

in 2021 we built our second aerosol bag-on-valve (BOV) line, adding 18 million units of new capacity. We expanded our manufacturing space by 10,000 sq ft and also increased our storage capacity by constructing a 15,000 sq ft expansion to our Level 3 finished goods warehouse (200 Meister Ave.), which is now built to the most exacting safety standards of any aerosol plant in the U.S.," Ipaye continued.



American Spraytech's newest production lines #5 and #6.



A bird's eye view of American Spraytech's new expansion.

"Towards the end of the year, we added equipment and personnel in our analytical lab, further expanding our in-house raw material and finished goods release capabilities."

In 2022, AST is moving forward with plans for further expansion. Beginning in February, it leased an additional 20,000 sq ft warehouse and will begin construction of its new 80,000 sq ft plant expansion later this year at 100 Meister Ave.

"We expect the [brand new] plant to be ready for operations in 2023; it will house our aerosol BOV lines, as well as provide the warehousing infrastructure for significantly expanding facilities for our customers over the next few years," Ipaye said.

Later in 2023, AST will add its sixth through-the-valve (TTV) aerosol line at the Tower Building at 205 Meister Ave. The new, high-speed line will give AST the capability to economically service customers with small run sizes to those requiring significantly larger runs. It also enables the filler to welcome smaller influencer and on-line brand launches and have the ability to scale successful products to the faster lines, providing cost efficiencies along the way, said the company.

When complete, AST facilities will have grown from 25,000 sq ft and 20 employees in 2003, when it first began operations on Meister Ave., to 325,000 sq ft and 300 employees.

"Today, every employee has an incentive ownership stake in the company; we are all owners delivering excellence to our customers," concluded Ipaye.

In January of this year, **PLZ Aerospace Corp.**—specialty aerosol and liquid product manufacturer headquartered in Downers Grove, IL—changed its name to **PLZ Corp.**

In July of 2021, PLZ Corp. made two major acquisitions. First, it purchased lubricants manufacturer **Champion Brands, LLC**. The acquisition expanded PLZ's full-service automotive and industrial offerings with a suite of more than 300 aerosol and non-aerosol

products, such as brake fluid, fuel treatments and engine additives. It operates a 450,000 sq ft manufacturing facility in Clinton, MO. The head of Champion, Matt Lowe, stayed on following the transaction.

Then, PLZ acquired **220 Laboratories (220 Labs)**, a formulator of personal care products such as dry shampoo, conditioner and body spray. 220 Labs has a 200,000 sq ft facility in Riverside, CA; its leaders, Ian and Eric Fishman, stayed with the company following the deal.



The acquisition of 220 Labs is PLZ's fourth acquisition in the personal care industry in the last two years. In total, PLZ now operates seven personal care facilities across the U.S. and Canada.

Voyant Beauty, Hodgkins, IL, published its inaugural *Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) Report* in 2021. Highlights of the report included the launch of the semi-annual CEO Awards program for employee recognition, honoring achievements in innovation, safety, best overall site, quality and individual/team performance; issuance of an official statement on *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion* to employees and the public; proactive development of 23 unique innovation formulation concepts rooted in sustainability trends; the latest sustainable packaging options; and implementation of a network-wide *Chemical Management Policy*. The full report is available at: voyantbeauty.com/our-values/.

The Starco Group, Los Angeles, CA, purchased aerosol manufacturer **Chase Products Co.**, Broadview, IL. Chase has expertise in spray paints, household cleaning products, personal care sprays and EPA-registered disinfectants and insecticides. This added to Starco's portfolio of aerosol, liquid fill and bulk chemicals for the household, do-it-yourself/hardware, personal care, pharmaceutical, food, beverage and spirits industries, the company said.

IKI Manufacturing, Edgerton, WI, will commission a new high speed line—IKI Line 10—on April 15, along with a new 76,000 sq ft raw material warehouse.

"From Jan. 1, 2021, IKI Manufacturing has grown its overall capacity by 60%," noted Jason White, President of IKI.

"IKI is currently involved in several new infrastructure projects, as well as multiple BOV projects over the last 12 months," White added.

Cortec Spray Technologies (CST), Spooner, WI, had a unique COVID-19 experience, noted Murad Alsmadi, CST Technical Sales & Product Manager for Coatings, Integrated Solutions & MRO Products and Julie Holmquist, CST Marketing Content Writer.

"Around the beginning of the pandemic, CST just happened to order an extra supply of aerosol cans and components, making it well-situated to overcome widespread industry shortages," they explained.

"As a result, CST was able to keep production rolling and help new customers who were desperately looking for someone to meet their contract fill orders during COVID. Cortec was able to...maintain good lead times and help medium-size accounts that [may have been] overlooked by others."

