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Alufoil Trophy 2010: Alufoil sector accentuates the positive

And turns the mundane into the beautiful

Innovation and technical excellence is alive and well in alufoil sector as demonstrated by the winners of the Alufoil Trophy 2010.

Designed to echo the needs of direct customers and consumers five categories, covering Consumer Convenience, Design + Marketing, Product Preservation, Resource Efficiency, and Technical Innovation, were introduced for the first time by European Aluminium Foil Association for the Alufoil Trophy 2010.

The new format attracted some 64 entries with 13 winners, leading both the alufoil sector and judges to herald the 2010 awards a great success.

“Items that are seemingly mundane had been transformed into items of beauty through the use of some clever alufoil concepts including laminates and graphics, while entrants also used alufoil as a replacement for other materials to a very positive end,” said head judge Terry Robins, technical and retail packaging consultant and former technical and packaging innovations manager of Sainsbury.



Judges were particularly impressed with the level of entrants’ ingenuity which came from all parts of the alufoil sector to produce some great solutions for customers. “Long may the innovation within the aluminium foil market continue,” concluded Robins.

THE WINNERS

Consumer Convenience

Bionostics: UniDose Glucose Meter Check Control

Huhtamaki Ronsberg: Laser-perforated Ice Cream Cone Sleeves for Nestlé Extreme

Marketing + Design

Carcano Antonio: Orion's mudguards

Plus Pack: Candlelight Sauce

Product Preservation

Amcor Flexibles Singen: Roche Diagnostic Accu-Chek mobile

Bionostics: UniDose Glucose Meter Check Control

Resource Efficiency

i2r Packaging Solutions: Marks and Spencer Oakham chicken trays

Nicholl Food Packaging: Micro-Rib light weight Aluminium trays

Wipf: Xirah Swiss Premium

Technical Innovation

Ancor Flexibles Kreuzlingen: sterile template for AMIC - Surgical Technique

Constantia Teich: Oval Philly Lid

Overall excellence

Advanced Packaging Supplier: Easybag Cooking®

Ancor Flexibles Sélestat: ALUTIN

Impress Metal Packaging: Easy Peel® 153

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The annual Alufoil Trophy is organised by the European Aluminium Foil Association.

High resolution pictures of all winners are available at www.alufoil.org

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Summary (more details available at the “News Desk” on www.alufoil.org)

Consumer Convenience



“A clever single dose control in which the use of alufoil is essential to the design and ease of use” was how Terry Robins described Trophy winner **Bionostics**’ UniDose glucose meter check for diabetics.

The UniDose pack is a simple-to-use, reliable and robust alufoil sachet that provides and presents a single drop of quality control solution to verify the performance of a blood glucose test system. The easy open, single-use pack has a two year shelf life at room temperature, thanks to alufoil. Extensive research and evaluation of laminate structures led to the use of the alufoil-based laminate.

UniDose also won an Alufoil Trophy for **Product Preservation**, *see below*.

Huhtamaki Ronsberg’s Laser-Perforated Ice Cream Cone Sleeves for Nestlé Extreme impressed the judges with their simplicity and ingenuity.



“How many times have we struggled to remove part of the packaging on an ice cream cone?” asked Robins who was particularly impressed with the special laser cutting technology, which allows part of the wrapper to be easily removed. “The great thing is that enough wrapper is left around the base of the cone to keep ones hands ice cream free”.

The alufoil/paper laminate features a predetermined breaking point on the inner paper level leaving the Alufoil layer intact to ensure that barrier protection against humidity and other external impacts are not affected.

Marketing + Design

A mundane product turned into a fashion component won the judges accolades and an Alufoil Trophy for **Carcano Antonio**’s Orion bicycle mudguards. Robins described the concept as “a true delight and something that every hobby cyclist will want”.



Featuring high quality graphic design and print, the potential provided by the bright and metallic surface of alufoil give the mudguards excellent appeal at point-of-sale and ably demonstrates how alufoil can be successful combined with other materials The picture right shows the mudguard printed in 4-colour rotogravure.

A novel concept for a sauce and candle combination called Candlelight Sauce, created by **Plus Pack**, would “add ambience to any dinner table”, said Robins.

Created for Candlelight Sauce from Dutch company Verstegen, the new dinner party sauce pack includes a tea light candle to keep the sauce warm on the dinner table, following heating in the microwave or conventional oven. The complete pack incorporates a triangular smoothwall alufoil tray that contains 300ml sauce and a pre-cut alufoil lid; the complete pack is topped with a press-on lid in injection moulded plastic into which the lit candle is placed. The decorated cartonboard outer provides additional on-shelf impact.



Product Preservation

Alufoil’s unique protective qualities were used for two clever concepts for glucose monitoring systems. Both Alufoil Trophy winners brought accolades from Robins who described them both as “innovative and convenient”.



Ancor Flexibles Singen won with the Roche Accu-Chek Mobile, a system which allows 50 diagnostic tests for blood glucose monitoring. Because the tests are highly water vapour sensitive, the alufoil is an essential part of both the cassette and the seal for the tray in which it is packed.

