

## COMPANY — SMI GROUP

# Everything is about innovation and flexibility

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*In 2009, SMI Group generated revenues of EUR 81.7 million. More than 95 % of the production went into export sales; 54 % to Europe, 14 % to Asia and 7 % was installed in South America.*

cess of the company. The second key-word for the Group is flexibility. It is not only the modular system, which allows clients to obtain a tailor made solution. SMI Group also tries to keep the company as such as flexible as possible. Therefore it produces most of its machines, structures and mechanical components in-house and develops the hardware and software for the packing machines internally. This guarantees maximum flexibility for its customers, technologically advanced solutions and low cost of ownership. As almost every production side in the beverage sector distinguishes itself from others, SMI Group also offers module-based logistic systems to manage and optimize product flows.

*In June 2010, its innovation strategy took the SMI Group directly to the Quirinal Palace in Rome, the official residence of the President of the Italian Republic. SMI Group, which specializes in the production of packaging machines, adopted the innovation strategy about 30 years ago in a tiny little town in the Northern Italian region of Lombardy and has not ever abandoned it since. As a result, the Group was awarded this year's National Innovation Award, bestowed upon companies, private and public institutions by the Italian government for contributions made to the innovation process and the social, economic as well as scientific development of the country.*

The prize was handed over to Arsenio Nava, Associate Director of SMI Group, by President Giorgio Napolitano and Renato Brunetta, Italian Minister for Public Administration and Innovation. "For years SMI Group has given top priority to research and development," Nava said at the ceremony in Rome. "The honor of receiving this award represents an endorsement of a successful business strategy based on innovation." And it is true: When it comes down to the secret of success of the Northern Italy-based SMI Group, everything is all about innovation and flexibility.

Founded in the mid 1970s in a tiny town called San Pellegrino Terme close to the small city of Bergamo as a machine shop, Italy's SMI Group emerged as one of the world's largest packaging machine manufacturers in just a little over thirty. Today the group operates sites in over 130 nations all over the world and runs local branches in the United States, Mexico, Brazil, Russia, Romania, Poland and Australia. It also works with direct representatives in China, France, the United Kingdom and Malaysia. Among the enterprise's client roster are

some of the biggest and most renowned names of the international beverage industry and as well as global players in the consumer goods sector. SMI Group has installed machines for Nestle, Danone, Unilever, Coca Cola, PepsiCo, Diageo, Heinz, Heineken, SABMiller, Inbev and Carlsberg.

**THE FLAGSHIP PRODUCTS OF THE SMI GROUP ARE ROTARY STRETCH MOLDERS. EVERY YEAR THE COMPANY PRODUCES ABOUT 50 STRETCH MOLDERS. UNTIL TODAY NEARLY 300 OF THESE MACHINES WHICH CAN PRODUCE BOTTLES UP TO TEN LITERS AND REACHES OUTPUT SPEEDS OF UP TO 36,000 BOTTLES PER HOUR, HAVE BEEN INSTALLED ALL OVER THE WORLD.**

It was the inventive talent, youthful spirit driven by initiative and the ambition to produce a packaging machine of its own, which motivated the Nava family business to forge ahead on the road to success. In the early years the company founded by Luigi Nava mainly did machine finishing work as a contractor for third parties. However, when four sons entered the family business the company started to produce and develop its own machines and presented its first shrink wrapper in 1987. When the business of

machine production started to take shape, the Sistemi Macchine Impianti (SMI) was established by the Nava family. Only two years later the first overlapping cardboard sleeve multi-packer was presented and contributed to the rapid growth of the new company. The first rotary stretch-blow

molders were fabricated in 2000 and opened the door to further growth. In 2006 the company delivered its 3000th highly successful shrink wrapping machine.

Today, the flagship products of the SMI Group are rotary stretch molders. Every year the company produces about 50 stretch molders. Until today nearly 300 of these machines which can produce bottles up to ten liters and reaches output speeds of up to 36,000 bottles per hour, have been installed

all over the world. The machines are based on a modular system and highly customizable. The same is true for SMI Group's second key product: Multi-packaging machines and wrap-around case packers. More than 4000 units have already been installed by the Group. The company is working hard

to reduce energy consumption and optimize the use of raw materials and water, as the Group considers the making of contributions that protect the environment an important part of its mission. The energy consumption levels of the machines, SMI Group proudly emphasizes, are among the most efficient available in the market. Almost four percent of the company's revenues are reinvested into research and development each year to maintain a high level of innovation – which is the trademark that coined the suc-

To better structure the wide range of products the company offers today, SMI Group is divided into different divisions: The SmiFlexi Division designs and manufactures a wide range of fully automated machines for secondary packaging like shrink wrappers, tray formers, cardboard sleeve multi-packers, wrap-around case packers and combined machines. The Smiform Division specializes in the production of stretch-blow molders. SMILINE designs and manufactures modular systems for line logistics, while SMI palletizing systems concentrate in develop the robotic pallet handling industry. SMIMEC is the division of SMI that has expertise in the manufacturing and machining of moulds and mechanical components. Semitec offers industrial computers and software to control their products, while smipack is the expert for low cost, simple and quick solutions for the packing of small and medium size products.

In 2009, SMI Group generated revenues of EUR 81.7 million. More than 95 % of the production went into export sales; 54 % to Europe, 14 % to Asia and 7 % was installed in South America. About 70 % of sales were generated by machines used for bottling and packaging of water, soft drinks and juices. The remaining 30 % were generated with beer, food, milk, wine and drugs.

To ensure that innovation will remain the main fuel firing the success of the company, the group established another division in 2008: SMI-LAB is set up to provide services as a Research & Development Laboratory, Innovation Laboratory and Training Laboratory. ● (bmg)