"One new customer needed a contract fill job on its tire cleaner. Cortec filled the spray cans with the customer's formula and also coordinated a nicely lithographed can label well within budget, thanks to good support from Cortec's own can supplier," the pair said.

"The satisfactory service led the customer to ask about private labeling one of Cortec's own products, a biobased cleaner that is currently undergoing field testing with the customer's end users."

Alsmadi is optimistic about continued growth and good lead times in 2022.

A hard year's work



Cortec Spray Technologies, Spooner, WI.

“We have a capacity of almost five million cans a year; we can add another shift if needed, so we’re very flexible when it comes to capacity,” he concluded.

In July, Colep, Porto, Portugal, announced its intention to split its businesses into two new entities—**Colep Consumer Products** and **Colep Packaging**—due to the operational and strategic differences between the businesses and the need for agility in the marketplace. The change included the promotions of Colep CEO Vitor Neves to Chairman; Packaging Division Managing Director Paulo Sousa to CEO of Colep Packaging; and Consumer Products Division Managing Director Pierfranco Accardo to CEO of Colep Consumer Products. Colep’s Healthcare Division will become part of Colep Consumer Products and will run autonomously under Managing Director Christian Schmidt. The **RAR Group** will remain the 100% shareholder of Colep’s new entities.

In December, **Aztec Aerosols** opened its latest warehouse in Crewe, UK following sustained growth over a four-year period, according to a report in *Insidermedia.com*. The 7,115 sq ft building is based alongside Aztec’s current site in Gateway Business Park.



Photo: InsiderMedia.com

Aztec’ Aerosol’s new warehouse was officially opened in December by Crewe Mayor Tom Dunlop.

The new build took 18 weeks to complete and consists of warehouse space, which will provide the firm with capacity for an extra 2,000 pallet spaces. The expansion was needed to meet increased demand in sales and production to fill aerosol air fresheners, brake cleaners and line-marking paints. It follows a series of major investments from its parent company **Instarmac Group**, who purchased Aztec in 2017.

Aztec Aerosols is furthering its growth plans with hopes to increase the number of staff at Crewe, which currently employs more than 50 people. The company has been based in Crewe for more than 20 years, having moved its operations to the town in 1999.

In April, Aztec announced a major investment in a new, high-speed filling line capable of running up to 180 cans a minute. The new line was installed in August and has increased output capability to more than 2.5 million cans per month, said the company. The line consists of a nine-head filler, new leak detection equipment, a nine-head filling gas station and gas house, plus new end-of-line fulfillment and packaging equipment.

Personnel updates

Executive hires and promotions helped bolster contract filler leadership teams in 2021. **American Spraytech** tapped Rasheedat Ipaye to serve in a new capacity. Ipaye had been a member of the AST family for more than six years as a chemist before recently being appointed Co-Manager of the Research & Innovation Dept. Since joining AST, Ipaye has been granted a U.S. Patent and been able to teach and mentor a new generation of aerosol chemists, all while formulating products that live up to the AST motto of “If You Can Dream It, We Can Spray It!” noted the company.



Ipaye

In her new role, Ipaye will leverage her technical background to lead AST’s business development efforts by reaching out and partnering with new customers across the U.S.

Brian Schumm joined **Formulated Solutions** as its new VP of Finance—FP&A. In this role, Schumm closely monitors the pulse of the business and completes analytics that help evaluate performance versus short and long-term strategies. Previously, he was a Finance



Schumm

Director at **Catalent Pharma Solutions**, prior to which he held leadership roles with **Preferred Materials & Synthomer (OMNOVA Solutions)**. He also worked for **Ernst & Young** in the Transaction Advisory Services—Valuation group. Schumm holds a BS in Accounting & Operations Management from Miami University, an MBA from Cleveland State University and is a CMA and a licensed CPA in the state of Illinois.

In 2021, U.S. recreational oxygen supplier **Oxygen Plus**, Edina, MN, donated more than 40,000 self-administered oxygen canisters to people suffering from COVID-19 in the metropolitan areas of Delhi and Mumbai, India. The delivery was expedited to people with depleted oxygen levels and shortness of breath through a collaborative on-the-ground effort.

Pivotal in this endeavor was Paras Shah, Director of **Tri-Pac, Inc.**, South Bend, IN—a company that exclusively manufactures Oxygen Plus canisters. Shah enlisted Lauren Carlstrom, COO of Oxygen Plus, to donate the portable oxygen. The lightweight O+ canisters—each offering 220+ breaths of oxygen—were distributed through a free donation drive via oxygen clinics, coordinated

by humanitarian aid organization The Hemkunt Foundation, with fundraising support from other Indian-owned businesses.

