

PAC

October 2023

magazine

supporting the pallet and case industry



Interpal, the four-yearly a gathering of the global wood packaging industry - took place in Montreal from October 3-5 2023.

Co-hosted by the National Wooden Pallet & Container Association (NWPCA) and the Canadian Wood Pallet and Container Association (CWPCA), the event attracted participants from across the world.

According to the organisers, more than 480 participants from 18 countries, including Brazil, China, Malaysia, Mexico, and the UK, attended. Delegates used the opportunity to discuss new ideas and innovations, network, and collaborate on industry best practices, business strategies, and emerging technologies. With sustainability top of mind, the conference focused on further advancing the sustainable practices and technologies that the industry is currently championing.

Attendees kickstarted the conference with pallet manufacturing facility tours at Herwood, Interco, and LCN, showcasing insights into cutting-edge practices, innovation, and process efficiency.

Interpal's educational programme focused on the industry's sustainability efforts, with sessions including: Unlocking the power of sustainability in the global supply chain; Global wood supply and markets in transition; How to reduce packaging waste and expand reuse through smart pallet design; How global directives impact your business: waste reduction & increased circularity; and panels on carbon, sustainability and the wood pallet industry, and global business, sourcing challenges and opportunities. There were presentations on the north American and European awareness campaigns, Nature's Packaging and Packaging From Nature, focusing on share global

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messaging about the environmental and other benefits of using wooden packaging and pallets, and the resources available to members of FEFPEB, NWPCA, and CWPCA.

Brent McClendon, President and CEO of NWPCA, said: "The Interpal conference's success, marked by an exceptional lineup of speakers and enthusiastic attendees, underscores that wood pallets are the linchpin of a sustainable supply chain thanks to the industry's proactive and innovative leadership."

"The critical role of wood pallets in the global supply chain is undeniable, and through events like these, we spotlight

the industry's immense contribution to solving complex environmental challenges as global shipping demands continue to grow."

John Dye, President of the Timber Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON) president was invited to the event to speak about the UK pallet and packaging industry during the global wood packaging forum board meeting.

The next Interpal conference will take place in 2027.

More information on the conference can be found at: www.palletcentral.com/fallplanttours.

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TIMCON AGM hears Northern Ireland set for pivotal post-Brexit business gateway role.

Firms in Great Britain who want to access the EU market will increasingly do so through offices based in Northern Ireland, after new rules governing the movement of goods between the two regions were introduced on September 30.

Speaking at the AGM of the Timber Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON), held in Belfast this month, Stuart Anderson, Head of Public Affairs, Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the country was making preparations to become a “gateway to Europe” as regulations arising from the Windsor Framework come into force. This includes the UK Internal Market Scheme (UKIMS), effective from September 30, which will enable companies in Great Britain to “green lane” products into Northern Ireland and bypass stringent customs checks.

“Northern Ireland is the only region of the UK that will have barrier-free access to the EU26,” said Anderson. “We can provide that gateway to both the EU and UK markets, and we are working closely with the UK government on the ways and means to do best this.”

Initiatives underway to stimulate investment in the country include addressing a skills gap, corporation tax incentives and promoting NI as a hub for sustainability and technology-focused businesses. With 68 per cent of firms in Northern Ireland only trading within the country itself, and trade with the Republic of Ireland – at £5.2 billion – currently twice that of trade with the rest of the EU, there is huge potential for growth, he said.

TIMCON’s meeting also heard an update on post-Brexit plant health requirements affecting the pallet and packaging industry by Aoife Smith from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). As facilitators of the movement of most manufactured goods, the timber packaging and pallet industry will benefit from any boost in trade between the two regions. However, the Windsor Framework in its current form does not give wooden pallets and packaging



Stuart Anderson, Head of Public Affairs, Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry

exemption from the requirement to be heat treated for moving products between the UK and EU, which was introduced as the result of Brexit. TIMCON is continuing dialogue with the UK and Northern Ireland governments on the issue.

