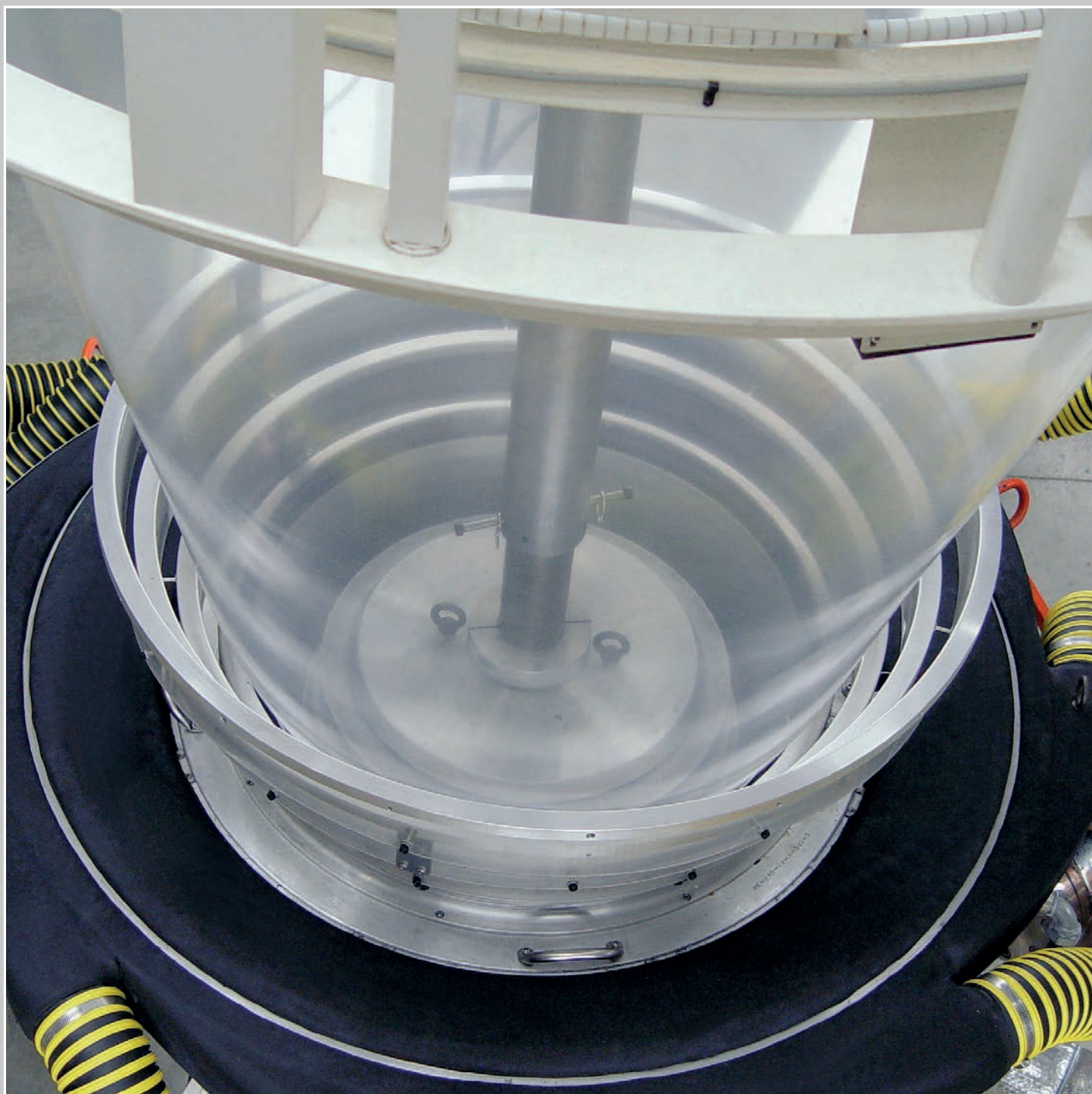


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# Packaging Films

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## Innovations to promote stand-up pouches

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*Innoform founder KARSTEN SCHRÖDER and Inmonet partner HENNO HENSEN on the current situation of stand-up pouches and how to promote this packaging solution*

*Can you assess the significance of stand-up pouches compared to other available packaging technologies and how urgently are innovations expected from the market players to improve their already successful use?*

**KARSTEN SCHRÖDER:** During its history of development, the stand-up pouch often was declared dead while markets consistently proved the opposite. According to a current study published by *Allied Development Corp.* there will be steady growth up to more than USD 4 billion in 2016. However, it is true that the use of stand-up pouches still largely depends on the filled goods and field of application. As for products like *Capri Sun* the use of stand-up pouches is self-evident, while with other products like soup this kind of packaging has been unsuccessful so far in Europe. In general, this packaging is well established in the market and I identify a strong increase in engineering investment on a global level.

