

# Labelling insights

By Miranda Fitzgerald

THE NSW BRANCH of the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) chose the evolution of labelling as the subject for its final cocktail evening in 2009. Guest speakers Will Tompson, general manager of The Van Dyke Press, and Claude D'Amico, market development manager for Innovia Films, talking about in-mould labelling (IML) and biolabelling respectively, demonstrated advances in these fields in recent years.

Tompson discussed IML, a pre-decoration technique where the label is inserted into the mould by a robot as the plastic packaging is created (either via blow moulding or injection moulding).

The myriad benefits of IML were outlined, including that the method is cost-effective because the packaging is manufactured and labelled in one process. It's ideal for short runs and can accommodate the labelling of different variants in the same packaging in one run, making it highly suited to the Australian market. Although IML has been around since the '70s, it has significantly taken off in the last decade.

The Van Dyke Press has been involved in the manufacture and supply of IML to Australia

lian plastics injection and blow moulders since this labelling method was introduced to Australia over 15 years ago. These Tompson said were particularly suited to personal care, household cleaners, food and drink and garden product packaging.

D'Amico spoke persuasively about the environmental benefits of biodegradable labelling. Biolabels, made from renewable, compostable resources such as cellulose, absorb CO<sub>2</sub> when the plant is grown, which is then released when the product is composted. As a result, labels such as Innovia Film's recently introduced NatureFlex labels, have less environmental impact than most traditional labels. While it is possible to apply biolabels to most substrates today, D'Amico said non-rigid packaging utilising PSA labels presented the clearest environmental benefits, with few constraints. There are additional considerations for rigid plastic containers intended for thermal recycling, for which D'Amico urged caution in selecting compatible combinations of bottle and label materials to maximise the environmental benefits, without detrimentally affecting those recycling streams.



Guest speakers for the evening, Will Tompson (left) and Claude D'Amico (right) are pictured here with William Woo, NSW AIP branch chairman (centre).

In some instances, the label would have to be separated from the bottle to be composted and also to prevent it from contaminating the recycling stream if the bottle was to be recycled.

D'Amico said consumers would need clear on-label instructions about separating waste streams, in order for this to become a reality. Some members of the audience felt that consumers would not go to these lengths, but D'Amico said the idea should not be dismissed, that change in consumer behaviour was possible.

## Recognition for long service

AT RECENT AIP meetings around Australia, a number of members have received the newly instated 25-year service award. Many of the candidates have in fact been active AIP members for a longer time, like some of the AIP fellows pictured here.



TOP LEFT: AIP fellows (from left) Ian Fletcher, Allan Kenny and Michael Halley have shown an outstanding commitment to the institute, between them contributing over 112 years of service.



BOTTOM LEFT: Craig Wellman (centre) joined NSW members in congratulating (from left) Paul Haberland, Brad Harrison, Bob McFayden, and Michael Walker. Absent was Prof Harry Lovell.

FAR LEFT: Colin Simpson (left) regaled the Victoria audience with amusing tales of his life in packaging, after receiving his 25-year service award from AIP national president Craig Wellman (right).

# AIP gets fizz-ical courtesy of CCA

By Lindy Hughson

A HIGHLIGHT OF the AIP's site visit calendar in 2009 was a tour of the sophisticated canning and bottling facility at Coca-Cola Amatil's largest Australian manufacturing site in Richlands, Queensland.

Prior to the facility walk-through, visitors were treated to some facts and figures on the company and the Richlands plant, delivered by CCA QLD manufacturing manager, Justin Turner.

The CCA Richlands facility leads the way in

terms of volume production in Australia, handling around 250 SKUs and in total around 500 million litres of product per annum. This equates to 40 million physical cases or 88 million unit cases (one unit case = 5.678 litres).

Since the plant opened in 1994, investment in technology has been ongoing, with the most recent addition in 2008 of a \$21 million, high-speed, Krones Variotec canning line (fill rates of 1200 cans per minute for 375ml and 250ml cans). This line also currently

packages into 440ml and 500ml containers, and will cater for slim-line variants in the future. A second canning line fills at rates of 1500 cans per minute. Also recently installed is a new \$8 million hotfill PET line for products like Powerade and Glaceau Vitamin Water that require pasteurisation.

Operating 24/7, the plant has two canning lines, three PET lines (including the hotfill line), one water line and one bag-in-box line. Its on-site manufacturing and warehouse area covers 65000m<sup>2</sup> – the size of 11 football fields.

Over the past decade or more, CCA Australia has increased its non-carbonated soft drinks portfolio by 18 per cent, today accounting for around 24 per cent of the total beverage business. Bottled water is a growing business, with well known brands NeverFail, Pump and Mount Franklin bottled at the Richlands site.

Coca-Cola remains the flagship product, however, in keeping with its global popularity – the two-litre bottle of Coke is the top selling supermarket product in Australia.

Armed with the facts, visitors viewed the lines first hand and had the opportunity to ask tour guides detailed questions about the operations. Overall, AIP members were impressed and pleased to have had the opportunity to take a peak behind the scenes at this world-class beverage manufacturing site.



AIP members were keen to gain an insight into best beverage filling practice at Coca-Cola Amatil's Richlands plant.

## Covenant revisited

LATE LAST YEAR, following the much-awaited meeting of the Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC), the AIP's Victoria branch invited National Packaging Covenant (NPC) CEO Ed Corder and Packaging Council of Australia (PCA) CEO Gavin Williams to provide feedback on policy decisions taken by ministers at that meeting.

The meeting, which was well attended and included a round of lively discussion following the speakers' presentations, was chaired by industry consultant and Covenant expert Robin Tuckerman.

Williams and Corder communicated several key messages regarding the 'strengthened' Covenant, which replaces the current version (MkII) expiring end June 2010 and which the ministers agreed to support.

Williams reported that the ministers commended industry on the leadership role it had taken through establishing the Covenant. He

and Corder agreed that the Covenant in all its guises to date had served the industry well, but that a change of focus was now necessary. The revised Covenant showed a marked shift from the previous focus on waste to landfill and recycling to address broader sustainability issues, with a greater focus on package design, workplace recycling, public recycling, and litter reduction projects, he said.

Corder said that product stewardship (rather than government regulation) was now recognised by both industry and government as key to the way forward on packaging sustainability. He said emphasis should also be placed on educating consumers on the safety of recycled materials, which would in turn drive demand and create local markets for recycled materials.

Williams said that retailers would play an influential role in industry's drive towards sustainability as they rapidly transformed themselves into major brand owners through



Ed Corder, NPC; Ralph Moyles AIP VIC branch chairman; Robin Tuckermann, MC for the evening; and Gavin Williams, PCA.

growth in the private label sector.

Williams ended with a cautionary note that packaging would remain in the hot seat when it came to pressure from government, consumers and environmental groups. He suggested all players should get to grips with the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines included in the revised Covenant so that the packaging industry would be well placed to lead change.