In a virtual address to the meeting, TIMCON President John Dye gave an update on a “challenging 12 months”, and the organisation’s work in areas including meetings of the Advisory Committee on Packaging on the introduction of UK’s EPR regulations - which he said has been delayed by at least 12 months. David Daw of environmental compliance consultant Valpak gave the meeting insight into latest developments on EPR as well as the EU packaging waste regulations.

Dye said because of the unique sustainability status of wood, TIMCON would continue to lobby for recycling targets to remain low until a reuse scheme proposed by the government is finalised.

“When the proposed reuse incentive scheme is introduced, then organisations such as TIMCON will be more supportive of higher targets,” he said. “If accepted, this scheme will help meet two important goals: firstly, to increase the number of times wooden packaging and pallets are reused and prevent premature recycling; and secondly, to increase the use of wooden transportation tools globally, creating more demand for tree planting, helping the government move the country further towards its goals of a more sustainable, circular economy.”

The AGM also heard an update on the challenges and opportunities in Northern Ireland’s forestry industry from John Joe O’Boyle, CEO of Forest Agency; and a presentation of the GDPR obligations for pallet and packaging businesses.

TIMCON’s membership increased once again during the past year.

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Hargassner Magno-SR 995 kW boiler installed at Nicklin Transit Packaging in Wednesbury for wood treatment kilns, space heating and hot water (left).

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Self-driving pallet trucks make debut at Colruyt

Colruyt Group has introduced two self-driving pallet trucks at its Dassenveld distribution centre in Halle.

The Belgian retailer teamed up with STILL, a provider of customised intralogistics solutions, to develop the new trucks, which it says will complement and facilitate the work of the employees at the facility. The companies commenced the project two years ago with logistics employees at Colruyt providing extensive input during various testing phases.

Koen De Vos, Director of Supply Chain at Colruyt Lowest Prices, said: "The SDVs (self-driving vehicles) help us move pallets within the distribution centre in Dassenveld, Halle. This allows employees to be deployed in more complex tasks or processes that require specific knowledge and skills."

The new self-driving vehicles recognise and process both euro and block pallets. They are designed to move pallets from the reception area to the correct location in the distribution centre, after which the orders for the stores can be picked up by the order pickers.

Jasper van Gool, programme manager at STILL Belgium said: "The main advantage with these devices

is that navigation does not require modifications to the existing structure such as reflectors, and the time to get a working truck deployed is much shorter. That has been reduced from weeks to a few days, just because they adapt so easily to new situations."

The vehicles are equipped with Lithium Titan Oxide batteries for optimised efficiency, robustness, and faster, less frequent charging requirements.

The trucks identify their environment and the objects within using LIDAR (Laser Imaging Detection and Ranging) and SLAM (Simultaneous Localisation and Mapping) technology.

Kim Vancauwenberghe of Colruyt Group Smart Technics said the company entered into the partnership when it couldn't find a suitable truck on the market which met the business's requirements.

"That's why we took on this challenge ourselves and worked out an initial solution with the help of The Flemish Agency for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO)", she said.



Cekamon and Alliance join forces

Custom automation and pallet recycling automation business Alliance Automation and CekamonSaws (part of De With group) have announced they have formed a partnership to serve the EU and US markets.

With a combined 60 years of experience, a release from the two companies said: "Together, we are poised to advance the wood industry through essential automation and technological advancements.

"Our goal is to decrease labour expenses, increase recycling capabilities, and reduce the environmental impacts of waste products. Two examples of solutions are: the Automatic Dismantling Robot and the Multi Pallet Sorting Line. We eagerly anticipate the opportunities for collaboration and future joint ventures."



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TIMCON's AGM, which was hosted in Belfast during September, saw speakers and discussions tackle many of the topics we have been involved in during the past year.

Although most agree we've had a particularly challenging 12 months

- with the more realistic margins that pallet and packaging had achieved disappearing as pressure returned to the market - as we have continued to progress in many areas.

The Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) has been put back by at least 12 months - and it may be longer. Defra will be issuing the new recycling targets, imminently.

In Advisory Committee Packaging (ACP) meetings and recent discussions with Defra, I have highlighted the multiple challenges we face, which are having a huge impact on the house building and construction sectors, which take around 50 per cent of new pallets we manufacture.

