

Board Converting News TM

An N.V. Publication

The **ONLY** Weekly Publication Serving the U.S. and Canadian Corrugated and Folding Carton Industries

Packrite Puts New 'Spin' On Folding/Gluing

by Jim Curley

For two weeks every year, High Point, North Carolina, becomes "the Furniture Capital of the World" as 100,000 exhibitors and visitors crowd exhibition halls to present and to see the latest in furniture design and production.

Late last month, High Point was again at the center of action as about 400 corrugated manufacturers and users descended on the city to view the latest in converting technology, as Packrite held an open house to display its new Bobst MASTERFOLD folder gluer with its patented Gyrobox board rotator.

A highlight of the day was the appearance of North Carolina's Lt. Governor Dan Forest, who saluted company owners, Michael and Mary Drummond, on bringing manufacturing jobs that require a highly-skilled labor force to the Tar Heel State. Lt. Governor Forest toured the facility with his hosts.

Established by the Drummonds in 2008, Packrite has two major niches - as a manufacturer of miniflute packaging and as a finisher for the trade. During the all-day open house in High Point, visitors toured the renovated 125,000-square-foot facility, which includes warehousing and roll stock storage, and saw product litho laminated on Packrite's custom-built 64-inch Asitradelaminator, sent to a Bobst EXPERTCUT 145 die cutter for diecutting and then to a 67-inch Bobst MASTERFOLD for folding and gluing.

The MASTERFOLD machine center, 130 feet long, also includes a Bobst Gyrobox module, a Bobst STREAMPACK semi-automatic batch collector and an

ATS-TANNER banding system. It is targeted for the finishing work for other converters and logistics companies, a market that represents about 30 to 35 percent of Packrite's total business, Drummond explains. "This



North Carolina's Lt. Governor Dan Forest, right, congratulated Packrite's Michael Drummond for bringing high-skill jobs to the state.

(Photo: Nick Griffin)

is all about making other converters more successful in the marketplace," he says. "Not many boxmakers can invest in this kind of machine, but, using this service we provide, they can expand their offerings to their customers at a reasonable cost."

The Gyrobox innovation allows Bobst to rotate a blank 90 degrees so that many complicated jobs that require multi-directional gluing and would ordinarily require two passes can be accomplished in just one pass, resulting in a doubling of production for some

jobs. Packrite's Gyrobox module, installed last December, is the first in the Western Hemisphere and only the second in the world.

"We're a bridge between two segments. Our folding carton customers are attracted by our ability to cut and glue boxes up to B-flute, while corrugated customers are not used to the cut-to-mark precision we can offer," Drummond adds. "We're filling a need that no one converter in the marketplace can handle by itself." He proudly points to the comment of one satisfied customer, who simply said, "Y'all understand it."



Multi-directional folding and gluing for heavier board is achieved, thanks to the Gyrobox module, below, on the Bobst MASTERFOLD.

(Photos: Nick Griffin)



Preferred Supplier

Drummond got hooked on Bobst equipment when he worked for his previous company, Preferred Packaging, a carton manufacturer. "Years back, Preferred bought a Bobst Alpina folder gluer," he remembers. "It was the only piece of new equipment we had, and I was amazed at what we could do with this machine, said Drummond.

So when the Drummonds started up Packrite, they began to equip the plant almost exclusively with new Bobst equipment. First came the Asitrade, which produces B-, E-, F- and N-flute sheets from 23-inches by 23-inches to 64-inches by 65-inches at speeds up to 10,000 sheets per hour. Parallel to the Asitrade is the Bobst EXPERTCUT 145 diecutter with Bobst's Power

Register system, which can cut cartonboard up to .060 pt. and corrugated up to B-flute at speeds up to 7,500 sph.

Michael Drummond remembers one customer who was stymied by a precise cutting job. "Can you salvage our 50,000 sheet order?," the frustrated converter asked. The EXPERTCUT145 with Power Register made short work of the tricky cut-to-mark die cutting job, leaving another customer satisfied and proving true Drummond's boast: "We can do things that others can't do." Bobst's Regional Sales Manager Terry Brock calls the 145 "an ideal crossover machine able to bridge the gap between folding carton and corrugated."

Between the Asitrade and EXPERT on one side of the factory and the folder gluers on the other side lies the only older piece of equipment in the plant - a Woodward jogger-aerator. "We like the older Woodward because it's heavier than newer models," Drummond explains.

