Boxmaking: Driving Down Time and Cost

10 ways to reduce setup time and improve productivity

How China is Speeding-Up Fiber Market Transition
It's all part of the package: strength, productivity and sustainability

Recycled packaging paper mills face two big challenges: declining recycled fiber quality and a reduction in fresh water usage. This makes it challenging to meet strength targets because your system is more contaminated, and your chemistries become less effective. That's why Buckman's Reinforce program incorporates a three-pronged approach to strength management.

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Don't let the challenges of today's recycled fiber compromise board quality or production speed. Reinforce your entire packaging operation with Buckman's Reinforce productivity management system. Contact your Buckman representative or visit buckman.com for more information.
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For box plants, the ability to make quick changeovers is a must. This article offers 10 ways to reduce setup time and improve productivity.

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The industry met at Paper2019 in Chicago, March 24-26. Co-hosted by the American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA) and the National Paper Trade Association (NPTA), Paper2019 brought industry executives together from around the world for unparalleled networking opportunities and timely sessions on emerging issues.

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Although China’s recently-implemented import policies on recycled paper are proving to be a challenge for those in the market of recovered fiber, it’s certainly as challenging for the Chinese paper and board mills, most of which rely on recovered fiber as the primary furnish for their machines.

Currently, China has maintained the limit of contaminants in a shipment of old corrugated containers (OCC) at 0.5 percent or less, and beyond that, there is a ban on imports of mixed paper.

China’s measures have not only caused an upheaval in the recovered fiber markets, but are also putting a strain on its paper producers. To put the fiber supply situation in perspective, in 2016 China imported close to 29 million tons of recycled fiber, and 2017 imports dropped to approximately 26 million tons. Imports during 2018 landed on 17 million tons. Currently, many Chinese producers expect imports for 2019 could be lower than 12 million tons, this according to Per-Ove Nordström, a Principal at Pöyry Management Consulting in Sweden.

And Nordström says the situation may very well become even worse for the Chinese paper and board producers. The government has indicated that it may ban all imports of recycled fiber altogether by the end of 2020.

In an article in this issue of PaperAge (page 22-25), Nordström emphasizes that no matter what, China will remain a fiber importer, ‘one way or another.’

‘Total consumption of paper and board is estimated to grow some 20 million tons by 2025, which is nearly half of the estimated global demand growth. In containerboard alone, where almost all production is recycled fiber based, demand is expected to grow slightly more than 10 million tons by 2025. Basically, all announced new Chinese containerboard capacity, so far, is planned to use recycled fiber as furnish.’

With China committed to its environmental policies, how will its paper producers find the fiber to maintain their current production levels, not to mention planned capacity expansions?

Nordström highlights four options or a combination of which that could improve the availability of fiber for Chinese mills.

(1) Alleviate current import restrictions; (2) Increase domestic recycled fiber collections; (3) Increase containerboard imports; and/or (4) Import new sources of fiber. As to the fourth option, ‘This leaves us with a potentially highly interesting opportunity that is not yet to any large degree being exploited; recycled pulp (UKP),’ Nordström says. ‘This could be a significant opportunity as the Chinese government considers it to be a product in its own right, and may be imported.’

Nordström notes that ‘the current global market pulp capacity dedicated to UKP is very small, approximately 4 million tons. But capacity is about to change . . . As it happens, one of China’s leading containerboard producers, Nine Dragons, is already on its way to building capacity in the US, exceeding 1 million tons of recycled pulp for exports to China. In addition, Lee & Man has announced plans to build greenfield capacity in Asia.’

As mentioned earlier, the Chinese government is committed to its environmental policies and has repeatedly expressed its intent to ban all solid waste imports beginning in 2020, although it’s not entirely clear as to what falls into that category. How that country’s paper producers solve their fiber supply dilemma is yet to be seen, but as Mr. Nordström points out, China will remain a fiber importer, ‘one way or another.’
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NORTHERN AMERICA

Verso to Close Coated Freesheet Paper Mill in Luke, Maryland

Verso on April 30 announced that it will permanently close its paper mill in Luke, Maryland, in response to the continuing decline in customer demand for the grades of coated freesheet paper produced at the mill, along with rising input costs, a significant influx of imports, and rising compliance costs and infrastructure challenges associated with recent environmental regulation changes.

The closure, which is expected to be complete by June 30, will reduce Verso’s coated freesheet production capacity by approximately 450,000 tons, reducing total annual paper production capacity to approximately 2.7 million tons.

“It is unfortunate that we had to make the decision to close the Luke Mill, but the continuing decline in demand for the grades of paper manufactured there left us no choice but to close this facility that has struggled with profitability for a number of years,” said Verso Interim Chief Executive Officer Leslie T. Lederer.

“The company explored the possibility of producing alternate grades of paper products but the conclusion remained the same — we could not achieve profitability at the mill in today’s market environment. Consistently matching the supply of our graphic paper products with customer demand for these products, reducing our costs and rapidly diversifying our product portfolio into growing markets remain essential drivers for Verso’s long-term success, and we continue to vigorously pursue these objectives.”

Most of the Luke Mill’s paper grades are already qualified to be produced on other Verso paper machines, and the company is working to assure all customer needs are met, according to Verso President of Graphic and Specialty Papers Michael A. Weinhold.

“Because Verso is continually evaluating the best use of our highly flexible manufacturing system to assure we deliver the quality, reliability and value our customers depend on, our Luke Mill customers can remain confident in Verso’s ability to meet their needs now and in the future,” Weinhold said. “We will be working closely with our customers to assure they continue to receive the high quality products and exceptional service they have come to expect from Verso.”

Approximately 675 employees will be impacted by the closure of the Luke Mill.

“The decision to close this mill that has been in operation for more than 130 years was an extremely difficult one, and is in no way a reflection on the dedicated men and women who work there,” Lederer said. “We know that this will be an extraordinarily emotional and challenging time for our Luke Mill team, and Verso is committed to treating them with fairness, respect and dignity during this difficult time.”

CNG’s Spicers Paper Acquires Premiere Packaging in Southern California

Central National Gottesman Inc. (CNG), which owns a range of sales and distribution businesses in the global pulp, paper, tissue, packaging, wood products and metals industries, announced that its Spicers Paper division has acquired Premiere Packaging Industries, Inc.

Premiere Packaging Industries (PPI), based in Cerritos, California, is a full-line packaging supply distributor that has been in business since 1999. PPI specializes in providing customers with custom and stock corrugated and poly products used in a range of sectors, particularly manufacturing and large-scale distribution operations.

