



# INVESTING IN GROWTH

The Slovak company TUBAPACK, a.s., based at Žiar nad Hronom, is an undisputed leader in its field with several high-profile awards to its name. The past few years have seen continued growth, with a number of investments in the modernisation of its facilities.





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**T**UBAPACK, a.s., located in Žiar nad Hronom, is part of the ŽHS, a.s. group and has for a long time been a producer of aluminium and laminated tubes, the first of which was produced in 1973. Owing to the increasing demands of its customers, the product portfolio was extended in 1998 to include laminated tubes. Thanks to its many years of experience, TUBAPACK, a.s., which now employs over 200 people, is ranked among the major tube manufacturers not only in Slovakia but also in central Europe, and this year the aluminium tube production in Žiar nad Hronom will be 42 years old.

### Two product groups

The company's manufacturing programme is divided into two basic product series: aluminium tubes and laminated tubes. The maximum annual production capacity for aluminium tubes is 300 million, and 50 million for laminated tubes.

Aluminium tubes are mainly intended for packaging applications for paste and slightly viscous liquid products in the cosmetics, food, pharmaceutical and chemical industries. Aluminium is an ideal packaging material: it is hygienic, non-toxic and retains the aroma of the packed product. In contrast to competing materials, aluminium packaging materials offer more concrete advantages – they are highly resistant to corrosion and provide a impermeable metal barrier to light, UV radiation, steam, lipids, as well as to oxygen and micro-organisms. Their recyclability is a major factor.

Aluminium tubes are coated inside with a preserving layer, on the outside a basic white glaze is applied, or any other shade of the basic coating. Tube tightness during filling and pressurising is secured by applying a sealant to the interior edge of the tube.

Laminated tubes are used predominantly in the food and cosmetics industries. The finer structure of the material from which they are made fits them for packaging

contents with higher volatility, because the barrier used prevents these materials from escaping and the contents being oxygenated. Their attractive appearance is another major advantage.

### Uniquely Slovak

It is in laminated tubes that the company offers its star product – a laminated tube with Braille characters intended for the blind and sight-impaired. One advantage of such tubes for drug manufacturers is that all information, including the product name, can be written in Braille on the tube, and no other packaging needs be used for the product. The exceptional nature of this packaging was rewarded with First Prize at the 'Packaging of the Year 2010' competition in the Czech Republic and also at a global competition in Düsseldorf, where it won the 'WorldStar for Packaging 2010' award.

An innovation being offered by the company's graphics department is 3D visualisation of a tube. In practice this means that on customer request the company is capable of creating a 3D model of a tube, offering views of the tube from any angle. The customer thus has the opportunity to see the tube as it will actually be before it is produced.

### Major investments

In Žiar in 2011 the company invested €7 million in a new line to produce aluminium cylindrical and conical tubes. The 'Introduction of Innovative Technology and Improved Competitiveness in Aluminium Tube Production at TUBAPACK a.s.' project was co-financed from the European Regional Development Fund, with half coming from the company's own resources. The result has proven to be worthwhile. The new TUBOMATIC 200 line for aluminium tube production has a manufacturing capacity of 65 million units a year. It is capable of turning out an unbelievable 200 tubes a minute. A natural part of the new technology is automatic packing and other leading technical and qualitative parameters. ▷










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In addition to an increase in manufacturing capacity the new line offers customers higher quality in a very current area, that of hygiene and food safety. There is also automated product quality checking at critical points and a doubling of the range of printing to eight colours (previously print had been in a four-colour range).

“This investment in a new line has extended the company’s portfolio by another type of product. These are the conical tubes, whose major advantage is a unique design and savings on storage and transport costs, because conical tubes can be stacked (i.e. inserted one inside the other because of the broadening of the casing),” says company Head of sales Martin Benuska. “This all shows that the new line is globally the very best in the packaging technology field,” he adds.

The past year (2014) has also seen a number of important investments in the modernisation of TUBAPACK’s production processes, totalling several million euros. For example, it has recently a Mall Herlan line with an annual capacity of 50 million aluminium tubes. This was followed by the modernisation of its laminated tubes facilities with the addition of a clean area which allows it to meet the highest criteria for clean production.

Furthermore, the company has been focusing on improving the working environment for its employees, to which end it installed an adiabatic cooling system which is far more efficient than standard air conditioners. This was followed up by improved thermal insulation in the main production hall and the replacement of air wells.

According to the company, “These investments run into million of euros but this is the only way to ensure we are a reliable and competitive partner for our customers, as well as being a responsible employer.”

### Worldwide success

A large portion of the company’s customers are in the food, chemical, cosmetics and pharmaceutical industries. Up to 95 per cent of output is for export, mainly to the EU countries and to Russia. Consumers will come across TUBAPACK tubes when buying products such as Indulona cream, Piknik and Pikao milk, and for Schwarzkopf and Syoss hair dyes.

TUBAPACK is ranked among the world’s leading tube producers through its manufacturing processes and the guaranteed quality of its end products, as confirmed by its successful recertification under the ISO 9001, 14001, 18001, 22000 and 27001 management systems.

There are exciting times ahead for the company: “Constant development, investment and qualified staff are the keys to strengthening our competitiveness, our market position and the introduction of TUBAPACK to new markets. WE cover all of Europe and Russia, and from 2014 we will also be expanding in North Africa and the Middle East,” says head of sales Martin Benuska in conclusion. □

