

The market place

PROFILE

Fawema: 1920-2020 - Celebrating 100 years of excellence

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A 100-year timeline of Fawema

Up until **1935** through to **1945**, the company manufactured various things for a number of industries including parts for locomotives and machine parts for the mining industry. Then, in 1949, the engineer, Julius Schwirten built the first dosing machine for Fawema. This was followed in **1950** by Fawema presenting their AGMA packaging machines.

From **1953** through to **1954**, Edeka (a large supermarket chain in Hamburg, Germany) ordered 250 dosing machines. The Albrecht brothers (founders of Aldi) also placed an order for dosing machines for nearly 100 sites.

By **1972**, The FA 10 and FA 20 machines were launched onto the market. Throughout the 1970s, the company underwent a period of growth with 24 representatives located around the world. These were established in all western European countries, as well as in North and South America, Algeria, Australia, Japan and South Africa.

1970s-1990s

The introduction of the FA 310 heralded a breakthrough by Fawema as a manufacturer of packaging machines and the company soon ceased the manufacture of locomotive parts, to focus exclusively on the production of packaging machines. By **1984**, Exports accounted for 80 percent of Fawema's production.

By **1995**, the company's 75th anniversary, Fawema inaugurated a new production and assembly hall. In 1998, The Munich based company MAX Holding AG took over Fawema.

The 2000s

Acquisition of the company Vision Schlauchbeutelmaschinen for the integration of new models into the FA range took place in **2004**. In **2006** Fawema was acquired by Mr Peter Steindl,

a graduate in business and engineering, within a management buyout of the MAX Automation GmbH.

In **2011**, the latest Fawema servo-driven packaging line FA 217 was brought to the market and the following year saw the new production hall established, introducing state-of-the-art high bay storage facilities.

In **2016** "Fawema Kenya" was established to serve as a base for the whole of the East African market. With company offices, spare parts warehouse facilities and staffed by trained field engineers, it allowed Fawema to cement its already strong position in the East African market.

In June **2018** "HQ Equita" acquired Fawema and its sister company HDG, founding the "The Packaging Group" and finally in late 2019, a third German company "Wolf" joined the group to make it one of the strongest suppliers of packing equipment in the world.

2020 and beyond: Fawema today

Traditionally, Fawema has always been a company that designs and manufactures packing machines which work primarily with paper packaging materials. This means Fawema solutions work with either ready-made paper bags or paper roll-stock. They also manufacture machines that work with plastic packaging material.

The majority of Fawema equipment is targeted toward the consumer-size market (between 500g-to-5kg) but they also make machinery for packing flour into bigger sizes of between 10kg-to-25kg. The filling is all 'open-mouth'. Fawema do not manufacture valve sack fillers, for example. If you were to buy a paper bag of 1kg flour at a supermarket in Germany, Switzerland, United Kingdom, South Africa, Kenya, Australia, the United States, Canada or Saudi Arabia then there is a high probability



that it will have been packed on a Fawema machine.

The mill master

Fawema's single biggest sector is the flour milling sector and it's true to say that the majority of their machine sales are for equipment to pack wheat flour, maize flour, cake flour, muffin and scone mixes. They also sell a lot of equipment to pack sugar, extruded dry pet foods, tea, dry building products such as grouts and mortar, cacao powder, rice, spices, oat flakes, salt, chocolates and sweets, lentils and pulses. They do not manufacture palletisers or pallet stretch wrappers.

Keeping pace with change

The packaging industry is in a constant cycle of evolution driven by a number of factors: government legislation is particularly strong in developing markets such as Africa and Asia. The plastic packaging ban in Rwanda and Kenya has generally been considered as a great environmental success and the same legislation is being implemented by other countries not just in Africa, but in Asia too. In more established markets such as Europe and North America, the exceptionally high competition between retailers and the ever-increasing demand from consumers for innovative packaging means that food suppliers are reliant on their packing machine suppliers to come up with new ways to improve productivity, reduce overall production costs, and ensure maximum safety and hygiene with each piece of equipment.

Global reach

There are 195 countries in the world and Fawema equipment is installed in 131 of them. In normal circumstances, Fawema engineers are dispatched to install and commission new machines, wherever that might be in the world. Fawema has offices with engineering staff in Europe, Africa, Middle East and Asia. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the freedom to travel has been severely curtailed and this initially presented Fawema with a headache. However, thanks to some quick-thinking by Fawema's Technical Support Team in Germany, the company devised an 'online start up programme', which means that an engineer can now guide a customer, via video link, through all the necessary steps to successfully install and commission a new machine. The first installations have been carried out and have been a great success.



A dust-free solution

Together with strategic partners, Fawema is now able to offer a "dust-free" flour filling solution. On a traditional retail paper bag of flour, the closure is done by making a fold in the top of the bag, applying hot glue and then making a final foldover to close the bag flat. This method is fine but if the adjustment of the machine is not set correctly, there can be a risk that a very small amount of flour dust can be released from the bag and, of course, this can be prone to build-up on supermarket shelves. With Fawema's innovative new dust-free option, this is no longer an issue. It's a simple but effective appliance both on the machine as well as on the packaging material.

The next 100 years for Fawema

Thanks to their long-standing history of working with paper packaging material, Fawema has always been considered a "green" company. Today, they are part of a three-way group under the TPG umbrella. The other two partners, HDG Packaging and Wolf are far more involved with plastic packaging, and they also lead the way in technology and innovation in their respective fields. One example of this is the way that they work now with fully biodegradable and recyclable plastic packaging materials. Plastic packaging materials will not disappear so the challenge now and in the future is to develop more environmentally-friendly plastics and to design packaging machines that can work with these new materials, to ensure that they serve the needs for packaging in the 21st century.

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