



## COOPERATIVE POWER

### CONGLOMERATE BACKING WITH FOCUSED SOLUTIONS

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At a time when the packaging industry seems overwrought by mergers and acquisitions, processors are concerned about the resulting effects on their respective businesses, from higher prices to a reduced focus on their core needs and interests to the overall sense of stability. Establishing long-term business relationships with genuine partners is almost impossible when the leadership and business philosophy of a supplier company constantly changes.

Taking a cooperative approach – literally, in the sense of collaboration, and figuratively, when it comes to a business structure – with a packaging supplier is a way for processors to ensure stability and simple solutions to their potentially complex problems. As an integral part of Spain's MONDRAGON network of industrial cooperatives, ULMA offers the power of a conglomerate while understanding and responding to industry-specific needs and demands of those in the meat and poultry business. Leveraging 4,000-plus employees across eight ULMA companies, MONDRAGON provided depth and dimension for powerful resources.

ULMA's uniqueness as a cooperative with global

and regional (and even local) ties allows the company to tap into the resources and brain trust within the MONDRAGON system, which is based on a business philosophy of trust and social involvement. Because MONDRAGON has invested so heavily in ULMA -- and ULMA's 1,200 employees with a direct presence in 20 countries as well as distribution partners -- as part of its internationalization of products and services, ULMA is in it for the long-term, and will be in it for the long-term success of its meat and poultry customers.

"Today's customers demand complete packaging solutions, upstream and downstream automation as well as diverse formats of packages. ULMA provides a unique range of packaging solutions which is the widest offer in the world," says Juan Ignacio Aguirre, Business Development Director for ULMA.

Accordingly, ULMA offers state-of-the-art integrated customer packaging solutions that span filling, secondary packaging, flow-wrapping, form/fill/seal, shrink wrap and vertical sealing, among other capabilities. A wide range of machinery – along with superior technical support and access to other cooperatives within MONDRAGON that impact meat and poultry packaging – assures that there are custom solutions to every product – and potential challenge. UPA, the ULMA packaging automation group, will totally automate and/or integrate products to provide turnkey systems.



## 8 Businesses, Infinite Possibilities



## COOPERATION & SUCCESS BORN FROM TRUST

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The fact that ULMA's business model and strategy is not based on becoming the biggest packaging company in the industry – but instead on meeting the needs of its customers by relying on its expertise and resources within a large, already-established and collaborative local network – stems from humble beginnings.

ULMA is one of nearly 255 companies and entities of MONDRAGON, spanning more than 75,000 people who share one business philosophy and work in four areas: Finance, Industry, Distribution and Knowledge. MONDRAGON can trace its noble and humble philosophy back six decades, and ULMA's can trace its back 50 years. In a region of northern Spain that was decimated by civil war, the modest goals of the fledgling corporation were based on the tenets of a priest, Father Jose Maria Arizmendi-arrieta, whose commitment to education, creating jobs and ultimately saving the community, inspired its five young founders. Arizmendi-arrieta's founding of a vocational school in 1943 in the community would flourish to include educational programs for technology, culture and religion.

The approach was and still is based on a symbiotic relationship where the corporation is built on

the community and the people of the community are the beneficiaries of its success and are not only committed to the corporation figuratively, but literally, as shared owners in the business.

Starting out in 1956 making cookers and heaters for paraffin, the five-man operation, originally known as ULGOR, flourished. As word spread about its mission to create jobs and help the community survive, the co-op based corporation grew rapidly throughout the 1960s and 70s. It diversified quickly, not only in its business interest, but in building an infrastructure that would prove to sustain the corporation with research and independently established financing to insulate it from the volatility of stock-market-based models. By 1980, 18,000 workers and 96 cooperatives were established with an infrastructure that had grown to include a coop-owned bank as well as a social security and insurance coop in addition to a supermarket chain, R&D centers and manufacturing facilities as part of the thriving network of linked companies.

