

TokyoPack 2018 – The Report

Background

[TokyoPack](#) is the leading packaging event in Asia. It occurs every second year and the exhibition then attract around 70 000 visitors, mainly

from around Asia. It is very well organized by Japan Packaging Institute, the Japanese trade organization. The trade fair spans over 4 days and contains packaging and machine solutions of all kinds.



The Swedish context

The Swedish presence was in the form of a national stand sponsored by Business Sweden and supported by the trade office at the Swedish Tokyo embassy. The stand was populated by a mixture of Swedish companies and organisations. From the industry OptiPack and UMV Coating were represented, Packbridge was there together with Paper Province, RISE and MidSweden University.

The Swedish attendance was very clear as the Swedish ambassador was honoured with a pair of scissors to cut the inauguration tape after a speech where he underlined the longstanding trade relations between the countries. This year a 150 years jubilee is celebrated, and a dinner was also held at the ambassador's residence where existing and potential trade partners were invited. An excellent opportunity to meet key people from the industry that was well used by the Swedish exhibitors.

Sweden also got the opportunity to arrange a half-day seminar on the second day of the exhibition. The seminar got quite some attention and was with 150 seats available sold out. We must thank JPI for good support in the marketing of the event. All exhibitors got to speak about their business propositions which led to many questions and following meetings in the booth.



Highlights from the exhibition

This is a major exhibition with around 70 000 visitors and 700 exhibitors covering everything packaging and packaging machines. This is my second time visiting this huge event and compared to the 2016 version I recognised most of the exhibitors, but I think the message was slightly different this time. I am now thinking about the positioning towards a more sustainable image as many companies were talking about the SDGs or the 17 global goals set by the UN, the Sustainable Development Goals. More exhibitors were also talking about the need for more circularity in the value chain.

I will below give a few examples of organisations that I met with at TokyoPack 2018.

Dai Nippon Printing, DNP

This year [DNP](#) had a large booth with a circularity theme. A very busy place where the four stages Shop – Store – Use – Recycle were exemplified. They were showcasing packaging solutions as well as other things, such as an app DNP developed for consumers.

Apps

The consumer uses the app for taking a picture of the receipt they get when shopping, for anything. The receipt is instantly transformed into a spreadsheet and added to your account. The benefit for the consumer is that they will get support for managing their household expenses and can easily see how they are performing against a budget. For DNP the advantage is that they will get consumer data that aggregated will be very valuable for creating new packaging solutions based on consumer behaviour.

Another app displayed was part of the anti-counterfeiting system, Quema, and is used for scanning holograms printed on labels. Consumers can immediately reveal a fake product by using the app.



Challenging sleeving

An example of a creative solution was about sleeves. Also, difficult pet bottles sometimes need a sleeve. DNP has come up with a clever way to make a sleeve shrink evenly, also on a dynamic bottle shape. Their system is based on a sleeve attached already on the preform. The bottle is blown, and the sleeve is heated and shaped simultaneously, also with an odd shaped container. <https://bit.ly/2ILFuPL>

OJI

[OJI](#) was one of the few that presented solutions for the growing segment, e-commerce. They came up with a smart idea of how to reuse the paper bag used to ship goods to consumers, shopping on the internet. With a simple but clever design a pair of handles are fitted inside the bag. When it has done its first job, to deliver the product, it can with a cut of a scissors be transformed into a shopping bag.

Among the materials OJI was highlighting we found a PLA material made of wooden chips, a paper made antibacterial and Rain Guard a water-resistant paper material.



Toyo Seikan

[Toyo Seikan](#) is a Japan based container manufacturing company. That is a wide statement and that is what they are, wide. With a range of containers in basically all materials Toyo Seikan can offer a wide range of products made from metal, plastic, glass and paper. They are talking about the SDG's as I would say that most of the leading exhibitors also were doing.

Cans

Debossed and embossed can necks are really looking great. Toyo Seika are making creative sleeves for cans. Decorated cans with a loose sleeve with windows that can be rotated for visual effects. Think Led Zeppelin III.



Caps and closures

Closures were introduced, like the Hook Spout or the Eiger cap for gable tops, a one-action opening without a pull tab. Or the Tornado cap, a tamper seal that indicates with sound and haptic signals that the bottle never has been opened before.

Toppan

[Toppan](#) is another major company representing the Japanese printing industry talking about sustainability and the need to use less polymers.

