



Interview with Gustavo Cuata-Mata, Managing Director
of Heiber + Schröder Maschinenbau GmbH

Nine out of ten

It is the global technology and market leader, supplying nine out of ten window patching and tray forming machines for packaging applications. Over more than three decades, Heiber + Schröder Maschinenbau GmbH has pioneered groundbreaking developments in the sector. The medium-sized family enterprise not only offers world-class technology, it also maintains exceptionally good relationships with its customers in more than 85 countries across the globe.

With a market share of 90%, Heiber + Schröder is the global leader in window patching and tray forming/carton erecting equipment. The company was established in 1986. Since then, Heiber + Schröder has pioneered many technological developments in the sector, such as customized solutions for pick-and-place operations in the folding carton industry and the world's first window patching machine featuring automatic setting. "We have always been very focused on technology and committed to building the best machines, and thus differentiate ourselves from the competition," Managing Director Gustavo Cuata-Mata says, describing the main reason for the company's sustained success in a highly competitive market. "In addition, we have always put great emphasis on long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with our customers."



WPHC window patching machines feature unique cutters for PU and PE foils. A special suction cylinder facilitates the application and separation of foil for transportation purposes

Heiber + Schröder is based in Erkrath in North Rhine-Westphalia and has a sales and service operation in Illinois in the USA. The company employs 62 people and generates revenues of 20 million EUR. The product portfolio of the

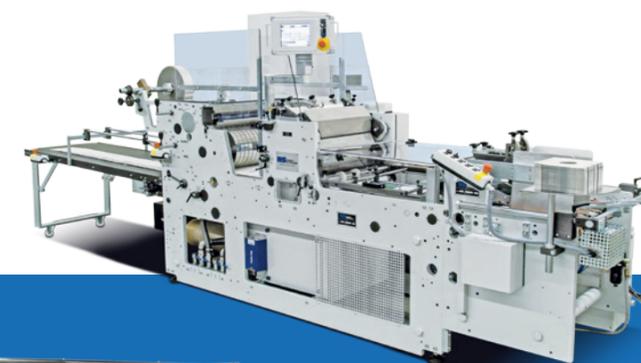
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successful mechanical engineering business comprises several high-performance window patching machines, including the highly versatile PROLINER 1100, the WPH for leak-proof windowing applications and the WP Master as the ultimate

window patching machine offering unrivalled speed and precision. The latest addition to the company's line of window patching equipment is the compact WP Speedliner designed for smaller production batches and processing formats. The tray forming range includes the flexible CE 1000 for all types of carton erecting applications and the CE 1560 for larger production runs. Like the window patching assortment, the tray forming line has just been complemented by a newly developed machine: the CE Speedformer, which offers the

same functionality as the larger production machines but at much lower cost. As a globally operating company, Heiber + Schröder achieves over 90% of its turnover through international activities. "Our main export markets are the USA, Japan, India and Europe," explains Mr. Cuata-Mata.

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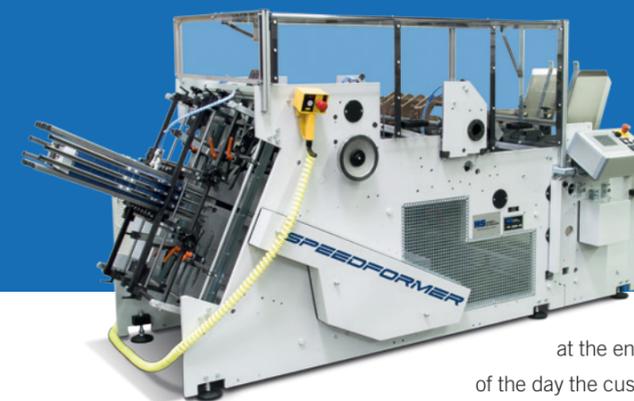
Processing up to 36,000 pieces per hour, the WP Speedliner window patching machine offers unrivalled performance

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The CE Speedformer is the latest addition to the company's line of high-performance tray forming equipment

Heiber + Schröder serves all types of packaging producers, from small, specialized manufacturers to large, multinational groups. "At present, 3% of all packaging firms worldwide need the type of machines we manufacture," says Mr. Cuata-Mata. "In the next five to ten years, our potential market is estimated to increase to 10%. We are operating in a fast evolving market with strong growth and very promising perspectives." In sustaining its global technology and market leadership, Heiber + Schröder relies on the combination of first-class technology and customer service. "Investing in one of our machines is a rational decision, but

at the end of the day the customer buys where he feels safe and can rely on receiving an optimum, individual solution rather than just a piece of equipment," explains Mr. Cuata-Mata. "Our sales people are not only multilingual but also multicultural. A customer in Japan has a different mindset than one in Germany, Saudi-Arabia or India. We have integrated the cultural aspect in our sales strategy to create and maintain long-lasting partnerships with our customers on all continents. We have a people

centered philosophy: In order to be successful you need motivated staff and satisfied customers." Despite its strong people focus, Heiber + Schröder is suffering from the growing skills shortage in the mechanical engineering industry. "It is getting more and more difficult to find qualified personnel," states Mr. Cuata-Mata. "As a medium-sized family business though, we have very flat hierarchies and encourage quick decisions and active thinking, which makes us an attractive employer, particularly for young professionals."

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