



A newsletter for customers, representatives, and friends of Flair Flexible Packaging.

Pouches with Fitments Offer Cost, Marketing and Environmental Benefits

When companies discover the marketing and cost benefits of flexible packaging pouches with spouts, they rightly turn to Flair Flexible Packaging. Flair's specialists have extensive experience in spout and pouch design and assembly in a clean room environment at their Calgary facility.

At Flair, customers benefit from experts who understand the science behind successfully sealing two unlike materials with different melting points. Flexible film or thin bag material is sealed to a rigid plastic spout using heat and pressure. At Flair's Calgary plant, proprietary design upgrades to their assembly machines yield ideal packaging combinations. When assembled in an inspected clean room environment, Flair can help facilitate food safety for their customers.

The customers' filling process and packaging design determines the spout-and-pouch assembly. The spouts are most often placed on the bag at either a 45-degree angle or centered on top. If the spout is mounted at the 45-degree angle, half of the pouch remains open and the filling is usually done through that opening and then sealed. If the spout is centered on top, the pouch is entirely sealed and then typically filled through the spout.

Demand is Growing

High demand and rapid growth in the spout-and-pouch market means Flair Flexible Packaging has plans to expand these specialized assembly capabilities to their new Houston

plant, located in Missouri City, Texas. This manufacturing and distribution hub was opened in 2011 to better serve Flair's customers in the southern part of the United States and throughout Central and South America.

Flair has seen major growth in the baby food and beverage industries. Many sauces are now being sold in spout pouches and Flair expects that even condiments like ketchup and mayonnaise will be regularly found in spouted pouches in the future in North America. With continued pressure from consumers to use alternative, environmentally friendly packaging, the technology is evolving quickly.

Pouches Pay Off

Spouted pouches are considered more environmentally friendly compared to rigid packaging because less material is used in their manufacture, they are less expensive to ship, and they contribute substantially less material to landfills.

In addition, customers who choose pouches can significantly improve their packaging graphics over traditional bottles and jars with up to 10-color photo-quality reverse rotogravure printing over a much larger print area. In a thorough cost-benefits analysis, spouted pouches in retort applications can definitely replace containers or bottles at less cost. **Ask your Flair representative to help you generate some fresh ideas in flexible packaging.**



Contact Flair at
www.flairpackaging.com or
 by calling (920) 574-3121
 from within the United
 States or (403) 207-3226
 from within Canada.

Compost Tea Goes Greener with Colorful Fitment Pouch

A specially blended compost tea for environmentally conscious gardeners is reaping the benefits of a switch to a greener, more cost effective flexible packaging structure.

According to John Perrino, co-founder and chief operating officer of Vermicrop Organics of Rocklin, CA, the company switched to a spout-and-pouch combination, or fitment pouch, designed by Flair Flexible Packaging as a solution to a very expensive and labor-intensive distribution system. "The garden shops that sell our VermiT Solution each have their own brewers so they can brew on site. We used to have to send them our kits, which included the empty bottles in half or whole gallon sizes, for filling. We'd manually label each of the bottles in our warehouse. The time, the cost of warehousing empty bottles, and the shipping expense were unsustainable."

The new half-gallon triple-layer laminated pouch with a 22mm recloseable/reusable pour spout fitment now enables Vermicrop Organics to design vibrant eight-color graphics onto the pouches. They are able to warehouse one shipment on less than two pallets - the equivalent of a full truckload of their old rigid bottles.

Perrino likes the beautiful packaging, but he likes the dramatic decrease in shipping costs for the kits even more. "We are now shipping flat, unfilled pouches instead of rigid bottles. No one else in the organic gardening industry is doing this - selling their compost tea in a pouch. It speaks to the heart of our mission, to discover innovative ways to make meaningful change." Vermicrop Organics distributes a full line of nature-inspired horticultural inoculants and growing media throughout the United States, Canada and portions of Europe.



What is it?

Three Laboratory Tests Generate Full Data Sets for Unknown Film Structures

Flair is unique in its comprehensive in-house research and development laboratory. While many small to mid-size flexible packaging companies may offer one or two lab tests to their customers, the Flair lab in Calgary, Alberta offers a series of three complete tests to analyze the components of existing packaging structures. Their reports also include recommendations for improvements to current structures to ensure they meet customers' criteria. The Flair team of packaging engineers recently explained their most cutting edge infrared spectroscopy capabilities:

Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) is a technique for measuring how well a sample absorbs light at a given wavelength. The FTIR microscope at Flair shines a beam containing many frequencies of light at once, and measures how much of that beam is absorbed by the sample. The beam will be modified many times to contain

MSA + DSC + FTIR = the complete picture

(number of layers and their specific position, melting / phase transition points, and resin identification via infrared spectroscopy)

a different combination of frequencies, which result in more data points. Following this, a computer program analyzes the data using the Fourier transform (a mathematical process) to infer what the absorption rate is at each wavelength.

These data are then matched against Flair's collection of data on more than 200,000 types of materials. According to the Flair engineers, the Flair laboratory team benefits from this extraordinarily extensive library to which they reference their data. "Flair saves data with each sample tested, always expanding and improving."

Why Quit Early?

At Flair, we advise customers not to quit early. Don't settle for a basic MSA test that only generates the gauge of each layer in a structure without identifying their individual properties. The DSC and FTIR provide a complete picture, and that's the best way to make decisions about improving your flexible packaging structure and design. Good data drives smart decisions.

MSA (Film Structure Microscopic Analysis) - Using a high-powered microscope, existing film structures are analyzed to determine the positioning of individual layers of film.

DSC (Differential Scanning Calorimeter) - This test detects the melting point and solidifying point of most types of resins by heating or cooling a sample and a known reference and tracking the difference in heat needed to keep them at the same temperature.

FTIR (Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy) - A technique for measuring how well a sample absorbs light at a given wavelength.