Despite lobbying by organisations including Wood Panel Industries Federation (WPIF) and the Wood Recyclers Association (WRA) for higher targets, TIMCON, have continued to advise both Defra and the ACP that until the reuse incentive scheme is in place, we cannot support any increased recycling percentage target as this will increase the probability of even more reusable packaging and pallets being chipped before they have reached their end of service lifecycle.

Once the reuse incentive is in place and is being policed then TIMCON and other "wood product" associations such as the National Association of Pallet Distributors (NAPD) will fully support the WRA and WPIF as recycling is the next step in a circular economy.

A proposal for such a reuse scheme has been submitted to Defra and the ACP chair and TIMCON will share feedback when we have it. If accepted the scheme will benefit the environment in several ways: it will help reduce the volume of wooden packaging and pallets being chipped or, worse, burnt for energy before they have reached their end-of-service lifecycles, and to increase the number of times

wooden packaging is reused before it is recycled, ensuring that the absorbed CO² is kept locked up for as long a time as possible.

Ultimately, it will also increase the use of wooden transport tools, including pallets, cases, crates, and cable reels, not only in the UK supply chains but internationally. This in turn will increase demand for tree planting to ensure continuous supplies of fibre for recycling and, ultimately, energy too.

Achieving these goals will be a cornerstone for the country's circular economy and reaching the UK's new zero target commitment to a 100 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 compared with 1990 levels. There will also be rewards for businesses across the supply chain, including manufacturers, poolers, traders of reconditioned pallets, and end users.

The work we are doing here is being monitored by our colleagues in European and global trade associations and we are keeping them updated on developments at meetings such as Interpal 2023 in Montreal, which I attended, along with almost 500 more representatives of the international pallet and packaging business.

Meanwhile, independent consultants are once again working on the annual wooden packaging industry report, which is jointly commissioned by TIMCON and the Forestry Commission. As always - and increasingly importantly - the results they release in early 2024 will illustrate the key market trends.

TIMCON is also involved in work on the EU PPWR (Packaging & Packaging Waste Regulation) through our membership of the European Federation of Wooden Pallet & Packaging Manufacturers (FEFPEB). This is important, not least because Northern Ireland will be working to the PPWR rather than UK regulations. TIMCON's agm, which was hosted in Belfast during September, saw speakers and discussions tackle many of the topics we have been involved in during the past year.

TIMCON's vital and ongoing work on behalf of the wooden pallet and packaging sector is one of the reasons that our membership has increased once again this year. And, with the expectation of another challenging period ahead of us, we have plenty more to do in the next 12 months, too.

John Dye President
Timber Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON)

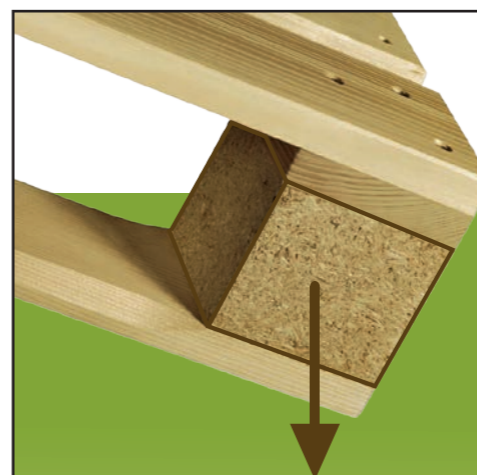


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Daltons Wadkin on revolutionising crosscutting with Salvador



Traditional crosscutting is one of the most dangerous operations in any workshop. As the industry skills shortage deepens, employers are looking for ways to keep pace with production while reduce skilled labour and maintaining a safe working environment. The solution; Salvador automatic crosscut saws from Daltons Wadkin.

A Salvador not only delivers safety, but boosts productivity, reduces waste, reduces labour costs and ultimately saves money. In addition, a cutting accuracy of +/- 0.1 mm speeds up product assembly further down the production line with no time-consuming reprocessing required.

