**The Future of Pharmaceutical Packaging: Sustainable Solutions from SÜDPACK MEDICA and the IMA Group**

**With PharmaGuard®, a PP-based, recyclable blister packaging solution, SÜDPACK MEDICA paved the way for greater sustainability in the pharmaceutical industry. But that was just the beginning. The film manufacturer is already developing the next generations of its future-proof packaging systems that combine sustainability with exceptional quality and reliability. Through its development partnership with IMA, SÜDPACK is working to ensure that these new mono-material structures can be processed on customers’ existing blister lines with the same efficiency, product protection, and packaging reliability as conventional PVC/PVDC solutions.**

**While current regulations do not yet require recyclable packaging or recycled content in the pharmaceutical sector – as they do in the food industry – pharmaceutical companies would be well advised to start preparing for future packaging requirements now. To make** the transition to sustainable blister packaging **as easy as possible for customers, SÜDPACK and IMA are actively developing market-ready solutions. Their goal is to ensure that the new materials can be seamlessly integrated into customers’ existing machinery.**

**The development of PharmaGuard was undoubtedly a milestone in pharmaceutical packaging. This innovative packaging concept sets new standards in terms of sustainability, quality, and performance. However, maintaining this high level of performance presents a real challenge, as PP- and PE-based mono-materials introduce entirely new requirements for the packaging process.**

**At SÜDPACK, polypropylene (PP) is the preferred polymer ...**

… for oral solid dosage packaging. PP-based structures, such as PharmaGuard, stand out due to **their intrinsic water vapor barrier**, low specific weight, high transparency, and excellent push-through performance. This material is free from phthalates, nitrosamines, PFAS, and halogens and meets the strict requirements of USP 661 and the International Pharmacopoeia. **Most importantly,** unlike conventional PVC/PVdC blister solutions, PP-based packaging concepts can be integrated into existing recycling streams. A Sphera LCA study, commissioned by SÜDPACK and verified in accordance with ISO 14040/44, has confirmed that PP has a smaller carbon footprint compared to traditional composite materials such as PVC/PVdC and aluminum, as well as PET-based mono- and multi-layer materials.

**A relentless focus on customer requirements**

What may seem like a seamless solution is actually the result of years of development by the pioneering film manufacturer. However, to ensure that the new high-performance films run smoothly on customers’ existing blister lines, the machine manufacturer’s expertise is also indispensable. The primary goal of this partnership is to minimize the time, effort, and costs associated with retrofitting existing machines, while ensuring the same level of quality, speed, and efficiency as conventional films in the packaging process. As a result of their close collaboration during the development process, both partners – and most importantly, their customers – can now benefit from greater opportunities to analyze and optimize material performance for blister packaging applications.

To better define future-proof, sustainable packaging solutions and foster closer cooperation with material suppliers and customers, IMA has established a network of analytical laboratories through its OPENLab initiative. For example, during the development of PharmaGuard, IMA’s extensive expertise in thermoforming, sealing layer design, and printing helped elevate the material’s performance beyond that of conventional PP films.

**The OPENLab: data-driven analysis**

The OpenLAB plays a key role in helping customers gain a comprehensive understanding of how materials behave on IMA machines. It also helps identify key factors that ensure consistent, high-quality results, including optical properties and process stability.

One of its most valuable assets is a detailed database of material structures, correlated with test results across different systems. Additionally, the OPENLab allows a dual approach to troubleshooting – any issues encountered during testing are analyzed in-house from both a machine and material perspective, allowing for precise adjustments and solutions. Moreover, the lab helps identify market trends for various IMA applications by evaluating new sustainable materials.

Ultimately, thanks to data-driven insights, SÜDPACK and IMA can ensure that the recyclability and performance of mono-materials meet both market demands and internal packaging standards. This makes it easier for customers to transition to more sustainable packaging concepts.

**More information and videos:**

[PharmaGuard®: Recyclable Blister Packaging](https://www.suedpack-medica.com/en/products/pharmaguard)

[More about IMA partnership](https://www.suedpack-medica.com/en/products/pharmaguard/pioneering-sustainable-solutions-for-the-future-of-pharmaceutical-packaging%23c8682)

**About SÜDPACK MEDICA AG**

SÜDPACK MEDICA AG is headquartered in Baar (CH) and is one of the leading suppliers of sterile packaging solutions in Europe as well as a pioneering partner for the global medical, pharmaceutical, and diagnostics industries. The company is part of the SÜDPACK company group and was founded in 1989. The core competency of SÜDPACK MEDICA is the development of plastic-based packaging solutions for sterile goods. The product and performance range of SÜDPACK MEDICA extends from standard solutions to tailor-made, customer-specific packaging concepts. It includes the production of coextruded flexible and rigid films, which are used as base and lidding films, and of pre-made pouch solutions for a wide variety of products. SÜDPACK MEDICA also benefits from the SÜDPACK Group’s long-standing leadership in technology and innovation in the coextrusion of polymer-based film solutions.

The production of SÜDPACK MEDICA products is performed at four sites in France, Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands. These sites are equipped with the latest plant technology and manufacture to the highest standards of quality and hygiene, including the capacity to operate under clean room conditions.

For optimal support and collaboration with their customers around the world, SÜDPACK MEDICA relies on a specialist team working in quality, sales, development and application technology, one that has long-standing expertise in polymers and process engineering and in the market for sterile packaging. This makes SÜDPACK MEDICA a competent solutions partner for their customers when it comes to the implementation of packaging solutions, including those with the most demanding requirements.

SÜDPACK is committed to sustainable development and fulfills its responsibility as an employer and towards society, the environment, and its customers. With its own site for processing biopolymers and its own compounding facilities, the SÜDPACK Group is also among the trailblazers in the production of forward-looking, sustainable and recyclable packaging concepts. [www.suedpack.com/en](http://www.suedpack.com/en)

**About IMA Group**

Established in 1961, IMA is world leader in the design and manufacture of automatic machines for the processing and packaging of pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, food, tea and coffee, as well as in the automation of industrial processes.

Its position of leadership is the result of significant investments in R&D, regular and constructive dialogue with the end**-**users in its sectors and the Group's ability to expand internationally, conquering new markets. Its history features a constant growth.

The Group has more than 7,600 employees, around 60% in Italy and 40% abroad, and is present in more than 80 countries, supported by a sales network made up of 31 branches (Italy, France, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Spain, Poland, Israel, Russia, the United States, India, China, Malaysia, Thailand and Brazil), representative offices in central-eastern Europe and more than 140 agencies.

IMA has 55 manufacturing plants in Italy, Germany, France, Switzerland, Spain, UK, USA, India, Malaysia, China and Argentina.

The IMA Group owns about 3,500 patents and patent applications in the world and has launched many new machine models over the last years.

In more than 60 years in business, IMA has built up highly qualifying values such as experience, reliability, an extensive presence in the global market and a strong capacity to respond to the requests of end-users; which now enable it to propose innovative solutions as well as high quality products. [www.ima.it](http://www.ima.it)

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