

# Professionalism, Flexibility, Quality

## RANGE OF MULTIPURPOSE PLASTIC PACKAGING

Spetztekhosnastka Company (TM Vital Plast) is a Ukrainian enterprise that produces a broad range of plastic containers. The company approaches market challenges using innovative solutions for their clients. Its Director General Mr. Vladimir Lempert spoke to us about this

**Are there any principles, which you would never give up while developing your company? How do these principles help you to maintain your market position today?**

**Vladimir Lempert:** We live difficult times in development of Ukrainian business. However, speaking though, when have they ever been easy for normal, market-oriented manufacturer, unless it comes down to making money by corrupt means? Today as in any period of time since the establishment of our company in 1989, we believed that even in such a difficult economy as the Ukrainian one, one can succeed. It is possible if you operate under easy-to understand rules for any employee, partner or client.

One such rule is striving to be professional. This refers to the ability to understand or anticipate the needs of the market, to design and manufacture, to establish a permanent dialogue with customers and partners, whose goal it is to find winning compromises and mutually beneficial solutions.

It is also important to be professional in human relations within the company where we try to create an environment of involvement, interest and openness in order that every worker can realize his capabilities and feel useful.

Today, the key production areas of our company are tool production, injection molded plastic packaging under the Vital Plast brand, production of components for the Western automotive industry - all with a high level of professionalism.

Second principle is to react fast and be flexible in the widest sense of these words. It is possible to deal with economic obstacles only if you can adapt to rising customer demands and unfavorable business regulations. Only those companies survive which understand the structure of clients' costs and develop new products. The products must be of better quality than the previous ones and have to be able to reduce expenses simultaneously to the end-user during all stages of delivery.

We always reflect on what is happening in the manufacturing process and on how well they are organized from the point of our products' customer value. For example, we travel a lot and study how the same processes are being addressed in Europe or in China. Since no accounts about well-organized process can replace the experience of line managers, mechanics, technicians and even laborers, that is why the heads of the company are not the only ones who travel. Then we try to apply the combined experience on our company. The elimination of unneces-



sary expenses of production is a basis for flexible pricing and economical efficiency.

In addition, the last principle is unchallenged quality. We want to produce something we can be proud of, to produce the goods we would want to buy ourselves. We try to guarantee the quality beginning from in-house business processes that involve staff training and reliable equipment usage. There is no room for compromise.

**That is, in practice, do the principles you noted achieve improvements in production technologies?**

**V.L.:** Definitely. Modern technologies guarantee that our products meet our clients' and end-users' requirements the best way possible. For example, we are among the first Ukrainian companies, which introduced injection-molding technology in package production. This solution allows us to adhere to high quality standards and decrease the manufacturing expenses for our clients at the same time. The package still meets all physical and aesthetic requirements but cost less to our clients.

Alternatively, when it comes to decoration of plastic containers by IML-labeling, we were also pioneers on the Ukrainian market. Packaging with IML is not only more noticeable on supermarket shelves, it also reduces the quantity of people involved who may adhere the labels unevenly and protects from forgery.



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**What novelties does your company have in the thin-wall packaging line?**

**V.L.:** For example, last year we have offered thin-wall 210 ml capacity containers with rounded edges and hexagon body. We can put IML-labels on the body and on the lid of the container. In a food store, it is impossible to overlook goods in such a package, as it is unusual and attractive. The high transparency of material this container is made of allows one to get a better look at the shape and texture of the product. At the same time, IML-labels contain all regulatory and advertising information.

This kind of packaging is not so popular in Ukrainian markets, perhaps because of fear of experiments with consumer prefer-

ences. However, this novelty was appreciated by our European customers. Chocolate mousses are sold in our packaging all around European Union countries.

**Speaking about IML-labels, what are your capabilities today? Is it possible to apply such labels to the entire range of your products?**

**V.L.:** It is not just about the assorted items where we apply IML's, although this is important because it involves the use of expensive robotics. With the IML label, the products of our customers look unique, bright, and brand awareness increases.

The variety of solutions we may offer is tremendous. Today we use glossy, transparent and orange peel IML-labels, metal-



lization and fragmentary lacquering. A lot of solutions. Our main clients use them very skillfully and we hope that potential customers will appreciate our possibilities.

**Is understanding a client's objectives and the professionalism of the company the basis for your innovations?**

**V.L.** For sure. Innovations make sense only if they are focused on a specific result – that of solving client's objectives.

For example, we have developed a unique packaging for water-based paints and varnishes. It has the shape of a cylinder. Our design office has developed not only a new form, but also a new system for assembling and closing the lid, hull and shell.

These innovative decisions were necessary in order to satisfy clients' needs in packaging with increased wear resistance and tightness. It allowed for our client to optimize transport and storage costs and helped to introduce his product in a price category of 'premium class'.

We create and produce the molds ourselves. We have many inventions and unique solutions. Patents protect many of them. This is our knowledge and experience arsenal that was accumulated during more than 25-year history of the company. It helps us to be among the leaders of our industry and to look ahead with confidence.

**Your company's reputation is famous for being a reliable partner not only among Ukrainian clients but also among big transnational manufacturers and foreign customers. What is the basis of such confidence?**

**V.L.:** We guarantee the quality of our products by needed certifications. The company's major business lines have necessary international quality certificates. Plastic packaging production has international certificate ISO 22000:2005. Engineering components produced for the western auto industry is certified according to ISO TS 16949:2009.

But this is, rather, the formal side of the matter, albeit an important one.

More importantly is this. Recently we started to use a new motto that reflects the sense of our activity and our designation. It is shorter than before and easy-to-remember.

In English the slogan is: "Your Trusted Partner". Unfortunately, we didn't find an appropriate translation into Ukrainian or Russian. It means that we want to be the partner whom our partners, customers and staff members can trust. Partners in whom you can trust without any worries.

We hide nothing. Our business is open for our clients, partners and state regulatory authorities. We know that such a socially responsible business is not just hearsay. We cherish our reputation that was created by 25-years of hard work. This is the reputation of a 'partner you can trust'.