“We have been committed during the past few years to developing our capabilities within the packaging industry,” said Andrew Wallach, CNG President and Chief Executive Officer. “Our North American Distribution business is focused on accelerating that growth by providing a broader range of packaging products and solutions to our new and existing customers, and the acquisition of Premiere Packaging is consistent with that strategy.”

Wallach added that PPI President John Luyben will continue building on the strong foundation that he and his team have built over the last 20 years. Luyben will report to Spicers President Jan Gottesman, and the company will continue to operate independently under its Premiere Packaging Industries name.

Spicers Paper is a privately held, independent paper merchant serving the Western U.S.
NORTH AMERICA

Georgia-Pacific Investing $120 Million in New Tissue Machine at Naheola Mill

Georgia-Pacific’s Naheola, Alabama, mill is set to receive an investment of more than $120 million for a new tissue machine and roll storage building to support the company’s retail bath tissue business.

While the new tissue machine will replace two older machines, it will increase capacity and support new tissue converting lines that are currently being started up at the mill. These latest investments continue the modernization of the Naheola mill, which includes ongoing construction of a new biomass boiler and woodyard.

Engineering and related work has begun, and the actual startup of the machine is scheduled for 2020.

The Naheola mill currently employs more than 900 people and produces retail bath tissue and paper towels used by consumers across the county. The mill also makes bleached paperboard which is sold on the market and is used to make Georgia-Pacific’s Dixie plates, cups and bowls.

Sappi North America Completes $25 Million Upgrade Project at Cloquet Mill

Sappi North America has completed a $25 million capital investment at its Cloquet, Minnesota mill to debottleneck areas of the pulp manufacturing process. The bulk of the investment was made in the recovery areas of the pulp mill.

“We are pleased that this investment brings an additional 30,000 tons per year of pulp production capability to better serve our dissolving wood pulp customers,” said Mike Schultz, Managing Director, Sappi Cloquet Mill.

This investment follows a $5.94 million capital investment in 2017 to replace the headbox on Paper Machine 12 (PM12) at the Cloquet mill, which enabled Sappi to maintain its capacity by adding a state-of-the-art, dilution profiled headbox that produces excellent basis weight profiles.

In 2011, Sappi completed a $170 million project that allowed the Cloquet Mill’s kraft pulp operations to also produce chemical cellulose used in textile and consumer goods markets.

New-Indy Acquires Proactive Packaging and Display in California

New-Indy JV Corp., a 50/50 joint venture between the Kraft Group and Schwarz Partners, has acquired Proactive Packaging and Display, a producer of value added corrugated packaging and displays located in Ontario, California.

New-Indy closed on the acquisition May 1. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

New-Indy issued the following statement, “The acquisition of Proactive Packaging and Display coupled with additional investment in its infrastructure will build upon its excellent market reputation as an award winning direct and digital printing operation.

“Going forward, we are excited about the prospects for this facility to produce a diverse array of products from high graphic direct print, digital print, and litho label retail ready point of purchase displays, standees for the movie and gaming industry, as well as a fulfillment operation.

“The Proactive Display facility will join New-Indy Tripaq, located in Cerritos (California) as the West Coast converting operations of New-Indy Packaging. These converting facilities align very well with the strategic integration of New-Indy Containerboard’s mill assets.”
Klabin announced that after a detailed analysis of market conditions, engineering and viability studies, its Board of Directors on April 16 approved a 9.1 billion-real ($2.3 billion) containerboard expansion project named Puma II Project.

Puma II consists of the construction of two new paper machines, along with production of integrated pulp, situated at the same industrial unit (Puma Unit) that Klabin operates in the municipality of Ortigueira in the state of Paraná, in southern Brazil. The total capacity of the machines will be 920,000 tons per year of kraftliner.

Klabin’s Puma Unit produces bleached pulp (hardwood, softwood and fluff) and will continue to supply the domestic and export markets with an annual capacity of 1.6 million tons.

According to Klabin, the construction of the Puma II Project will be executed in two stages:

- **The First Stage** consists of the construction of a principal fiberline for the production of unbleached pulp, integrated with a Kraftliner and White Kraftliner paper machine — the products of which will be sold under the brand Eukaliner — with an annual production capacity of 450,000 tons. In addition, this stage also includes the construction of complimentary installations supporting the new lines and plants for the recovery and utilities areas.

- **The Second Stage** incorporates the construction of a complimentary fiberline for the production of unbleached pulp integrated with a Kraftliner paper machine with an annual production capacity of 470,000 tons and the expansion of some support installations.

Klabin estimates that construction of each stage of the project may last 24 months and that the beginning of the second stage may take place after the startup of the first stage. Thus, startup of the first machine is expected in the second quarter of 2021, and startup of the second machine is expected in the second quarter of 2023.

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**Bracell Rebrands Pulp Operations in Brazil; Pulp Mill Expansion Project Underway**

Bracell Group, which is part of Singapore-based RGE, will rebrand its operations throughout Brazil under the Bracell brand. The Bracell brand now includes Bahia Specialty Cellulose (BSC) in Camacari, Bahia, and Lwarcel Celulose in Lencois Paulista, Sao Paulo.

Bracell announced the rebranding shortly after it began work on “Project Star,” a major expansion project at its pulp mill in the state of Sao Paulo.

“We have operated one of the industry’s most respected specialty cellulose producers, Bahia Specialty Cellulose, right here in Brazil for over 15 years,” said Per Lindblom, Executive Vice President, Bracell Group. “Our acquisition of Lwarcel Celulose in August 2018 now provides us with a platform to become one of the most dynamic and fastest growing dissolving pulp and cellulose operations not only in Brazil, but in the world.”

Project Star, which involves the former Lwarcel Celulose pulp mill in Lencois Paulista, is a substantial capacity expansion project to increase the mill’s current production capacity of 250,000 tpy by an additional 1,250,000 tpy to reach 1.5 million tpy.

The new mill will incorporate a biorefinery concept — an approach that maximizes recycling and recovery of input materials, utilization and realization of byproducts from the pulping process, low water consumption, low emissions, and no use of fossil fuels.

By the time Project Star completes in 2021, Bracell will have an annual production capacity of 2.0 million tons of dissolving pulp and will employ 7,300 direct and indirect employees.

Work on the mill’s expansion has already begun and completion is expected by the end of 2021.

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**EUROPE**

**DS Smith to Sell Two Packaging Businesses to International Paper**

DS Smith announced that it has reached an agreement for the proposed sale of two packaging businesses in North Western France and Portugal to International Paper for EUR 63 million.