Printed electronics

They displayed a printed strip placed on a carton can containing NFC technology that by using UHF communicated relevant information to the consumer as it at the same time fed back useful information.

Barriers

Toppan had chosen to talk quite a lot about the GL-film and GL-coating. GL-film has excellent barrier properties and can be compared to aluminium and can be used as an alternative for many products. A variety of GL-coated packaging solutions were showcased, bags and pouches made of paper and polymers. They had also developed an interesting liquid repellent coating for easy emptying of containers. As an example a pp stand-up pouch was used referring to food waste.



Nippon Paper

[Nippon Paper](#) is a big paper company and part of the Nikkei 225. The theme this year was “Use more paper”.

Aseptic

They were introducing a new system for aseptic beverages in containers up to 300 ml. The material is obviously liquid carton and with the shape of a gable top. What is new sits in the machine which is made more easily cleaned and aims for the fillers of yoghurt and similar sticky products. These products are mainly in PET bottles today but here is a carton alternative.



Shieldplus

Shieldplus was highlighted and is a laminated paper with excellent barrier properties. In some cases, as good as aluminium. It can be used with food.

Clever solutions

NP had developed an easy recycled cup for hot beverages where the paper cup needs a fortifying layer of polymer for the barrier. Nippon’s solution for easy recycling is a cup in a cup. The consumer can easily separate the two cups when finished with the beverage.

Another innovative solution was a gable top container for non-food products, you put it upside down in a holder fitted with a pump as a refill. The gable top could contain shampoo that

Fest

Fest is a brand representing wood based and moulded paper trays and similar for food products, all made in Thailand and very sustainable.

Mitsubishi

[Mitsubishi](#) also had a few good solutions to share. One was addressing the ever-growing market for ready-made dishes. It is a pouch with dual compartments where one contains pasta and the other one a suitable sauce. When put in the micro the heat and steam make the pouch rise and the sauce is now on top of the pasta part of the bag. At a certain point the bag will burst and the sauce is mixed with the pasta. Just tear the top of the bag and eat from the still standing pouch.

Mitsubishi displayed a one-hand grip portion sauce pack. You can even have two separated sauces to mix in the one-hand move.



They had stand up boxes to show made of flexible plastics. For candy and food products. And also, a tube with flexible plastics that collapses and is easier to empty.

Nihon Tetra Pak

[Tetra Pak](#) displayed their wide range of liquid carton solutions for food and beverages. They were not only talking about packaging solutions but also about new services and digital systems that relate to Industry 4.0 technologies.

Predicative maintenance

Tetra Pak has developed a cloud based predicative maintenance system that helps their customers to identify machine failures before they occur. The system has a capacity to analyse the huge amounts of data that is generated during production. It is used to monitor data collected from IoT-enabled sensors keeping track of how machines are working at their customers' production sites. From the collected data the system can calculate an estimated lifetime of components and predict failures. The information is used to plan for maintenance and service and most importantly advice their customers about the situation well in time allowing them to plan for production downtime and better manage stock and food safety risks.



Augmented reality

Hololens, which is a pair of Augmented Reality smart glasses enables on-site service members in remote locations to contact one of Tetra Pak's global specialists when performing maintenance tasks. By using AR headsets, Tetra Pak can support engineers on a mission to fix a faulty machine and who cannot solve the problem themselves. They can then call up a specialist via the headset's Skype functionality who then can see what the engineer sees wearing the Hololens glasses and help fix the problem. This makes the concept of a connected workforce real and adds real value for their customers.

Fuso

[Fuso](#) is a leading producer of machinery for packing of tea and coffee, portion packs. Tea bags are very well established as a universal way to brew a cuppa. The single portion of coffee is not as easily solved but Fuso has an idea. They have constructed a machine that produces the equivalent of a tea bag but for coffee. It is filter filled with coffee neatly folded into a small sachet including a fibre-based construction with three hooks that fits in a cup. Just pour hot water on top and enjoy.



This is a general overview with a few of the 700 exhibitors highlighted. There were many others there in Tokyo that week in October. We could for instance also mention [Hosokawa Yoko](#), a major supplier of flexible packaging solutions, machines and complete packaging systems. Or [Kyodo Printing](#) talking about easy-open pouches and had a few innovative solutions for example a functional lid for draining. There is obviously so much more to say about this major exhibition but there is only one way to experience it and that is by going there. Next time is in early 2021. See you there!