The growth plan included global expansion and soon, the corporation had coop-based corporations established in 26 countries with industries ranging from manufacturing of buses to refrigeration and including food.

True to its founder's beliefs, a commitment to jobs remains today. Contrary to most traditional business models, Mondragon has proven that even



THIS NEW SYSTEM BOOSTS PRODUCTIVITY, GIVEN THE PAIRING OF PRODUCTS, AND REDUCES LABOR COSTS.

in lean business times it is critical to grow the employment base, with a track record showing how adding jobs results in multiplying revenues.

With this approach and commitment, the Mon-dragon family of businesses depends on the willingness and ability of its employee-owners to share its sense of family, accountability and service with customers that are immediately considered a coveted member of the corporation. That philosophy is shared by those within the ULMA organization, who understand that unity leads to innovation which leads to success. According to Cecilio Lejarreta, CEO of ULMA Packaging, “One of the great strengths of ULMA Packaging are the people who make up the company. With absolute involvement in the business project, the workforce is composed of a young but experienced team with a high rate of graduates and engineers as well as highly skilled professionals.”

## NEW & NOTABLE

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ULMA has created an innovative new FLOW VAC application common in meat and cheese packaging. The new system automates the feeding of a belt vacuum chamber on both sealing bars. Packages are sealed on one side only for a 90-degree transfer to the buffering belt of a vacuum chamber with the open end facing both seal bars on the vacuum

chamber. If products are not small enough to be paired, an auto-detect system will load the product as a single item. Ultimately, this new system boosts productivity, given the pairing of products, and reduces labor costs.

## HARPAK-ULMA HISTORY AND LEGACY IN THE U.S.

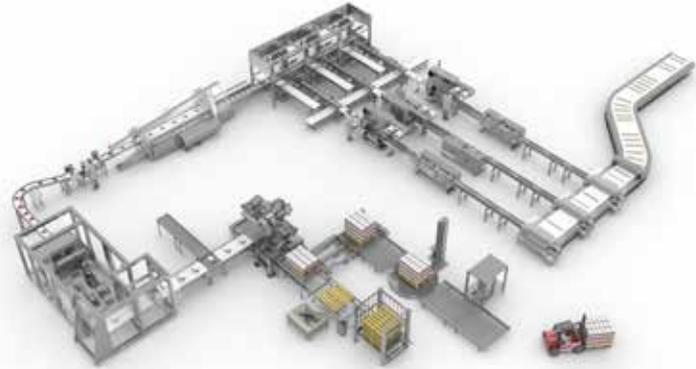
In 1994, the Harlfinger family established Harpak based on 30 years of experience in the packaging business. In 2010, to offer a wider range of fully integrated packaging solutions, Harpak and ULMA Packaging Systems, Inc. merged to become Harpak-ULMA Packaging LLC. The broader scope of packaging allowed for total packaging solutions tailored for a customer’s specific requirements within a single distribution system.

# SYSTEM SPOTLIGHTS

## AUTOMATION

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ULMA Packaging Automation (UPA) is a division within the ULMA group which specializes in projects which encompass the definition, design and implementation of “automated, integrated packaging solutions”. UPA provides complete Project Management as an important part of the solution to control the entire project enabling the use of just one company to fulfill all the requirements of complete production lines.



## VARIABLE SIZE MASTER BAG

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ULMA Masterbag packaging can accommodate random tray sizes automatically. A variety of sizes of trays are wrapped in a MAP grouped bag adapted to the total length of the tray group. The Masterbag is formed on ULMA's Pacific Flow Wrap equipment.



## DARFRESH HORIZONTAL FORM FILL SEAL

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Cryovac® Darfresh® rollstock technology is available on ULMA TFS thermoformers. This technology combines state of the art equipment with Sealed Air Darfresh® skin films to produce an outstanding package with many attributes. The Darfresh® package gives the consumer the ultimate in convenience with an easy open film, clear visibility and extended shelf-life for fresh products.



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