The sales of the packaging businesses would fulfill the commitment made to the European Commission in relation to the clearance of DS Smith’s acquisition of Papeles y Cartones de Europa, S.A., known as Europac, which was completed on January 22, 2019.

“I am delighted that we are on track to meet our commitment to the European Commission with both an attractive price and a good home for the businesses in International Paper,” said Miles Roberts, Group Chief Executive of DS Smith.

Completion of the sales is subject to customary closing conditions including works council consultation and regulatory approvals and expected to take place in the first half of DS Smith’s fiscal year 2019/2020.
EUROPE

Metsä Fibre Begins Pre-Engineering for Bioproducts Mill in Kemi, Finland

Metsä Fibre has started pre-engineering projects related to the construction of a new bioproduct mill in Kemi, Finland.

In May of 2018, Metsä Fibre launched a prefeasibility study that included two alternatives: (1) building a totally new bioproduct mill that would be clearly bigger in size than its current Kemi pulp mill, or (2) alternatively extending the life cycle of the current mill by modernizing several departments. In the study, the availability of wood raw material and the development potential of Kemi’s industrial infrastructure and logistic connections were examined in particular.

Metsä Fibre decided upon building a new bioproduct mill with an annual production capacity of approximately 1.5 million tonnes of softwood and hardwood pulp at the current mill site in Kemi. In addition to pulp, the mill would produce various other bioproducts.

According to Metsä Fibre, this mill would be the biggest wood processing unit in the Northern hemisphere. The new mill would replace the current Kemi pulp mill that has an annual capacity of about 620,000 tonnes. The total investment would amount to approximately EUR 1.5 billion.

The annual pulpwood consumption of the new Kemi bioproduct mill would be approximately 7.6 million cubic meters, which is roughly 4.5 million cubic meters more compared to the consumption of the current mill. The aim is to source the pulpwood for the mill from Finland. Securing the wood sourcing for the mill requires further studies to maximize the share of domestic wood.

The main planning premises of the new mill include totally fossil free operations and 250 percent self-sufficiency in electricity. The pulp production volumes would be sold to European and Asian customers as well as to Metsä Board’s linerboard mill located at the same mill site in Kemi.

Metsä Fibre’s final investment decision related to the Kemi bioproduct mill is expected to be made in summer 2020.

Stora Enso Explores Recycling of Paper Cups for Magazine Paper Production

Stora Enso said that it intends to start recycling used paper cups on a large scale at its Langerbrugge Mill in Belgium. Based on production trials, Stora Enso possesses the technical feasibility to recycle paper cups for use in other paper applications and is now looking into partnerships for the collection and sorting of used paper cups.

“Recycling must be made easy for consumers, that is why we want to invite partners and customers to jointly develop business models for collecting paper cups,” said Annica Bresky, Executive Vice President of the Stora Enso Consumer Board division.

In recycling trials at Langerbrugge Mill, half a million baled post-consumer paper cups collected from fast food restaurants and coffee houses were re-pulped for the production of magazine paper. The result confirmed that paper cups can be recycled at the mill without any additional process equipment, and that the fibers are well suited for other paper applications, such as magazine paper production.

Stora Enso’s Langerbrugge Mill is one the largest paper mills in Europe, producing 540,000 tons per year of recycled newsprint and magazine papers. The production is exclusively based on paper for recycling. The mill is conveniently located in Continental Europe with about 80 million people living within 300 kilometres of the mill, thus providing a large enough source for recycled raw materials.

Rik Van Bostraeten, Sourcing Manager, Multifuel & Business Innovation, for the Langerbrugge Mill, noted, “Langerbrugge Mill has the technical readiness to accept billions of used cups for recycling within our sourcing area. The challenge is more about getting these cups to us on the industrial scale that our production would require.”
EUROPE

WEPA Takes over Arjowiggins Deinked Pulp Mill in France

WEPA Group, headquartered in Arnsberg, Germany, has been awarded to take over the business activities of the Arjowiggins Greenfield Mill in Chateau-Thierry, France. The decision was taken by the commercial court of Nanterre on March 29.

The Greenfield mill is part of the Graphic Paper division of Arjowiggins Group and filed insolvency together with two sister companies in January 2019. With 74 employees, the mill has a production capacity of about 130,000 tons per year of deinked pulp.

Martin Krengel, CEO of the WEPA Group, said, “As a family business we have an overall sustainable orientation and the use of recovered paper is an essential component of our raw material strategy. With the takeover of the Greenfield mill we further strengthen our position as a European private label tissue specialist and as a market leader in the field of recycled papers. In addition, we ensure our long-term supply with deinked pulp.”

The WEPA Group is the third largest supplier of tissue paper and tissue products in Europe with an annual turnover of EUR 1.2 billion.

RUSSIA

Prinzhorn Group to Buy 50 Percent Stake in Russian Corrugated Packaging Group SFT

Prinzhorn Group has agreed to purchase a 50 percent share of SFT Group, a packaging, paper and recycling group based in Russia. The deal will result in a joint venture between the two groups.

Both parties agreed not to disclose the transaction value.

The family-owned and vertically integrated SFT Group has an annual production capacity of 500 million metric square meters of corrugated packaging, 450,000 tons of containerboard and 550,000 tons of paper for recycling. All of SFT Group’s production sites are located in the Central, North-West and Southern Federal Districts.

The core production sites include Kamenskaya Paper & Board Mill, Aleksinskaya Paper & Board Mill, Kartontara in Maykop and Famadar Cartona in Taganrog — all producers of containerboard and corrugated packaging solutions.

“This strong joint venture brings together long-term focus, market know-how and technical expertise. Our customers can benefit from our improved recycling, paper and packaging solutions,” said Cord Prinzhorn, CEO of Prinzhorn Group.

SFT will continue to operate under its current name.

INDUSTRY SUPPLIERS

Valmet Acquires U.S.-based J&L Fiber Services for $51 Million

Valmet on May 1, 2019 completed the acquisition of J&L Fiber Services Inc., a manufacturer and provider of refiner segments to the pulp, paper and fiberboard industry. The company is located in Wisconsin. The enterprise value of the acquisition is approximately EUR 51 million on a cash and debt free basis subject to ordinary post-closing adjustments.

J&L Fiber Services manufactures and supplies low-consistency refiner segments that are important wear parts used in pulp and paper production, complementing Valmet’s offering in refiner segments. It also supplies high-consistency refiner segments that are used in thermomechanical pulping and medium density fiberboard (MDF) refining.

In the last twelve months, the company had net sales of approximately EUR 30 million with an EBITA margin of around 15 percent. The acquired operations employ about 100 people.

