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Advances in rolling mill technology lead to thinner converter foil

Constantia Flexibles has won an Alufoil Trophy 2015 for Technical Innovation with the development of a **5µm aluminium converter foil** specifically designed for pouch and confectionery laminates. The project included technical advances to allow the thinner foil to be processed on a high performance laminator.



The new thickness has been achieved thanks to innovations in rolling mill technologies which have enabled enhanced process parameters in each of the steps: rolling, doubling, separating and annealing to obtain the thinning to below 5µm, compared with the current standard of 6 - 7µm.

Speaking for the judges Jean-Paul Duquet, global packaging eco design manager of Bel Group explained, "To create this gauge of foil consistently, without loss of barrier properties or loss mechanical characteristics, shows a remarkable understanding of the material and great skill at the rolling stages. This is a highly technical and complex process. Not only does it perform on the technical level, but a 5µm lamination layer offers cost and resource savings as well."

Roman König, head of product management confectionery & processed food at Constantia Flexibles said, on receiving the news of the award, "For Constantia Flexibles, as an aluminium manufacturing company, it is very important to take part in this respected international competition, organised by our sector association EAFA. It recognises excellence in the use of our material, as well as reflecting the state-of-the-art for our industry. We are particularly pleased to have won in the Technical Innovation category as it underlines that we are at the forefront of creative technologies to our customers."

A Life Cycle Assessment conducted by the company, comparing 6.7µm with 5µm, shows a Carbon Footprint improvement of about 13%. Improved process parameters at the lamination stage enable the thinner gauge to operate on a high-speed laminator without loss of performance, says Constantia. Envisaged applications include the wrapping of chocolate, confectionery bars and the inner wrappers for gum where a typical lamination would be Alu/wax or adhesive/paper.

The Alufoil Trophy is organised by the European Aluminium Foil Association. There are five categories – Consumer Convenience, Marketing + Design, Product Preservation, Resource Efficiency and Technical Innovation. Judges also gave an award for cross-category excellence. For 2015 there were 12 winners.

High resolution pictures can be downloaded and all winning entries can be viewed at www.alufoil.org

Further information:

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The European Aluminium Foil Association is the international body representing companies engaged in the rolling and rewinding of alufoil and in the manufacture of aluminium closures, alufoil semi-rigid containers and of all kind of flexible packaging. Its more than 100 members include companies in Western, Central and Eastern Europe.