

Greiner Packaging makes T-IML possible

New thermoformed cups with IML decoration are just as attractive as their injection-molded counterparts – but have the edge when it comes to sustainability.

The benefits of T-IML at a glance:

- Monomaterial solution ensures maximum recyclability
- Lightweight packaging with a small carbon footprint
- Highly attractive at the POS thanks to excellent print quality
- Barrier properties can be added to reduce food waste

Kremsmünster, Austria (February 2022). There are many ways to design or optimize packaging so that it is more sustainable – for instance, by making it readily recyclable, using less plastic, or making it from alternative materials. That is why the packaging experts at Greiner Packaging work continuously to review its product portfolio in order to improve sustainability by making changes or introducing innovative solutions. The latest highlight is the thermoformed IML cup.

T-IML helps to save material

In the past, the in-mold labeling (IML) decoration method was only ever used in combination with injection molding production technology. But now, Greiner Packaging has built on its longstanding core competency in thermoforming to offer thermoformed IML cups. The benefit of the technique is reduced material usage – less plastic is required for thermoformed cups, which saves resources while also making the cups lighter. As a result, they are responsible for fewer CO₂ emissions during transportation. Both the cup and the IML label are made of PP, making for a monomaterial solution that is very easy to recycle. Wherever feasible, Greiner Packaging also tries to use recycled material, although the use of mechanically recycled material for food applications remains severely limited due to strict approval criteria, with only r-PET currently meeting the relevant requirements.

Efficient production for sustainable packaging

But how does T-IML work exactly? During in-mold labeling, a label is inserted into the thermoforming mold in which the product is shaped, thereby forming a solid bond with the finished product. With this decoration method, shaping and decoration are performed efficiently in a single process. Having invested in a test mold, Greiner Packaging is now able to manufacture T-IML cups. The cups are available with a diameter of 95 millimeters and a capacity of 500 milliliters. Switching from injection molding to thermoforming lowers the cup's weight in this format from 15 to 11.4 grams – a 25% reduction.

Barrier properties for extended shelf life

“At Greiner Packaging, we are committed to a circular economy and want to take a broad-based approach to making that happen. With our new T-IML cups using less material and being readily recyclable, they encapsulate exactly what we hoped to achieve,” emphasizes Philipp Maurer, key account manager at Greiner Packaging. Another advantage of the new packaging is that the sheet used in the thermoforming process can be imbued with barrier properties. This extends the shelf life of the packaged food, in turn helping to prevent food waste.

High-quality appearance

In addition, IML is an especially high-quality form of packaging decoration. Matte, rough, glossy, or soft-touch decorative effects can be applied, and the printed content is photo quality and therefore visually outstanding. “IML packaging solutions are extremely effective at attracting consumers' attention at the point of sale. On top of their sustainability attributes, that is naturally a real plus,” Maurer adds.

Text and image: Greiner Packaging

Text document and high-resolution images for download:
<https://mam.greiner.at/pinaccess/showpin.do?pinCode=DGbHJEyDAzKw>



Caption:

Light, attractive, monomaterial solution. T-IML cups impress with their many advantages in terms of sustainability and design.

About Greiner Packaging

Greiner Packaging is a leading European manufacturer of plastic packaging in the food and nonfood sectors. The company has enjoyed a reputation for outstanding solutions expertise in the fields of development, design, production, and decoration for more than 60 years. Greiner Packaging responds to the challenges of the market with two business units: Packaging and Assistec. While the Packaging unit focuses on innovative packaging solutions, the Assistec unit is dedicated to producing custom-made technical parts. Greiner Packaging employs a workforce of nearly 4,900 at more than 30 locations in 19 countries around the world. In 2020, the company generated annual sales revenues of EUR 692 million (including joint ventures), which represents approximately 35 percent of Greiner's total sales.

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