J&L Fiber Services operates globally through a sales representative and distribution network. Over 75 percent of its sales goes to North America. The acquired business becomes a part of Valmet’s Services business line, as Waukesha Service Center.

“We are continuously strengthening our stable business, meaning Services and Automation,” said Pasi Laine, President and CEO of Valmet. “The recent acquisition of North America-based GL&V is now followed by adding J&L Fiber Services’ complementary refiner segment products to our services offering. This acquisition also further strengthens our local presence especially in North America.”
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Many brands are planning to spend significantly more on packaging in coming months, according to a new L.E.K. Consulting study. In a survey of 250 brand owners across the consumer packaged goods (CPG) spectrum, a whopping 75% say they expect to increase packaging spending over the next year. Nearly a third of them will do so by more than 10%. That’s a big jump from both 2018 and 2017, when 65% and 40% expected to increase spending, respectively.

Why the even greater emphasis on packaging? A full 90% of brand owners say packaging is critical to their brand’s success — a way to adapt to industry pressures, including fast-changing consumer tastes and preferences.

“CPG brand owners recognize consumers want more convenience, and companies are looking to packaging to help provide it. This will entail some major changes to packaging, and CPGs are responding and investing,” says Thilo Henkes, Managing Director at L.E.K. Consulting and coauthor of the “2019 Brand Owner Packaging Study.” Accordingly, 57% of brand owners say they’re developing packaging that’s easier to open, 51% say they’re working on more single-serve package sizes and 49% say they’re stepping up placements in new distribution channels, such as convenience stores, the survey says.

Another top driver of brand growth, according to the L.E.K. research, is the rise of premium products, as consumers turn to these as a way to convey their unique personal tastes. Forty-two percent of respondents say they’ve expanded their premium offerings, with 35% changing their promotional strategies and 32% expanding their price-pack offerings. And packaging is often central to the marketing of premium offerings, since the packaging format, substrate choice, printing and texture, etc. often conveys the product’s high-end status.

Among the other consumer trends that the report says has direct implications for packaging:

Customization. New technologies have made product customization more cost-effective, and, in turn, consumers have gained a fondness for specialized products. More than half of brand owners have increased product personalization over the past two years, and 42% have implemented additional customization of their products. As such, brand owners say...
they plan to launch 15%+ more SKUs in 2020 vs. 2018, and differentiated and effective packaging will be crucial.

**Ever-increasing health focus.** As demand for more healthy products skyrockets, companies have made adjustments to their products, including more healthy or natural ingredients. And packaging changes in the past two years reflect this, as 60% of brand owners have introduced all-natural or non-processed products and 53% have introduced “health-focused” products that have required adjustments to packaging in order to communicate this change to consumers.

**Green growth.** Environmentally friendly products have begun to move out of their corner niches onto the center stage, and brand owners see this as a top source of growth over the next two years. Eighty-five percent say they’ve made at least one significant change to packaging substrate material in the past two years, most frequently to increase ease of recycling. And they expect the value of packaging containing biodegradable, recycled or compostable material to grow by 1.3 to 1.4 times from 2016 to 2022.

**Ecommerce expansion.** As more and more consumers choose to shop online, brand owners are turning to a variety of strategies that involve packaging. Fifty-five percent say they’ve entered new digital channels, 47% have implemented mobile on-demand ordering and 47% have increased investment in their websites. CPGs will need to make changes to packaging to protect against breakage, maintain freshness during delivery and keep a consistent look and feel across multiple channels.

“All indications are that brand owners consider ongoing investment in packaging to be critical to their brand’s success,” says Jeff Cloetingh, Managing Director at L.E.K. and report coauthor. “By conveying both valuable attributes and a potent brand message, packaging continues to have the unique capacity to make products stand out in a crowded marketplace.”

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Clearwater Paper recently appointed Robert Hrivnak as Senior Vice President, Finance and Chief Financial Officer. Hrivnak joins Clearwater Paper from Itron, a U.S.-based technology company with revenues in 2018 of about $2.4 billion. Hrivnak most recently served as Itron’s Chief Accounting Executive – Vice President and Corporate Controller.

Georgia-Pacific announced that Kathleen A. “Kathy” Walters will retire as executive vice president – consumer products group, effective June 1, 2019, following a distinguished career in the consumer products and paper industry. David Duncan, who serves as executive vice president – building products group, has been named to lead the consumer products group. Pat Boushka, currently president of GP Cellulose, will succeed Duncan as leader of the building products group. In addition, Munir Abdallah, vice president of sales and marketing for GP Cellulose, succeeds Boushka as president of GP Cellulose.

Gould Paper Corporation has appointed Michael Trachtenberg as President and Chief Executive Officer, effective May 1. Trachtenberg replaces David H. Berkowitz, who had been the President and CEO since 2015. Previously, Trachtenberg served as Gould’s Chief Operating Officer.

Graphic Packaging Holding Company has named Stacey Panayiotou as Executive Vice President, Human Resources. Ms. Panayiotou joins Graphic Packaging from The Coca-Cola Company, where she was most recently Global Vice President of Talent and Development and Vice President, Human Resources for Europe, Middle East & Africa.

Monadnock Paper Mills announced that Julie Brannen has joined the company as Business Development and Sales Manager. Brannen has more than 15 years of experience working in the paper and printing industry. Most recently, she was North American Sales Director at Arjowiggins Graphic Papers.

Verso Corporation announced that B. Christopher DiSantis stepped down as President and Chief Executive Officer and member of the Verso Corporation board of directors effective as of April 5, 2019. Leslie Lederer, former chairman, interim president and CEO of Catalyst Paper Company, has been named as interim CEO as of April 5 in order to ensure a smooth transition until such time as a permanent CEO has been identified and retained.

INDUSTRY SUPPLIERS

Fabio Perini announced the appointment of Mauro Luna as its new Global Sales Director. Formerly, Luna served as Commercial Director for Amcor Rigid Plastics.

Donna Harman, President and CEO of the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA), was recently honored with the Bryce Harlow Foundation Business-Government Relations Award in recognition of her exemplary career in government advocacy. Harman has served as President and CEO of AF&PA since May 2007. Prior to that, she served as AF&PA’s Senior Vice President, Policy and Government Affairs.