**HENNO HENSEN:** For two decades, this initially small market segment has shown annual growth rates of 15–20%. In 2012 volumes are said

to have reached 24.5 billion pouches in Europe and 76 billion on a global scale. These are quite impressive numbers proving the well established position of the pouches. How-



**K. Schröder.**

**H. Hensen.**

ever, innovations are still urgently needed. For example, it is still not accepted, in our society, to drink out of pouches and elderly people in particular prefer rigid containers. There are other examples like the absence of respective supportive devices in cars illustrating the fact that this packaging solution is still not accepted everywhere. On the other hand, why should consumers not enjoy just-in-time cooled beverages, which is certainly possible with stand-up pouches?

*Which major obstacles in the fields of technology, marketing and consumer acceptance have to*

*be overcome in the short term to improve the market penetration of stand-up pouches?*

**KARSTEN SCHRÖDER:** In my opinion, stand-up pouches are currently associated too closely with certain product groups which do not mutually support each other. For example, pouches for petfood are differently perceived than those for laundry detergents or soft drinks. I think there is still some effort necessary to convince consumers that stand-up pouches are more than cheap packaging or solely refill packaging.

**HENNO HENSEN:** What we need is more than just supporting devices in cars but a logical processing chain ranging from the film substrate, the suitable closure system to the pouch itself. In addition, I will not ignore the final packaging. A special development introduced during the 2nd European Stand-up Pouch Conference (November 2010) now is supplied with significantly improved technology. In the first half of 2013, a well-known food manufacturer with worldwide reputation introduced a product based on this technology. Although it is too early for detailed information, filling capacities of 300–1000 pouches per minute will be achieved. This opens up the economic opportunity to approaching PET bottles in terms of price making the change to pouches an increasingly interesting issue.

*As co-arranger of the conference programme of the 3rd European Stand-up Pouch Conference and long-time associate of this market segment, you contributed a presentation dealing with the principles of self-cooling or self-heating pouches. How far has this development come and which market needs are you addressing?*

**HENNO HENSEN:** Together with my partner HARALD SAELENS I explained how we overcame the hurdles in the context of this project. To give you some background information, we identified many different fields of application for ad-hoc solutions fa-



cilitating warm meals or cold drinks. For example, in cold nights soldiers need to prepare warm drinks without any risk or victims of natural catastrophes must be supplied short-term with food and drinks within an environment with very harsh logistical conditions. In addition, extreme athletes require easy and safe packed high-calorie drinks. Another example is useful and safe outdoor meals for babies. Though there are already some offerings in this regard, they are very complex to use and also expensive.

Our development has now reached the stage of practical demonstrations. According to the motto »heat it« we demonstrated three pouches for soup products during our presentation at the 3rd European Stand-up Pouch Conference in October 2012.

*Which market trends have you*

*identified since the first stand-up pouch event in 2009? What were the most important ideas generated by the recent conference?*

**KARSTEN SCHRÖDER:** We firmly believe that a continuous European event is strong enough to set a



course. Much of the feedback from conference participants indicates that certain projects and products are made known through conferences. This not only boosted them significantly but also paved the

way for successful breakthroughs. A striking example of this is the increasing offer of fresh fruit mixtures packed in stand-up pouches and replacing the traditional cardboard packed cocoa drinks at schools.

For us, one of the main objectives of the conference events was to bring people together from different countries with the many different perspectives to offer a truly global programme.

**HENNO HENSEN:** For the recent conference we succeeded to bring together a number of machine manufacturers presenting the latest finding in the aseptic sector. This innovative technology is on the brink of a breakthrough and the conference provided the participants with further relevant details to promote further steps of development.

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