

# PAPCEL: 65 Years of Tradition in Manufacturing and Deliveries of Papermaking Machinery and Equipment



*Dostál David*

**P**APCEL of the Czech Republic is a leading engineering company with more than 65 years of tradition in the manufacturing and deliveries of complete papermaking machinery and equipment for production of all the commercially available paper grades. PAPCEL is a group of companies comprising several international paper technology manufacturers such as ICONe S.r.l., Italy; ABK

Groupe, France; Erma Elan Engineering, Czech; former companies Comecart, Italy and Gorostidi, Spain.

PAPCEL President David Dostál shared his views on the group's activities with PaperASIA Editor AK Bolhassan. Following are excerpts from the Q&A Interview:

**paperASIA:** Can you tell us when and where was your first paper mill project? What did it produce and what was the production capacity? Is the mill still in operation to this day?

**David Dostál:** The PAPCEL company has been active in the papermaking industry since 1950. In the 1990s the main downstream markets were the domestic and Slovak ones. Since 2009 the company had exported to the markets of Eastern and Western Europe. And just the Russian market was then the prevailing export territory; one of the first major projects of that time was delivery of a new paper machine for manufacturing of decor paper to the OOO Mayak-Technocell mill, a member of the Russian-German Felix Schoeller concern. The paper machine is still being operated manufacturing decor paper, its daily capacity is 130 tonnes and nowadays the mill, developing and carrying further projects out, belongs to the PAPCEL's most important customers.

**paperASIA:** Since then, how many paper mill projects have the group carried out worldwide? Can you give us the breakdown figures as to when, where and what paper grades?

**David Dostál:** Since then PAPCEL have carried out more than 70 rebuilds of stock preparation lines, have rebuilt dozens of machines in Russia and Western Europe, have had several projects in Asia. In many cases the projects were of major extent with budgets of more than EUR15



*(Photos: PAPCEL)*



million. One of the deals carried out was a construction of a complete new paper mill in Belarus. There, except the papermaking machinery we have delivered the entire production plant, managed civil works and delivered a complete new boiler house. The paper machine makes decor paper and its yearly capacity is 30,000 tonnes.

After the acquisitions with the companies ABK Groupe, then PMT Italy and ICONé (former GapCon) in the years of 2015 to 2017 PAPCEL now own the technological know-how of the machinery for virtually all the available paper grades. We deliver machinery making liners/fluting, decor papers, P&W, tissue. Nowadays we are active almost worldwide with references in all the continents.

**paperASIA:** Are all of these projects involved the installation of complete papermaking machinery?

**David Dostál:** PAPCEL deliver complete papermaking technology: New machinery, new stock preparation lines. We are a main contractor for deliveries of entire mills able to manage all the works from civil works to erection to putting machines into operation etc. Naturally, not all of our projects were those of complete new paper machines. We have carried out lots of rebuilds, we deliver unit machines etc. We have several references for rebuilds of paper machine press parts using the modern shoe press technology installed. Nowadays the PAPCEL Group is able to deliver any sort of machinery from headboxes to winders to roll wrapping machines. For the stock prep lines we deliver everything from pulpers to knotters.

**paperASIA:** Which of these projects do you consider most challenging for the group and why?

**David Dostál:** The projects of complete new process deliveries are always a kind of great challenges. Whenever a construction of a new building is a part of the project it is always a very complicated installation with a highly demanding overall project co-ordination. Currently e.g. the tissue projects are substantial for us. We have developed an excellent concept of installing shoe presses into tissue machines bringing the mill operators significant operational savings. It is very important for us to carry out the projects able to demonstrate the achievements of our technical development.

**paperASIA:** PAPCEL activities are mainly focused on the European markets. Are there plans to expand its activities to other regions such as India and China?

**David Dostál:** PAPCEL deliver worldwide. We are active both in Europe and in Asia; in India we have been present for several years. Both markets are important for our exports. In India we have had a commercial agency more than 10 years. We have created here an independent sales group. The entire PAPCEL Group, i.e. the companies PAPCEL, PMT S.R.L. Italy, ABK Groupe France and ICONé S.R.L. (former GapCon tissue), have carried out more projects of special paper grades machinery rebuilds just in Asia. Our commercial agency is also in China. Together we are carrying out interesting projects like deliveries of new headboxes or rebuilds of press parts installing shoe presses. Both markets have a huge business potential.

**paperASIA:** What projects are PAPCEL working on now and where are they located?



**David Dostál:** In Russia we have several paper machines, the important customers are Mayak Group or Nikol-Pack, both being strong and important papermaking groups. We have delivered them paper machines manufacturing fluting/liner paper grades, decor papers etc. In India we co-operate with the NEPA group or Pragatti, in China with ZIBO Oumu etc. We have a lot of customers in Western Europe like e.g. Rossmann, Hamburger etc.

**paperASIA:** What are the other services offered by PAPCEL to the paper industry?

**David Dostál:** Except the deliveries of complete paper machines and stock preparation lines we deliver equipment for use of chemicals in paper mills. This is about starch cookers, dosing apparatuses for various sorts of chemicals, dosing retention agents, dyes, biocides, latex etc. We deliver workstations for film presses, coaters, size presses. Except the new equipment we deliver also a used ("second-hand") machinery. Customers are provided with all the services related to dismantling, moving to destinations, erection etc. For new deliveries we manage erection, erection check-up, training operators, putting into operation and carrying out guarantee tests. PAPCEL have an engineering office of their own called ERMA Elan Engineering, thus we are able to elaborate complete project documentation. We carry out various calculations, for our customers we elaborate business plans, solve their project financing etc.

**paperASIA:** We are seeing continuous growth in demand for tissue grades worldwide. There will be new installations of tissue machines especially in developing countries. What has PAPCEL got to offer in this respect?

**David Dostál:** PAPCEL can deliver complete turnkey tissue machines. Since 2016, the ICONé company (the former GapCon tissue) specialized on manufacturing of tissue machinery has been a part of our group. We have a unique shoe press type concept EconPRESS NExT working very successfully for example in the Argentinian Papelera Samseng mill. Compared to the original machine conventional configuration with suction roll operated in the mill for initial three months, a significant refining and vacuum energy costs decrease has been achieved. The new concept is fully functioning and it is suitable for all the customers considering rebuilding their tissue machines.

**paperASIA:** Finally, how do you describe the current state of the paper industry? Will there be more orders for complete papermaking machinery or merely rebuilds of existing mills?

**David Dostál:** Nowadays, all the customers emphasise return of their investments and reducing their operation costs. Presently and for the future we feel a significant pressure on decreasing sale prices. Many papermakers are adopting decisions to rebuild their mills; they are about interesting installations aiming to improve productivity and manufactured paper quality. In the future Asia is about to play the substantial role - China, India, Korea, Malaysia. Projects of new machinery deliveries are to be carried out most probably just there. Manufacturing of tissue will be developed; we believe a variety of new projects are going to appear for both new machines and minor rebuilds or for projects of moving used machinery from Europe to Asia. The markets of the US and Latin America have got a good potential as well. **PA**



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