Kathy Buckman Gibson was recognized as Woman of the Year by TAPPI’s Women in Industry Division at its recent annual PaperCon conference in Indianapolis. Buckman Gibson is an owner and Director of Buckman. She has been involved with the pulp and paper industry for more than 25 years while working at Buckman in various capacities including Chief Operating Officer, General Counsel and Chairman of the Board. Currently Buckman Gibson is CEO and President of KBG Technologies, LLC, a joint venture between herself and Buckman established in 2018. KBG Technologies is a certified woman-owned business providing chemistries and smart technologies to the pulp and paper industry and water treatment market.
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Recovering from a difficult challenge shows resiliency, whether it’s in an individual, a business or an entire industry. The paper industry faced just such a test in 2017 when China announced a major policy change — China National Sword — restricting the import of recovered paper products. The immediate effect on the amount of paper in the U.S. recovered for recycling raised a serious question about the future of this important indicator of sustainability. But the percent of paper consumed in the U.S. that was recovered for recycling reached an historic 68.1 percent last year. After dipping slightly in 2017 following China’s new policy, the U.S. paper recovery for recycling rate rebounded to a record high in 2018. This shows how dynamic the market for recovered paper and paperboard is — and the critical role it plays in extending the useful life of paper and paper-based packaging products to support sustainability.

The impact of China National Sword was actually very significant. Exports to China, which account for approximately 40 percent of U.S. recovered paper exports, were off by a substantial 30.5 percent in 2018 according to U.S. Census Bureau data. But the markets for recovered paper are more than complex and efficient enough — and industry ingenuity to use this material to make new products is more than creative enough — to overcome the hurdle. The decline in exports to China was more than offset by exports to other trading partners, in particular other Asian countries.

The revival from 2017’s lower rate actually follows what has been the trend in paper recovery for recycling for almost 30 years. The rate of paper recovered for recycling has doubled since the industry committed to setting and achieving recovery goals in 1990. In fact, the industry has met or exceeded 63 percent paper recovery for recycling for the past 10 years. Recovered paper markets are driven by the same supply-demand dynamics that characterize the broader economy, which means there will naturally be ebbs and flows in recycling rates. But the overall trend has very clearly been toward an increasing percentage of paper recovered for recycling.

The reason for that trend has been a very successful partnership between industry and consumers. Industry-led efforts to support increased paper recovery have included collaborating with The Recycling Partnership to build recycling infrastructure in communities across the U.S., educating policymakers, and delivering STEM-based curriculum materials to 5th grade classrooms through our youth education initiative with The Responsible Package.

Additionally, we carried out a public affairs campaign during the 2018 holiday season to counteract anticipated negative stories about the increasing volume of cardboard boxes from online holiday shopping. The campaign educated...
government stakeholders on our industry’s role as part of the paper-based packaging recycling solution. We also encouraged consumers to properly recycle their boxes to ensure they reach their highest-value end use: the manufacture of new products.

Consumers have responded and demonstrated their own commitment to increasing the quantity and quality of paper recovered for recycling. A big part of their motivation is the understanding that paper recovery for recycling is an environmental success story. Paper recycling reuses a renewable resource that stores carbon long-term, also known as sequestering carbon, and helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Consumers increasingly know that recycling paper is good for the environment. And with 96 percent of Americans having access to community curbside and/or drop-off paper recycling programs (most recent data from AF&PA’s 2014 Community Access Survey), it’s easier than ever for consumers to recycle paper and help reach the latest record recovery rate.

As exciting as 2018’s record-breaking recovery rate is, it is just a step closer to a bigger goal. The industry has consistently set higher goals for the recovery for recycling rate and then worked hard to meet them. As part of our Better Practices, Better Planet 2020 sustainability initiative, the industry set a goal of exceeding a 70 percent rate of paper recovery for recycling by 2020 — and we are making a major effort to achieve it.

Progress toward a goal doesn’t always occur in a straight line. Changes in the international marketplace for recovered paper caused temporary disruptions that briefly delayed the growth in the percentage of paper recovered for recycling — and that could happen again in the future. But part of what has made this effort successful over the long-term is the fact that it is voluntary and market-driven and those same attributes helped us regain our footing and take paper recovery to new heights — and we’re not done yet!

The American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) serves to advance a sustainable U.S. pulp, paper, packaging, tissue and wood products manufacturing industry through fact-based public policy and marketplace advocacy. AF&PA member companies make products essential for everyday life from renewable and recyclable resources and are committed to continuous improvement through the industry’s sustainability initiative — Better Practices, Better Planet 2020.

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Boxmaking: Driving Down Time and Cost

10 ways to reduce setup time and improve productivity.

By Lin Grensing-Pophal

Editor’s note: This article was originally published in the March/April 2019 issue of AICC BoxScore (The Independent Packaging Association).

The production cycle for many manufacturers, including box manufacturers, has been significantly shortened over the past several years, driven to a large degree by technology and consumer demand for faster and faster turnaround for all the various types of interactions and transactions they take part in daily. With Amazon providing two-day shipping at no cost through their Prime program, and other retailers following suit, companies of all kinds are finding that whatever customers are ordering online and through their smartphones, they want it now!

"Before we had a computer in our pocket, people just purchased from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.,” says Leslie Pickering, co-owner of Quadrant5 Consulting, a firm that works with manufacturers in the corrugated and folding carton industries to help them streamline their processes.

“Purchasing 24 hours puts an enormous pressure on manufacturing cycles. There are greater demands in terms of shorter lengths of turnaround. All manufacturing facilities are under cost pressures, which create difficulties for them because the cost of power, labor, and equipment is all going up.”

For box plants, says Pickering, the ability to make quick changeovers is a must. Driving down setup time and increasing speed to market can help manufacturers save a lot of money, he says. “Quick changeovers allow them to have more flexible schedules — the more flexibility in the schedule, the more profit they can make.”
Mike Nunn, vice president of operations at Ideon Packaging, agrees that there is ample opportunity for box manufacturers to make improvements that can directly impact their bottom lines. Nunn, who is Lean Black Belt-certified, uses tools such as kaizen and PDCA (plan, do, check, act) to drive measurable improvements. Taking steps to reduce setup times, says Nunn, can be a low-cost way to find hidden capacity in your operations. He notes that the first time he performed a kaizen on a flexo, he was able to demonstrate savings of 70 percent! That’s a significant time — and cost — reduction.

Here we take a look at 10 best-practice ideas for reducing setup time and improving time to market:

1. **Upgrade equipment.** Advances in boxmaking technology mean that manufacturers have access to better and faster equipment fueled by software advances that can both boost speed and reduce or eliminate the need to shut equipment down to change orders. But, notes Pickering, the equipment side of the equation is relatively easy, assuming the purchases can be made within budget and provide payback in a reasonable amount of time. Where the challenges most often lie is with the “human element,” he says.