“I am grateful to Oxygen Plus for graciously stepping in with a donation that will literally help save lives,” said Shah. “Although we can’t completely fix the situation, we believe that a combination of smaller efforts can have a positive impact.”



A hard year's work

Additionally, Ray Bodamer was promoted to the position of VP of Packaging Operations at **Formulated Solutions**; his core focus is optimizing the performance of the Formulated Solutions Filling & Packaging Value Stream, which extends into commercial filling, packaging, maintenance and process improvement engineering. According to the company, Bodamer is a seasoned engineering and operations professional with over 20 years of progressive leadership experience in automation, product design and site management.



Bodamer

Prior, Bodamer held various leadership roles in engineering, operations and business management with increasing responsibility within **BIC Graphic USA**. He holds a BS from Springhill College, a BME from Georgia Institute of Technology and an MBA from University of Tampa. He is also certified as a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt.

PLZ Corp. appointed Gary Hendrickson as Senior Advisor. He hails from **Valspar Corp.**, where he served as Chairman, President & CEO, and prior, President & COO, President Asia-Pacific and Senior VP in the consumer paint division.



Hendrickson

Innovative product launches

Starco Brands—in partnership with global artist **Cardi B**—launched Whipshots, a vodka-infused whipped cream for drinks and desserts. The boozy whipped cream is non-dairy (containing caseinate), does not require refrigeration and can be found next to other spirits behind the bar and at retail locations. Flavors include Caramel, Chocolate, Mocha, Strawberry and Vanilla. The aerosol shots are available in three sizes—50mL, 200mL and 375mL. Additionally, Starco Brands created an agreement with alcohol distributor **Republic National Distributing Co. (RNDC)** to distribute Whipshots in the U.S. The cans are produced by Trivium; the valve/actuator is from Aptar.



In February, **Starco Brands** further announced that Whipshots had launched its national retail program with its current distributor, RNDC, to strategically expand into retail with both digitally-native instant-delivery and traditional brick-and-mortar retailers, such as GoPuff, BevMo, Liquor Barn and Total Wines & Spirits beginning in California, Colorado, Washington State and Florida, with additional regions added monthly.

JagoPro Poland Sp. z o.o., Jaworzno, Poland, launched Crush The Sweat Out—a new concept to apply antiperspirants to underarms using mousse, gel or cream formulations. The products are equipped with a customized actuator that ensures good adhesion to the skin and a pleasant application. It also prevents over-application of the product. The packaging is designed to be easily separated for recycling. Crush The Sweat Out won a 2021 European Aerosol Federation (FEA) Award for Product Design.



Aurena Laboratories, Karlstad, Sweden, is developing private label products based on Aptar Pharma's PureHale Bag-on-Valve (BOV) Technology Platform. PureHale is a portable nebulizer-like device designed for upper respiratory care and creates a very soft, fine mist that is delivered with or without a mask. Aurena Labs will offer Aptar Pharma's PureHale platform for use with saline or



other natural ingredient formulations to help treat upper respiratory system conditions in a variety of sizes (30mL, 50mL or 85mL) with customization, interchangeable masks and mouth-piece solutions. Existing BOV product lines can be adapted for PureHale filling with minimal parameter changes, Aurena Labs noted.

Cortec Corp., Spooner, WI, recently released EcoAir Biobased Outdoor Coating powered by Nano VpCI—a ready-to-use, temporary coating formulated for severe marine and high humidity conditions. It comes in a convenient EcoAir spray can and it is classified as non-flammable. It provides multi-metal corrosion protection that is temperature stable to 180°F (82°C). It leaves behind an oily protective film that does not dry and offers rust prevention in outdoor applications. When the protection period is over, it can be removed with a Cortec VpCI41x series cleaner degreaser. According to the company, EcoAir Biobased Outdoor Coating is estimated to be two-thirds or more biobased content, which was achieved by combining renewably sourced oil and solvent materials with Cortec's proprietary VpCI corrosion inhibitor formulation for effective protection.



Aerosol Service Sp. z o.o., Ustka, Poland, launched Spray 'N' Use Applicator, a 2-in-1 product that consists of a replaceable mini-spray aerosol and an applicator matched for exact needs. It is characterized by pocket design, ease-of-use and precise application. No direct-contact of formula with hands makes it safe and clean,

said the company. The product is hermetically-sealed and does not spill or dry up. Applications include household products such as anti-fog, furniture polish, shower cleaner, screen cleaner and stain remover; technical products such as spray adhesive, degreaser, silicone lubricant, tire shine and rust remover; personal care products such as body bronzer and peeler, gel massager, hair conditioner and make-up remover; and other products such as shoe care products, car/ski wax, upholstery cleaner, white board cleaner and leaf shine. **SPRAY**

