



TOP QUALITY TUBES



Slovak TUBAPACK, a.s. based in Ľar nad Hronom, producing aluminium and laminate tubes for packaging applications in the cosmetics, food, pharmaceutical and chemical industries. Supported by considerable investment, the company is now striving to further strengthen its position in all of its key markets.

The tradition of tube production in Ľar nad Hronom dates back to 1973, when the first aluminium tubes were produced. In 1998 the growing demand and development of packaging materials led to the launch of laminate tube production.

After a number of organisational changes, the business was transformed into an independent entity in 2006 when it also adopted its current name, TUBAPACK, a.s. Since then the company has fully focused on the development of its core capability – the production of aluminium and laminate tubes for various sectors. “Traditionally, aluminium tubes have been our core business and it is the key part of the portfolio even today. Share of laminate tubes production is 10 % but demand is still growing,” says company sales manager Tomas Kajan. Today, 90 per cent of production volume is sold to the export markets, particularly the EU countries but also Russia and other destinations.

Aluminium tubes

Aluminium is ideal as packaging material for the food industry as it is hygienic, non-toxic and preserves the aroma of the packed product. Aluminium is also the lightest of all the packaging materials, thus saving raw materials as well as power resources required for its production.

Aluminium packaging materials offer several specific advantages. They have high corrosion resistance and provide an impervious metal barrier against light, UV radiation, water vapour, fatty substances as well as oxygen and micro-organisms. Also, they are fully recyclable. Aluminium tubes are used in the cosmetics, food, pharmaceutical and chemical sectors.

At TUBAPACK, the aluminium tubes are manufactured from aluminium with 99.7 per cent purity. The tightness of the tubes in filling and squeezing out is ensured by the application of a sealing binder on the inner side of the tube edge. “We work very closely with our customers



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and reflect their requirements regarding the type of caps or threads and type of tube material, such as those internally coated with varnish to prevent the filling from reacting to the packaging,” explains Mr Kajan.

Tubes with Braille script

Laminate tubes represent a more recent product for the company. Their finer material structure makes them highly suitable for packing, particularly for cosmetic products or products containing more volatile substances. The leak-proof barrier consists of aluminium or PE foil inserted between the internal and external polyethylene tube jacket. “We produce two types of laminate tubes – tubes from laminate foil with an ABL barrier and tubes from laminate foil with a PBL barrier,” explains the sales manager. In the first type, the barrier against volatile substance leakage and filling oxidation is made from aluminium foil, which also contains laminated layers of plastic material. In the PBL barrier type, the barrier is made of a special plastic material, EVOH (Ethylene Vinyl Alcohol). These tubes offer the advantage of a tube jacket shape memory (it returns to its original position after being pressed), are fully recyclable and can be manufactured as transparent. At the moment, aluminium tubes represent 90 per cent of total production volume. However, demand for the laminate tubes is increasing. “We have introduced an innovation in the laminate tube segment recently. Based on customer requirements we have developed a tube which may hold the Braille script. The development of this original feature was realized in close cooperation with our supplier of printed laminate foil, company Colonia press, a.s. (Czech republic). They came up with solution how to integrate the Braille script on surface of the laminate foil. After successful testing and approving by customer and also by Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union we started regular production of this kind of tubes. Using Braille script on the tube could, amongst other advantages, significantly reduce packaging costs, if tube is used as final packaging” says Mr Kajan. This innovation was first introduced at the PHARMtech Congress in Budapest and raised considerable interest. So far TUBAPACK, currently the only company in the market offering this feature, was awarded a prize “Packaging of the Year 2010” in Czech national competition. Together with

Colonia press, a.s they are also nominated for special prize for best-of-the-best packaging solution out of all 80 registered exhibits.

Continuous improvement

The company has implemented the quality management system, environmental management system, occupation health and safety management system and food safety management system according to STN EN ISO 9001:2009, STN EN ISO 14001:2005, STN OHSAS 18001:2008 and STN EN ISO 22000:2006. “None of our major competitors complies with ISO 22000:2006 and we are very proud of our achievement,” says the sales manager. The core business – aluminium tubes – has been supported by considerable investment. The company submitted two projects for non-recurring financial grant from the ERDF Operational Programme “Competitiveness and Economic Growth”. Both projects in total value of €7 million were approved so they are going to buy and install the first class German production line and also equipment for production of conical aluminium tubes. “The new technology will move us forward,” says Tomas Kajan. “We hope that the new aluminium tube line would be installed by the end of the year with the first runs shortly after. The investment will significantly increase production capacity and create new jobs, as well as enabling us to make top quality tubes for the pharmaceuticals sector in particular.” The company also invests in upgrading its laminate tube technology to satisfy the requirements of actual but also potential customers. The sales manager confirms that, in the next few years, TUBAPACK will aim to strengthen its position in the EU markets – although the company will continue to further develop its business relationships in Russia and other countries. It will also strive to achieve more certificates, such as ISO 27001 (Information Security Management System), ISO 15378 (Primary packaging materials for medicinal products) and GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice), within its continuous improvement process. “Our mission remains the same – we want to be a fully customer oriented company making top quality products with highly capable and committed staff,” concludes Mr Kajan. □ www.tubapack.sk