2. **Engage and involve your operators.** There’s power in your people — they have knowledge, experience, and insights that you can leverage to help make improvements that can drive time out of the setup process. Don’t overlook that knowledge! By engaging your team in whatever changes you wish to make, you’ll boost the odds that they will be on board with those changes. In addition, get them involved in ongoing monitoring and measuring. Are the changes you’ve implemented having the desired impact? If not, reconvene to discuss additional steps and opportunities for improvement. Create a culture of continuous improvement, in which operators know that they should be making suggestions regularly and coming together at specific times to consider whether new practices or processes should be implemented. “It’s a great opportunity to pull a team together,” says Nunn. “Pull together all of the stakeholders and ask them about the setup and where their challenges are; truly understand the process from their view, and not necessarily the management view.”

3. **Formalize changeover processes.** Most companies don’t have these, Pickering says. Instead they rely on their operators to “figure it out.” The problem with this, he says, is that “if you don’t have a formal way, you can’t train for it, and if you don’t have a standard process, you have variability.” And, what happens when a high-performing operator leaves for another company or retires? Their knowledge is lost, which impacts the production process and turnaround times. Documenting changeover processes that are derived based on the best-practice experiences of operators can be an important way to reduce variability and changeover times.

“Quick changeovers allow [manufacturers] to have more flexible schedules — the more flexibility in the schedule, the more profit they can make.” – Les Pickering, co-owner, Quadrant5 Consulting
4. Ensure an environment that supports the performance of the process. The area around the equipment, or the industrial environment, needs to be visually easy to see to support the processes — that means, says Pickering, that there is nothing in the area that is not needed. “It’s really back to a bare-bones skeleton,” he says. And, it ensures that the tools or equipment that operators need will always be where they expect them to be. “If you’re the lead operator and I’m the assistant, and you say to me, ‘Go get me that 6-millimeter wrench,’ and if that wrench isn’t where it’s supposed to be, now I have to go and find it.” That takes time — unnecessary time that slows down the process and increases costs. Some seemingly minor things can have major impacts here, says Nunn. For instance: having tools on shadow boards close to the machines where they’re used. A simple step, yet one that can reap huge dividends.

5. Re-reference the machines. Whenever an operator does a setup, says Pickering, they need to have confidence that if they need to print 2¾ inches from the lead edge, that the machine will go to that position every time. Re-referencing the machines on a regular basis — at least monthly — can help to ensure that level of confidence.

6. Break down — and document — internal and external changeover tasks. Internal elements are those that require going into the machine as it’s stopped to perform some kind of action — changing a plate, for example. These actions can be taken only when a piece of equipment is down or not running. External elements are actions that can be taken while the machine is running — cleaning a print plate, for example. If any of these actions are not operating as efficiently as possible, says Pickering, setup times will be impacted. That requires a solid understanding of exactly what sorts of activities (internal and external) are taking place, whether there are opportunities to expedite them, and then documenting those actions so they are performed consistently with minimal to no variability.

Documenting changeover processes that are derived based on the best-practice experiences of operators can be an important way to reduce variability and changeover times.
This is, says Nunn, perhaps the biggest action item that manufacturers can undertake to achieve operational impacts.

“Identify everything that needs to be done in a task, and separate into internal and external actions.”

7. Think lean. Nunn’s experience in lean manufacturing stresses an ongoing focus on ensuring that only value-added tasks take place in any production process. “Do all of the tasks add value, or are they non-value-added?” he asks. In the lean environment, there is a focus on identifying various forms of waste that can be part of any process and then eliminating, or at least significantly reducing, those items. This isn’t, or shouldn’t be, a one-time activity, he notes.

“It’s repeating a PDCA process of let’s identify waste and eliminate or reduce it to shrink the amount of time it takes to produce the setup.”

8. Don’t overlook electronic information flow. It’s not just the production process itself that should be considered when seeking to reduce setup time, Nunn notes. Consider electronic information flow as well. A combination of paper and electronic systems may offer the best options for data flow, he says. For instance, paper tickets can be lost and waste time in trying to determine who has the ticket. Automating these tickets can ensure that information is available and readily accessible when and where it needs to be.

9. Adopt a “pit-stop” mentality. Nunn points to auto racing as a good example of how efficiencies can be introduced to significantly minimize the amount of time taken to perform a specific task. A pit crew can change out four tires and fill a tank of gas in less than three seconds. Having dedicated setup people can help achieve these efficiencies. Nunn says he’s a big believer in the SWARM (sudden, work, aligned, rapid, measured; see “Setup Reduction,” BoxScore, July/August 2018) mindset — he wrote a piece last year for AICC on the concept and how it can be used to reduce setup time.

10. Do the math! Crunching the numbers can yield valuable information and provide a baseline or reference point to calculate the value of making specific changes. How many changeovers did your machine perform over the past year? How long did it take to perform the changeovers? If you could reduce that time by 50 percent, what would the dollar impact be?

Boxmakers, says Pickering, need to think more as if they’re performing a ballet than playing hockey. “I want it to be a choreographed changeover,” he says. “It should be like ballet — that’s the only way.”

How could taking time to consider some of the best practices above help you to drive time and cost out of your production processes? There’s no time like the present to gather your team members and begin considering opportunities for improvement.

Lin Grensing-Pophal is a writer based in Wisconsin. She is a frequent contributor to BoxScore.

About AICC, The Independent Packaging Association
AICC a growing membership association which has served independents since 1974, by providing access to education and information in print, in person, and online. AICC membership is for the full company — join and all employees at all locations have access to member benefits. In April 2017 AICC began offering free online education to all members to help the individual maximize their potential and the member company maximize its profit. When companies invest and engage, AICC will deliver success. Learn more at www.aiccbox.org.
Living in Interesting Times: How China is Speeding-Up Fiber Market Transition

Chinese actions to curb imports of recycled fiber have caused confusion in the recycled fiber markets. A significant drop in imports of recycled fibers could even be followed by a total ban of imports. What challenges and opportunities does the industry face going forwards?

By Per-Ove Nordström, Principal, Pöyry Management Consulting

China’s changes in their import policy regarding recycled fibers have been significant, creating both winners and losers. So far, the situation has created challenges for Chinese mills, as supply of recycled fiber has become limited and the price of domestically collected fiber has skyrocketed. In the US and Europe, on the other hand, paper and board producers are enjoying unusually low fiber cost.

In 2016, China imported close to 29 million tons of recycled fiber, and 2017 imports dropped to approximately 26 million tons. Imports during 2018 landed on 17 million tons. Currently many Chinese producers expect imports for 2019 could be lower than 12 million tons. The situation may very well become even worse for Chinese producers. The government has indicated that it may ban all imports of recycled fiber altogether by the end of 2020.

