

“ Faster processes are the trend in pharma packaging

As Product Manager at Uhlmann Pac-Systeme GmbH & Co. KG, Konstantin Gerbold keeps a close eye on the latest trends in pharmaceutical packaging. Among other things, he is in charge of packaging lines for small and medium batches, such as the BEC 200 and BEC 300 blister lines for packaging of solids. In this interview, he reveals how he sees the changes brought about by the COVID 19 pandemic and what developments he expects for the future.

Mr. Gerbold, what trends can be observed in pharmaceutical packaging? What changes has COVID-19 brought to the market?

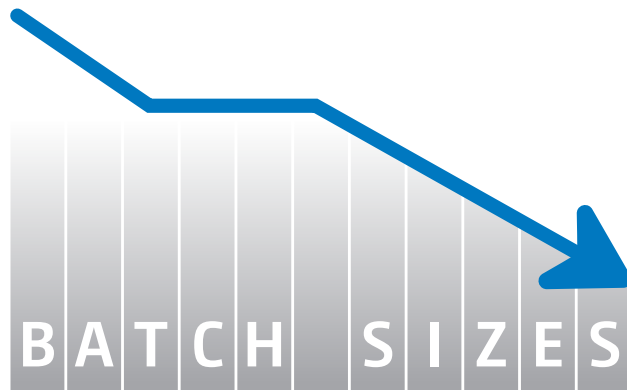
Konstantin Gerbold: There is a major trend in pharmaceutical packaging toward faster processes – and in more ways than one. The dynamics and speed of change in the pharmaceutical industry were already increasing in recent years, but COVID-19 has increased this enormously. There are greater fluctuations in terms of demand, faster changes to requirements and new products, so our customers –

pharmaceutical manufacturers and contract manufacturing organizations (CMOs) – need to be prepared for this.

How are pharma manufacturers and CMOs reacting to the increased dynamics of the markets?

Konstantin Gerbold: Decision-making processes are accelerating. It used to take several months, sometimes even years, for a contract to be signed. Recently, decisions have become more short-term and delivery times now play a more important role. We accommodate our

Konstantin Gerbold has been Product Manager at Uhlmann Pac-Systeme GmbH & Co KG since 2016. There, he is – among other things – in charge of packaging lines for small and medium-sized solid dose batches.



“ On average, batches are getting smaller – a trend that has been going on for years and which will continue to intensify as a result of dynamic markets.

customers in this with our cycle assembly. This enables us, for example, to deliver the BEC 300, a high-performance combination of blister and cartoning module, within five months – in the standard version including two format sets. For a number of projects, this has already proven to be the decisive factor for the purchase.

Is this acceleration also affecting the packaging process?

Konstantin Gerbold: I have not observed any direct correlation with the machine speed. This is still chosen to suit the products and the production organisation. What has become much more important, however, is flexibility. On average, batches are getting smaller – a trend that has been going on for years and which will continue to intensify as a result of dynamic

markets. For the producers this means more product changes, more cleaning, more documentation and therefore more un-productive time. This is where packaging machines like the BEC blister line that can be easily cleaned and have quick changeover times come into play. With the BEC 200 and BEC 300, for example, a complete format change takes a maximum of 30 minutes.

How are your customers reacting to the increase in product changes?

Konstantin Gerbold: To compensate for the loss of productivity due to the many changeovers, pharmaceutical manufacturers and contract packagers are working hard to increase OEE wherever possible. This puts the focus on simple and fast maintenance, preventive maintenance, the reduction of unplanned downtimes and

the reliability and stability of the lines. We are also seeing the increasing importance of spare parts management and service contracts such as ServicePlus, where a service technician is on-site within a specified period of time.

What developments do you expect for the future?

Konstantin Gerbold: I am not anticipating everything becoming calmer and more predictable again! For us, the high dynamic is the „new normal“ that everyone will have to adjust to. I also wouldn't rule out further acceleration and therefore higher demands on flexibility, performance and reliability. Supplemented by suitable services and digital solutions, packaging lines such as the BEC 300 will be in greater demand as a result.

“ We deliver the BEC 300 within five months – in the standard version including two format sets.

The trend in pharmaceutical packaging is towards faster processes, smaller batches and more frequent product changes. One line that supports pharmaceutical manufacturers and contract packagers in meeting these challenges is the BEC 300 blister line from Uhlmann.





BEC 200

With its high level of quality at an attractive entry-level price, the **BEC 200** is of particular interest to contract packers and manufacturers of generic drugs or food supplements. It is particularly suitable for small batches.

Mode of operation	Single track
Sealing principle	Plate sealing
Max. output	200 or 300* blisters/min.
Max. format range [feed x width]	200 x 145 mm
Max. drawing depth	12 mm



BEC 400

The **BEC 400** is a top-end blister line for larger blisters and batch sizes up to 150,000 packs. The cartoning module has the largest format range in the series and is designed for large folding boxes.

Mode of operation	2-track
Sealing principle	Plate or roller sealing
Max. output	400 blisters/min.
Max. format range [feed x width]	200 x 284 mm
Max. drawing depth	12 mm (PVC), 11 mm (aluminum)

The BEC range – blister and cartoning modules in single productive units

The right blister line for every requirement and budget



BEC 500

With its two-track mode of operation, the **BEC 500** increases process safety while reducing operating costs. It is the ideal line for all common solid products involving medium-sized batches of up to 150,000 folding boxes.

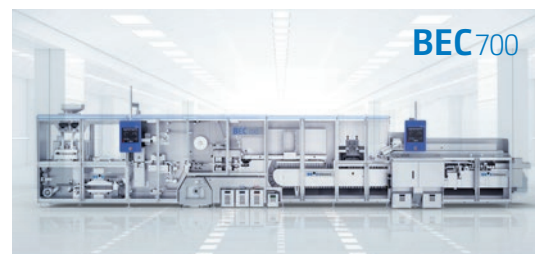
Mode of operation	2-track
Sealing principle	Plate or roller sealing
Max. output	500 blisters/min.
Max. format range [feed x width]	200 x 284 mm
Max. drawing depth	12 mm (PVC), 11 mm (aluminum)



BEC 300

The **BEC 300** is designed for the packaging of batches of up to around 70,000 folding boxes. Together with services and digital solutions, this provides a coordinated system to optimally support pharmaceutical and nutraceutical producers.

Mode of operation	Single track
Sealing principle	Roller sealing
Max. output	300 blisters/min.
Max. format range [feed x width]	200 x 145 mm
Max. drawing depth	145 mm



BEC 700

The **BEC 700**, the power house consisting of a blister and cartoning module, follows the proven BEC line concept. Thanks to its three-track mode of operation, it also packs large batches highly efficiently.

Mode of operation	3-track
Sealing principle	Plate or roller sealing
Max. output	700 blisters/min.
Max. format range [feed x width]	200 x 284 mm
Max. drawing depth	12 mm (PVC), 11 mm (aluminum)

close-up online

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THE BEC RANGE
Learn more about
our blister lines



CLOSE BY THROUGHOUT
THE WORLD
Your contact person
around the globe



*optional output upgrade