The plant utilizes two Bobst folder gluers. The older one, a MASTERFOLD 130 glues boxes in sizes up to a 51 7/8-inch by 35-inch at up to 100,000 pieces an hour. Parallel to that, both closer to the laminator and die cutter is the machine that saw its debut last month, the Bobst MASTERFOLD 170 G + S. This machine includes the Accufeed blank aligning device, the Polyvalent pre-breaking module, the patented Gyrobox rotator section, an Aligning module that follows the rotation and the Combi one and two sections before the final folding section.



Packrite's new technology caught the eyes of 400 visitors.

(Photo: Nick Griffin)

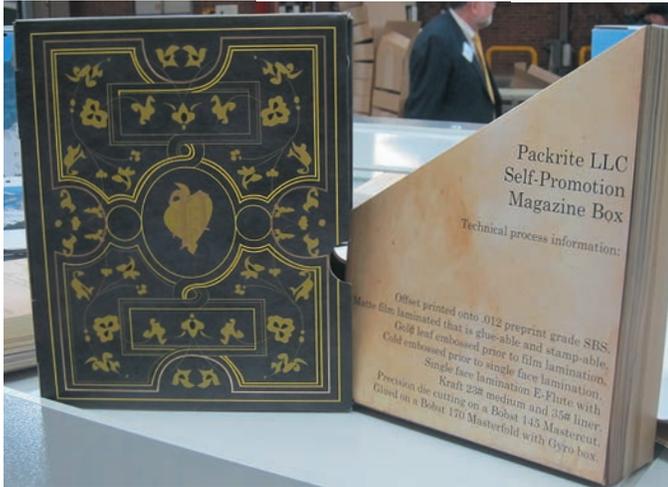
According to Bobst, this unique level of folder-gluer technology will enable Packrite "to create the widest variety of trays, internal and multi-position dividers, 4- and 6- corner boxes, automatic bottom cartons and many other specialty items."

Unique Offerings

While the Gyrobox is new to the corrugated market, it was first developed for the folding carton industry

in 1998, reports Yvan Magni, Bobst's Product Support Manager, Specialty Folder-Gluers. The innovation was debuted at a German boxplant in 2011, he notes. "The demand for this product by corrugated manufacturers began in recent years, and Bobst's research and development team then developed the MASTERFOLD with the Gyrobox in response to this need," he says.

"This machine puts Packrite in a position to do something no one else in North America can do," Magni adds.



This photo shows that Packrite can deliver the whole 'package.'

Steve Creasy, VP of Bobst's Sheet Fed unit, agrees and sees the development of equipment such as the MASTERFOLD and the Gyrobox as key to Bobst's unique mission. "We're trying to provide innovations such as the MASTERFOLD and the Polyjoiner for shelf-ready packaging, to name just two, that will enable our customers to differentiate themselves in the marketplace and add value to their products.

"Our first North American installation was well placed," he added. "Michael has a flair for design." Drummond saw the machine at a Bobst Open House in 2011 and confirmed his order at Drupa.

Another new machine at Packrite is a Packsize EM 7-25 On-Demand Packaging machine installed in early March. The machine, made by Salt Lake City, Utah based Packsize, cuts, creases and scores Packsize's cor-

rugated Z-fold into boxes that meet the exact specifications of the shipper. "This product is perfect for shipping both product and samples to customers," Michael Drummond says.

Win-Win

One of the customers that visited Packrite at its open house was Todd Burke, VP of Sales and Marketing for ThatBox, LLC, a unit of Fort Mill, South Carolina based The Packaging Warehouse, a contract packager and designer of corrugated products. ThatBox has no printing capabilities in house, so it relies on Packrite for its printing and diecutting. Then the sheets are sent back to ThatBox for finishing on its custom-made gluer.

"We needed a vendor for printing and diecutting and started to use Packrite about three years ago," explains Burke. "We're both design companies, and their expertise and service have helped our company grow." At the open house, Burke broached the possibility that Packrite might supply the printing, diecutting and even the finishing for one of its newer products - a custom-designed corrugated cooler.

"We try to partner with all our boxmaking customers," explains Kristie Smith, Packrite's Director of Customer Service. "ThatBox has been a great partner." If ThatBox's cooler, targeted for Christian organizations, is a big success, ThatBox might even send its custom-made gluer up to High Point and let Packrite handle its gluing operations as well, Smith said.

Contacted a week after the open house, Michael Drummond termed the event "a big success." He notes, "Everyone was amazed at the technology we exhibited. I'm proud of the way our staff performed that day and I'm thankful for the way Bobst and our other suppliers supported us."

It already looks like the open house might directly result in increased sales for Packrite and its customers. "I've got several samples on my desk that resulted from inquiries made at the open house," Drummond notes. "We're excited about the opportunity these may provide to continue to help our converting partners grow."