CHINA TO REMAIN FIBER IMPORTER, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER

Chinese forest resources are nowhere near enough to enable the country to be self-sufficient with domestic pulp to be able to replace current fiber imports. So far, recycled fiber seems to be the furnish of choice in many grades. Total consumption of paper and board is estimated to grow some 20
million tons by 2025, which is nearly half of the estimated global demand growth. In containerboard alone, where almost all production is recycled fiber based, demand is expected to grow slightly more than 10 million tons by 2025. Basically, all announced new Chinese containerboard capacity, so far, is planned to use recycled fiber as furnish. Is this possible or are there other options that are more viable?

**FIBER SUPPLY SOLUTIONS**

Using the containerboard market is a good example to illustrate the challenge; in 2017 Chinese containerboard production reached 45 million tons, almost all of it recycled fiber based. 15 million tons of OCC was imported, making up approximately one-third of total furnish. Between 2019 and 2021 it has been decided that approximately 10 million tons of new capacity will be built, all intending to use recycled fiber as furnish. On top of that there are projects exceeding 8 million tons of capacity, planned but not yet confirmed. One conclusion seems to be that China, if all projects are built, strives to largely remain self-sufficient in containerboard supply.

If a total ban on solid waste imports will be implemented, approximately 15 million tons of current production needs to find new ways to source fiber, or close down. So what alternatives are at hand?

1. **Alleviate current import restrictions.** This option would include no ban on recycled fiber. It could also mean that current contamination restrictions of 0.5% could be changed to 1%, more in line with what the industry currently considers realistic to comply with given current equipment and collection practices. Still, this option seems to go against current efforts to stem the environmental challenges China is facing. So far, the contamination rules have, as intended, led to a change in the quality of imports. More volumes of DLK #13 and double sorted OCC #12 have been sourced from the US instead of the lower qualities traditionally imported. However, there are indications that large Chinese producers, and thus significant importers of recycled fibers, find a total ban unrealistic and now plea for continued imports beyond 2020.

2. **Increase domestic recycled fiber collections.** The second option is to try to replace current imports and supply new capacity with domestically collected fiber. As the Chinese containerboard producers serve the Chinese manufacturing industry, a significant share of the corrugated boxes will leave the country through exports and will be recovered overseas. Our estimates, when adjusting for export flows, indicate total recovery rates exceeding 60%, close to adjusted levels seen in Europe and the US. Recovery rates for OCC are likely higher, just like in the US and Europe. The potential to significantly increase recovery of OCC within China is low and far from 15 million tons (see Graph 1).

3. **Increase containerboard imports.** The third option is already to some extent being addressed. During 2018, imports of e.g.
kraftliner, increased. There are also expansion plans in neighboring countries, e.g. Vietnam and Laos, announced by Chinese producers with the clear intention to export to China. There are also examples of Chinese producers buying mills in the US, which will be converted to containerboard for exports to China. However, to replace 15 million tons requires significant investments on projects that will be more or less entirely dedicated for exports. The volumes equal 30-40 machines and the effort will take quite some time to undertake.

4. Import new sources of fiber. The fourth option is therefore maybe more likely; new ways to supply Chinese mills with pulp. The most obvious one would be to increase the imports of unbleached kraft pulp (UKP). This is likely to happen, particularly as quality issues will become more important over time. However, current global market pulp capacity dedicated to UKP is very small, approximately 4 million tons. But capacity is about to change. One large Chinese containerboard producer bought a closed pulp mill in the US in 2018. Following some investments, the capacity of UKP at the mill is expected to reach 275,000 tons per year. One reason why current UKP projects are limited is the product’s relative unattractiveness compared to recycled fibers which are far cheaper (see Graph 2).

This leaves us with a potentially highly interesting opportunity that is not yet to any large degree being exploited; recycled pulp. This could be a significant opportunity as the Chinese government considers it to be a product in its own right, and may be imported. So far this is a small product. During 2018 approximately 300,000 tons of recycled fiber was imported, usually from sources around China and with a widely varying quality. Current production is not likely to be sustainable. In e.g. Vietnam, Indonesia but also Taiwan, authorities are increasingly concerned for the same reasons as China; they see a growing problem with increasing imports of material that subsequently lead to issues with waste water and solid waste.

Graph 2. Fiber prices in China and US.

As it happens, one of China’s leading containerboard producer, Nine Dragons, is already on its way to building capacity in the US, exceeding 1 million tons of recycled pulp for exports to China. (Pictured left: Biron mill in Wisconsin, which ND Paper acquired in June of 2018.)
A significant opportunity could emerge in the geographies where most of the recycled fiber is generated, i.e. North America and Europe. It is conceivable that recycled fiber pulp mills could emerge close to export ports or in areas with large populations where there are huge flows of fiber, like the US West Coast, Rotterdam or Antwerp.

**CHINESE BACKWARDS INTEGRATION CREATES CAPTIVE MARKETS**

Many Chinese containerboard producers already have significant recycled fiber sourcing organizations in these markets and it would be another way to integrate backwards. Leading Chinese paper and board producers have a fairly long history of integrating backwards to ensure fiber supply, including acquiring pulp mills abroad. From a Chinese perspective, the case for recycled pulp is, arguably, based on economics. The price difference between domestically collected OCC and buying OCC in the US is currently about $330/ton. The question is if the price difference can justify greenfield investments. It is also a question of how long this price difference can remain. However, an analogy could be Chinese pulp mills that are willing to import very expensive woodchips to keep their mills running.

As it happens, one of China’s leading containerboard producer, Nine Dragons, is already on its way to building capacity in the US, exceeding 1 million tons of recycled pulp for exports to China. In addition, Lee & Man has announced plans to build greenfield capacity in Asia.

**FIBER STRATEGY REMAINS KEY TO SUCCESS**

In our opinion, current Chinese actions are only spurring existing trends to develop faster than previously expected. The two main trends are tighter recycled fiber markets, as well as increasing concern over deteriorating quality of recycled fiber. If China continues on its current track and allows recycled fiber imports although limited but with highest quality requirements, earlier exported low quality fibers will remain in the US and Europe. Understanding the changing dynamics in the fiber markets is of strategic importance.

It is clear that most paper and board producers need to reconsider their fiber sourcing strategies to address the changing structure of supply. Today it is unclear how far the Chinese companies are willing or able to take their backward integrations strategies, and to what extent the Chinese market becomes captive.

There are also commercial aspects to consider as the performance of a mill’s paper products may change due to changing quality of furnish. As paper performance changes, so does suitability to various end applications and the value to customers.

