*BEUMER Group: Trends in the packaging sector*

**Suitable answers at hand**

**Digitalisation, films made of recycled material and the increasing use of robots - mechanical engineering companies in the packaging sector have to face continuous changes. They can adapt themselves, but they can also be pioneers and set trends just like BEUMER Group. However, what is actually on the minds of the suppliers and how do they react to the various issues in the sector? BEUMER expert Jörg Spiekermann has the answers.**

"We clearly feel the changes in the packaging sector", says Jörg Spiekermann, sales manager for palletising and packaging systems in the Consumer Goods area of BEUMER Group. "Our customers require solutions permitting them to further relieve their staff, make their processes more flexible and increase their production and resource efficiency." On request, the system provider delivers the packaging sector complete packaging lines: from filling up to the palletised stack and also from one single source. This means that interfaces can be omitted or minimised and the customer only needs one point of contact.

With BEUMER Group system solutions full pallets or individual bags can be forwarded to a connected warehouse or directly to the loading space of a truck. The system components are mainly transport technologies such as conveyors or vehicle-based systems. Various solutions for handling and manipulators such as robots, buffer and storage modules are available as well. As BEUMER Group always uses components from a modular system, the solutions can be expanded at any time and can grow with the customer's needs.

**Coordinated processes**

Software solutions are becoming more and more important. "For best results and to ensure full material and data tracking, the filling, palletising and packaging components as well as other system components must be perfectly matched," says Spiekermann. "It is more and more important to network logistic processes and to control them in an automated way."

For this, BEUMER Group has developed a modular Software Suite as superior data processing system; it can be adapted individually to the particular tasks. "Since we want to consider and optimise the process as a whole, our experts are of course able to easily integrate products from third-party suppliers," explains Spiekermann. A cross-program user interface shows process data and reports. All available data can be accessed without having to switch between different applications.

With the BEUMER Group warehouse control system, the Software Suite can be easily connected to the warehouse management system or the customer's ERP solution. This way, BEUMER Group ensures the communication between the different control levels for the user. BEUMER Group can create an intelligent connection between the individual systems, and integrate them into the existing processes and inventory control systems of the customer.

**Smarter with the support of start-ups**

According to Jörg Spiekermann, the trend goes towards digital solutions that increase automation potentials and further optimise supply chains and processes. But for many mechanical engineering companies in Germany this is a huge challenge. "They simply miss the necessary know-how." And how is it at BEUMER Group? Digitalisation means cooperation, interaction and data interchange. This also changes the role of the packaging system suppliers and cooperation with the customer. "There are many young companies with a lot of know-how ready to surprise the market," says Spiekermann. "But we don't want to wait for them to take us off the hook with their fresh ideas," emphasises the sales manager. "We prefer to take the helm by ourselves, we look for and support promising start-ups and thus carry digital projects into our company." He gives an example that is only remotely related to the packaging sector: With its digital marketplace, the start-up Sparrow Networks ensures that the participants are supplied with the appropriate spare part as quickly as possible in the event a component in their systems fails. Sparrow connects the stock of the system operators with each other. Thanks to the network, a suitable supplier can always be found quickly. This prevents long downtimes and expensive storage costs.

The start-up receives extensive support from the Berlin-based, autonomous company builder Beam, a spin-off of BEUMER Group. "We try to solve unique problems in logistics together with start-up teams", explains Spiekermann. It is important to find entrepreneurs with promising business ideas. The system provider is planning on founding three start-ups per year and transferring them (while being consolidated under Beam) into a separate company. This includes Sparrow Networks.

**Robots have become more and more important**

The sales manager sees a further trend in the increasing use of robots and mentions the (petro) chemical industry as an example. "Here the products are filled in special bags, barrels, canisters, cartons or buckets. To palletise them, BEUMER Group offers its space-saving articulated robot, the BEUMER robotpac," says Spiekermann.Depending on the packaged items, BEUMER Group equips the robot with the appropriate gripping system which can be easily and automatically changed if the packaged items change. "The fork gripper was for exampled designed for palletising bagged goods and cardboard boxes. The finger gripper is particularly suitable for the efficient handling of bagged goods," he explains. For maximum performance, BEUMER Group offers a double gripper for both types. They also offer parallel grippers for dimensionally stable packed items, suction grippers for items with a smooth surface and many other special grippers and combination tools. The modular structure permits adaptation of this series to special market- and customer-specific requirements. Bags stacked accurately on pallets can then be transported successfully to the downstream packaging system – for example, the BEUMER stretch hood. "Our BEUMER stretch hood packaging system is highly energy efficient", says Spiekermann. "An intuitive human-machine interface simplifies operation and makes quick work of film roll changes." Operating parameters can be changed as well.

