

Industry Outlook 2015

Flexibility and safety needed for multiple packaging types

The pharmaceutical industry in Asia is expected to grow further this year, although forecasts had to be slightly corrected compared to previous years. While contract manufacturing still accounts for an important part of the industry's turnover, more regional companies have also started to develop their own formulations. Generic producers and contract manufacturers require very robust and efficient machinery with high output, while complex medicines for targeted treatment call for flexible platforms, and smaller batch sizes at the highest safety conditions.



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with tub and bag openers as well as different barrier systems allows the set-up of fully automated line concepts.

Single-serve drugs with sachet packages

There is another packaging format on the rise: single-serve sachet packaging has revolutionised the way we take our medicine over the last few years, offering us portable, immediate relief for headaches, back pain and

other common ailments when we are on the move and in a hurry. In addition, individual sachets protect medicine from exposure to air and light when not in use, keeping the product fresh and potent long after the outer box has been opened by the consumer.

Product protection is especially critical throughout Asia, where countries often have different climate zones with varying temperatures and humidity. The more important are systems featuring extended sealing times to ensure tighter, more reliable pouch seals for consistent product quality, and compliance with safety standards. Sachets offer a broad range of foil laminates, which further contributes to high product protection.

Speed and efficiency are crucial for manufacturers looking to boost profits by making the most of their production lines. The small and trendy packaged products can be sold for a higher profit per item than larger packs, but can slow down the manufacturing productivity. To overcome this, the latest automated high-speed machinery is able to fill up to 1,000 high-quality sachets per minute within a compact footprint. This also reduces maintenance. In addition, accurate dosing technology to ensure precision portion control is available. Integrated, modular systems now also allow the incorporation of tipping fillers for easy-flowing products or auger fillers for those with high viscosity. Not only does dosing accuracy and precision ensure that consumers take the correct dose, but it also decreases product waste, resulting in increased profitability for manufacturers.

New concepts for biopharmaceutical filling

Glass containers are the most common type of primary packaging for biopharmaceuticals. Supported by leading equipment manufacturers, producers of primary glass packaging have now developed pre-sterilised, ready-to-fill glass containers, such as syringes, vials and cartridges to contribute towards more flexible filling operations. When opting for pre-sterilised packaging, drug producers no longer need to perform the preparatory steps of loading and washing or sterilisation and depyrogenation, thus saving space and consuming less energy.

This trend has triggered the development of new platforms that process different pre-sterilised containers with the utmost flexibility, while satisfying the need for high product yields and maximum safety. The latest filling and closing machines can be used for multiple types of pre-sterilised primary packaging. Quickly exchangeable format parts enable pharmaceutical companies to conveniently switch between different products and packaging types.

Newly developed platforms with an integrated capping station enable drug manufacturers to conduct all steps in a small space. Moreover, the compatibility with different filling systems allows them to adjust their operations according to the particular packaging and medication requirements, for instance by using single-use filling technologies. A combination

Year of the new Asian tigers

Thomas L. Friedman's much-acclaimed expose 'The World is Flat' sketches an Asian continent where the sky is the limit. A decade onwards, Asia has indeed evolved from 'the workbench of the West' to an economic powerhouse with a middle class that continues to rise. In 2015, we

foresee the coming of age of Asia's new economic tigers: the Indochina countries.

The World Bank recently revised its forecast for several Southeast Asian markets. Malaysia for example reached GDP growth of 4.7