Finally, a new field of recycled pulp products is emerging. To capture these opportunities, brand new strategies need to be developed from scratch. Winners will devise fiber sourcing strategies and define the most suitable use for these new products.

*Per-Ove Nordström is a Principal at Pöyry Management Consulting in Sweden. He can be contacted by email at: per-ove.nordstrom@poyry.com.*
The industry met at Paper2019 in Chicago from March 24-26. The American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA) and the National Paper Trade Association (NPTA) welcomed 750 industry executives from 228 companies. Participants networked, held business meetings in the nearly 50 Official Paper2019 Suites and attended sessions on current issues.

**PAPER INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP SESSION: THE NEXT GENERATION OF INDUSTRY LEADERS**

Moderator John Rooney of Evergreen Packaging, LLC kicked off the session with a presentation on the challenges of attracting and retaining the future industry workforce. A panel discussion followed where Rooney was joined for the industry leader perspective by Pete Watson of Greif Inc. and Ken Winterhalter of Twin Rivers Paper Company; Vanécia Carr of Domtar Paper and Scott Riley of Mac Papers brought the emerging leader angle; and Kelly Fellner of Rochester Institute of Technology and Alex Fleck of Western Michigan University and Graphic Packaging International presented the student/recent graduate point of view.

Key takeaways and opportunities included: emphasizing the industry’s sustainability and company’s culture in recruitment efforts; marketing the variety of positions available and skillsets needed; changing systems and frameworks to a team-based approach; accepting that younger generations may not spend their entire careers in the industry and preparing for that scenario; and taking a chance on young people by giving them professional experience.

**PAPER2019 RECEPTION**

Event registrants took advantage of the networking opportunity at the Paper2019 Reception following the Paper Industry Leadership Session. The well-attended social event provided all registered attendees a chance to unwind a bit in a casual atmosphere and talk with friends and colleagues.
FASTMARKETS RISI SESSIONS

PAPER2019 LUNCHEON
Bill Meany, President of Lindenmeyr Munroe, received the 2019 NPTA Stanley O. Styles Industry Excellence Award — NPTA’s highest honor and awarded to an individual who has had a distinguished career in the printing paper industry. In his heartfelt remarks, Meany honored and expressed gratitude for his family, mentors, employers and colleagues, noting that in his 40-plus years at work in the industry “I’ve laughed every single day.”

The Paper 2019 Luncheon speaker was Nicole Malachowski, a retired United States Air Force Colonel who was the first woman pilot on the Thunderbirds Air Demonstration Squadron. Her speech focused on headwinds — an aviation metaphor for unforeseen challenges — and how to harness them to overcome personal failures, cultural changes and life-altering events that seemingly come out of nowhere. Illustrating each point with gripping examples from her personal experience, Malachowski encouraged the audience to recognize the gifts headwinds offer and how to use them to reach greater heights.

PAPER2020 – SAVE THE DATE!
Paper2020 will be held March 15-17 in New York City.
Western Michigan University paper engineering faculty, students and several industry partners celebrated the startup of technology that will allow for the development and testing of new paper types, as well as another machine to certify recycled products.

Facilities on the WMU Parkview Campus now house a one-of-a-kind pilot-scale multi-ply paper manufacturing machine in North America, named in honor of alumnus Charles (Chuck) Klass, who worked for more than five decades in the pulp and paper industry. Klass received his Bachelor of Science degree (BA) from Western Michigan University in 1962 and his Masters in business management (MBA) from Pace University, New York City in 1968. He attended the unveiling ceremony April 16 and pulled the first sheet of paper off the new machine.

The equipment, moved and donated from the National Institute of Standards and Technology, enables WMU to test and develop two-ply paper and paperboard used in a wider variety of products, says Lon Pschigoda, WMU Pilot Plants general manager. Servicing industry clients from around the world, the WMU operation provides an outlet for companies to test new paper types, fibers, chemistries and equipment on a smaller scale, without having to interrupt their own production lines.

The project, “represents the best of WMU,” says WMU President Edward Montgomery. “It is research that impacts the world and creates unparalleled opportunities for our students.”

Its installation was made possible with the help of donations of industry talent, expertise and materials.

“Their achievement results from a 70-year partnership between the paper industry and the paper science and engineering program,” says Jan Van Der Kley, WMU vice president for business and finance. “The new machine provides greater opportunities for our students to have hands-on-experience with a one-of-a-kind facility in North America, new research opportunities for our faculty, and allows WMU to conduct more product trials for our industry partners.”
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Dating back to 1968, the new-to-WMU machine replaces an older model the University used in the former McCracken Hall, which was installed in 1958. During its yearlong installation process, the newer machine has been upgraded with many pieces of modern technology to help with trial efficiency and real-world learning for students.

A new fiber recycling plant also was unveiled, used to test and certify products from around the world for repulpability and recyclability. WMU has recently partnered with the Sustainable Packaging Coalition to be the certification site for their How2Recycle product labeling program. The fiber recycling plant is named for the managing director of WMU’s Paper Technology Foundation, John Bergin. Bergin is another WMU paper engineering distinguished alumnus. His career includes leading the Paper Technology Foundation for the last 13 years.

“Paper has a great story to tell,” says Pschigoda, “from sustainably managed forests, to an incredibly high recovery rate of recycled fiber, to the new products that can be produced with those fibers. Today’s student and future generations will be more and more focused on sustainable solutions.”

Companies represented at the event include:

- ABB Inc.
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- Albany International
- BTG
- Canadian National Railway
- Domtar
- EcoSynthetix Inc.
- Graphic Packaging International
- Kadant Johnson LLC
- Kemira
- Nalco Water
- New-Indy Containerboard
- Paper Lyons LLC/Imerys
- Performance Process, Inc.
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- Solenis
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About WMU Pilot Plants

The WMU Pilot Plants provide workforce and facility solutions for research, product development and education, serving Western Michigan University, the public and educational communities within the paper, printing, and allied industries. Through public partnerships, WMU Pilot Plants provide a valued workforce supplement as well as open access to pilot plant facilities and personnel. To learn more, please visit: wmupilotplant.com.
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See you at the mill.
Beloit, Dominion, Tamfelt, Sunds, Tampella, KMW, Kvaerner, Götaverken, Sunds, and now GL&V. The history of Valmet is woven from many different threads, all together forming the robust fabric of our company today.

We are proud that, with our acquisition of GL&V, we strengthen our impressive heritage and sharpen our technological capabilities in chemical pulping, stock preparation, paper making and finishing.

In addition to further developing our local presence in North America, Europe, South America and India, this acquisition will also help fortify the future of Valmet. valmet.com