**Sustainable all along the line**

BEUMER Group not only committed itself to evaluate this packaging system comprehensively on the levels of economy, ecology and social responsibility, but for all products made by BEUMER. This demonstrates BEUMER Group's commitment to the total value of ownership (TVO). "We consider the systems in its entirety, not only from its cost side," says Spiekermann. For example we continuously look to reduce energy and resource consumption in the production cycle and during operation, as well as keeping emissions to a minimum.

Not only the machines but also the packaging are sustainable, at least a strong trend goes in that direction, since the plastic products are being criticised for some time now. After using them, they often end up as waste on landfills or - and this particularly applies in case of consumer goods - in nature, polluting the environment considerably. Since the beginning of 2019 the new packaging law has therefore also been in force. It's aim is to avoid packaging waste and to strengthen recycling. Therefore many films will include recycled material in future, which might considerably change their characteristics and handling. Many packaging system owners, who fix and package goods ready for dispatch by using stretch film for transshipment on pallets, are of course unsettled," says Spiekermann, who knows his customers. Can we further use our packaging systems they often ask. "Yes you can," the BEUMER sales manager assures. The BEUMER stretch hood A processes these films as usual in a very reliable way. At this regard, the experts in cooperation with the film manufacturers have performed tests and analysis with various films in the in-house R&D centre in Beckum.

With the BEUMER stretch hood A packaging system, the system supplier supports his customers along the line, and with regard to safety. "The high restoring forces in the stretch film make sure that the film fits tightly to the entire stack, 'like a second skin', and thus ensures the necessary stability," Spiekermann describes. The products are protected from the environment. The palletised goods are clearly visible due to the smooth surface of the transparent, highly flexible film. And underlaying barcode labelling is quickly and consistently recognisable. Logos and text can also be printed on the film to be used as an advertising medium. Tamper protection is also important: Unauthorised persons cannot take goods from the pallet without damaging the film. The packaging also protects against dangerous substances; the content for example shall not come in contact with the surface of the container. This is the case for lubricants and adhesives, antifreezes, resins, brake cleaners, as well as for bulk material such as pellets. The packaging system can also be used to line the inside of the container with a film hood. We know the market and the requirements of our customers," says Spiekermann. "With our solutions we always want to be one step ahead."

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***Meta-Title****: BEUMER Group: Trends in the packaging industry*

***Meta-Description:*** *BEUMER sales manager Jörg Spiekermann describes the challenges of the mechanical engineering companies in the packaging sector and has the answers.*

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**Captions:**



**Picture 1**: The easy, intuitive and reliable operation of the new BEUMER stretch hood A is especially appealing to customers.



**Picture 2:** The BEUMER robotpac is able to palletise barrels in a very efficient way.



**Picture 3:** Sparrow is a virtual stock room. The digital platform enables members to share spare parts among themselves.



**Picture 4:** Jörg Spiekermann, sales manager for palletising and packaging systems in the Consumer Goods area of BEUMER Group: "Our customers require solutions permitting them to increase their production and resource efficiency."

**Photo credits: BEUMER Group GmbH & Co. KG**

**The high-resolution pictures can be downloaded** [here](https://newcloud.a1kommunikation.de/index.php/s/JfKriUvAiAUWk1M)**.**

BEUMER Group is an international leader in the manufacture of intralogistics systems for conveying, loading, palletising, packaging, sortation, and distribution. With 4,500 employees worldwide, BEUMER Group has annual sales of about EUR 950 million. BEUMER Group and its group companies and sales agencies provide their customers with high-quality system solutions and an extensive customer support network around the globe and across a wide range of industries, including bulk materials and piece goods, food/non-food, construction, mail order, post, and airport baggage handling. For more information, visit [www.beumer.com](http://www.beumer.com)