Accu-Chek’s mobile blood diagnostic device, utilises a highly water-sensitive test tape cassette, which is sealed into the cassette by an alufoil strip coated with PP. Designed to provide the correct peel force for opening, the alufoil also helps dispense the test tape. A peelable alufoil seal is used for the PP tray that holds the cassette. Robins said, “A technically clever solution for a demanding product.”

The other winner – **Bionostics’** UniDose – was described as “unique amongst glucose metering methods” by Robins.



Current PE vials used for glucose control solutions achieve 18-24 month stability for an unopened vial, but only three month stability once the vial has been opened. The single format alufoil-based UniDose, with its very low water vapour transmission rate, allows a very small volume of control solution to maintain glucose concentrations within specification for 24 months at up to 30 °C.

“The two year ambient temperature life of the pack makes it particularly impressive. It is a system that will save large sums of money over traditional glucose metering methods,” states Robins.

*Bionostics also won an Alufoil Trophy in **Consumer Convenience**, see above.*

Resource Efficiency

Alufoil trays featured highly in this category with **i2r Packaging Solutions** and **Nicholl Food Packaging** praised for their lightweight concepts for convenience foods.

A shaped range of lightweighted smoothwall trays for Marks & Spencer Oakham Chickens from **i2r Packaging Solutions** has reduced the amount of aluminium required by as much as 20% but still remain strong enough to hold a whole chicken.



Three tray sizes are available for different chicken weights, while the shape of the trays enhances the product through improved oven cooking conditions; provides a stronger more stable tray when handled hot by the end consumer; minimises damage in transit; and adds to on-shelf appeal.

Nicholl Food Packaging's Micro-Rib concept is an attractive lightweight ribbed tray using innovative new alloy technology and tool design. The resulting trays give the appearance of a smooth wall tray with a minimum 12% material reduction.



There is no impact on capacity compared with the standard market tray, and strength and integrity is maintained to ensure efficient production line performance.

Robins praised both developments as “resource efficient with enhanced strength for ease of use in the kitchen”.

The narrower seal seams for the Migros Xirah Swiss Premium 100g cat food pouch from **Wipf** allow more packs, 24 compared with 22, in each outer tray to provide savings in transport costs; shelf space; and storage space. Printed on a 10-colour gravure press and partially-coated with a matt lacquer, the PET/ALU/cPP 3-ply composite was developed to withstanding the stresses involved in the sterilisation process.



Robins was impressed by both the potential resource efficiencies and by the attractive new matt varnishing technique developed to allow retorting; not common with a matt finish.

Technical Innovation



In a new application for an alufoil-based structure **Amcor Flexibles Kreuzlingen**'s sterile template used in cartilage repair operations impressed the judges.

Robins said, "This innovative idea should be a boon in surgical techniques. The sterile template will allow the surgeon to cut the damaged cartilage more accurately."

A major innovation is that the template forms part of the product. The surgery package used by Geistlich Pharma's Chondro Gide® (AMIC – Surgical Technique) includes the individually wrapped template with which the surgeon can take an impression of the damaged cartilage and cut the replacement to match appropriately. Alufoil is used for its special mechanical and hygiene characteristics, and the specification allows gamma radiation.

Constantia Teich won with its partially-embossed Oval Philly Lid, used by Kraft Foods for its Philadelphia cream cheese.



A special punching process was developed by Constantia Teich featuring eye mark steering to punch lids in register to the partial embossing. The eye mark is applied by the embossing roller which avoids the use of a printing machine and saves cost for the customer. The un-embossed sealing rim provides optimum sealing and peeling characteristics.

Robins said, "While embossing of alufoil is not new, the quality of the partial-embossing on this pack is so good that the Philadelphia brand is greatly enhanced by the technology."

Based on **overall excellence**, three further alufoil concepts were awarded an Alufoil Trophy 2010:

Amcor Flexibles Sélestat won with ALUTIN, a new cap for wine and champagne bottles using an innovative material based on two aluminium layers which are extruded with a mix of different polyolefins. It provides good formability and a smooth finish, and is less costly than conventional 'tin'.



ALUTIN can be used for complicated bottle necks without creating wrinkles, opening up new markets for special bottle shapes in the spirits, wines and champagne markets.

Advanced Packaging Supplier's Easybag Cooking® is a new bag concept for packed foods including meat and fish which can be used for roasting, on the BBQ, and steaming in both industrial and consumer ovens. The flexible alufoil bag, manufactured from four alufoil walls with a plastic lid, can be frozen to -35°C or cooked, with or without the plastic lid, at up to +240°C. Suitable for vacuum packaging techniques, it tolerates up to 90kg pressure.



Originally designed for military use, Easybag is now available for the domestic consumer market.

The first 153mm end on the market and developed to replace open top ends for this size of steel can, **Impress Metal Packaging's** new EasyPeel® 153 offers a modern, lightweight, fashionable and convenient end for round microwaveable trays and other containers.



The ring with a whole easy peel lid is manufactured from alufoil, supplied by Amcor Flexibles. The lid is heat sealed to the inner parts of the Easy Peel® ring and both the PP layers of the alufoil laminate and the ring melt and merge while cooling to give a 100% barrier against oxygen and light. Both the PP layers of the alufoil laminate and the ring melt and merge while cooling to give a 100% barrier against oxygen and light.

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