Saif Al Ghurair, Chairman.

Additional Print and Die-Cutting

Thanks to the rapid growth in the company’s order book, Arabian Packaging continued to roll out its investment strategy further. Just before the installation of the new 2.5m corrugator in late 2018, the company took delivery of additional converting lines – including yet another market

first; an eight colour Göpfert Ovation off-line printer. This sets us apart from our competitors for sure.

“We have seen that when trading conditions are tough and our customers are competing in a

difficult market, they tend to create new designs for their boxes, hoping that more colour will help sell more products – so we have to be in a position to offer the best quality print in the UAE,” explains Mr Al Ghurair.



The new eight colour Göpfert Ovation printer



JB Machinery dryers fitted to the new Ovation



The BGM Case Line CL 1125

In addition to the eight colour Göpfert Ovation (which was installed in July 2018), the company also installed a BGM CL 11/25 Caseline (with rotary die-cut unit and two slotters). This machine is able to die-cut, fold and glue many of the printed sheets that come from the new Ovation. The BGM line is complemented by a Dücker Corpal stacker, as well as a Mosca Uatri in-line bundle strapper.



Bobst Masterfold gluer



Away from the corrugator’s stacker and into WIP

Elsewhere at the plant, a new Bobst Masterfold was installed in September 2017 and a Bobst Mastercut 2.1 die-cutter with Loader AF and palletising unit followed in February 2018. Thanks to the increase in volumes, Arabian Packaging also installed an additional line of Dücker materials handling, with pallet press and pallet wrapping system from Mosca.



Bobst Mastercut 2.1

Looking Ahead

New machines, increased capacity and excellent quality are the hallmark of success. “We are proud of what we are achieving,” concludes Mr Al Ghurair. “We work closely with our suppliers – paper, inks, machinery – to ensure we get the best possible results for our customers. We have additional expansion plans on the horizon, but that is a story for another day.”

About the Company

Arabian Packaging was established in Dubai in 1982 and since 2004 has been based in the Jebel Ali Industrial Area 2. Arabian Packaging is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Al Ghurair Group, one of the UAE’s most prominent and respected business Groups.

Al Ghurair family formalised its business activities with the creation of Al Ghurair Group in 1960. At that time, Dubai was undergoing great economic and commercial growth. This development was spearheaded by the Rulers of Dubai, the Al Maktoum Family and supported by the trading skills of Dubai’s prominent business families. Amongst these was the Al Ghurair family.

The Group entered many different fields of activity, creating Dubai’s first cement plant (National Cement), first shopping mall (Al Ghurair Centre) and one of its oldest banks (Mashreq). Today, the Group owns a diverse range of businesses in manufacturing, real estate and financial investments and has operations on five continents. Among its prominent businesses are Taghleef Industries, (flexible packaging), Gulf Extrusions, (aluminium extrusion) and the shopping mall and mixed used-development Burjuman Centre in Bur Dubai and Reef Mall.

Arabian Packaging is one of three packaging companies owned by the Group, the others being metal packaging manufacturer Arabian Can Industries and flexibles converter Arabian Flexible Packaging.