For high-volume production there are three Salvador models available. For 90° cutting the Salvador SuperPush 200 and 250 models feature programmable cutting lists with optimising and defecting facility as standard. The heavy-duty pusher

runs up to 120 m/min and will process pieces up to 110 kg. The cutting time can be regulated between 0.1 to 2 seconds depending on the material with an 'intelligent' pressure beam adjusting to single piece and pack cutting.

Varying lengths of timber are loaded onto the static or optional chain infeed table before the machine scans and measure each piece, individually optimising the lengths to be cut to ensure maximum yield.

A range of out feed options are available for the SuperPush models including waste trap door, tilt-and-return collection plane, automatic outfeed length selectors and label or inkjet printing.

For angle cutting the Salvador SuperAngle 600 crosscut will optimise and defect angled cutting lists up to +/- 70° with a precision of +/- 0.1°. The automatic



setting of each saw angle cuts takes no more than 1 second, positioning from 0 to 70°. As with the SuperPush models the SuperAngle is available with chain infeed loading and automatic outfeed options depending on customer production requirements.



All Salvador automatic crosscut saws are equipped as standard with full PC control running powerful but intuitive cutting list and control software. The machine can run in standard cut to length mode, optimising mode, or defecting mode. Cutting lists can be programmed directly at the machine or remotely from an office-based PC with files uploaded

via a network connection or USB drive.

Daltons Wadkin are the longest established woodworking machinery suppliers in the UK and have been supplying the latest crosscutting technology for generations. Established in 1901, the company ethos is to help customers 'machine smarter', by providing the latest advances in machinery, training and support. Their growing team of regionally based service engineers and rapid response help desk ensure operators are affected by minimal downtime.

Alex Dalton, fourth generation family member and company director, says: 'As sole distributors for Salvador crosscut saws in the UK and Ireland, we have established ourselves as crosscutting experts with extensive experience with industries manufacturing a range of products including joinery, garden equipment, housing, doors, windows, parquet flooring, joists, pallets and cases.'

For more information on Salvador crosscut saws or to arrange a working demonstration call **0115 986 5201**, email info@daltonswadkin.com or visit www.daltonswadkin.com

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CHEP brand owner releases sustainability review

CHEP owner Brambles says it is on track to meet its sustainability targets for 2025. The company made the statement in its latest Sustainability Review: Pathway to Regeneration Supply, which reports on material environmental, social and governance issues and achievements across its global operations.

The report details progress it has made towards its 'ambitious regenerative vision' and says the company is demonstrating 'global leadership position in sustainability and the power of collaboration in a circular economy to building sustainable and resilient supply chains of the future.'

It highlights environment-focused achievements including:

- **Enabling the sustainable growth** of an additional 3.85 million trees by implementing sustainable practices in timber plantations, as part of our forest-positive targets
- **Enhancing the circularity of its network** by saving approximately 10 million pallets through targeted recovery and remanufacturing initiatives, preserving the value of its manufactured capital while conserving natural capital through reduced demand for raw materials
- **Advancing waste-positive ambition** by launching a new platform made from 100 per cent post-consumer plastic and a total of 13 next generation platforms containing recycled content
- **Delivering lasting social and community value** by connecting livelihoods with reforestation projects. This includes a project in Tabasco, where one new forestry role was created for every 10 hectares of reforestation and one skilled forest engineer for every 500 hectares.
- **Increasing gender diversity** across all levels of the business. Women now represent 45.5 per cent of board roles, 36.3 per cent of leadership roles and 8.3 per cent of service centre roles • Achieving a 5.2 per cent reduction of (Scope 1, 2 and 3) greenhouse gas emission across the entire value chain against FY22 and 7.7 per cent from FY20 baseline, while maintaining carbon neutrality (Scopes 1 and 2) across operations and strengthening the mix of our 100 per cent renewable electricity use

Graham Chipchase, Brambles' Chief Executive Officer, said: "The major strides we've taken towards our sustainability goals speak to the unbroken focus and shared commitment across all parts of our business. For Brambles, our global leadership in sustainability is both a great source of pride and a strategic advantage as the world transitions to a low-carbon economy, ensuring we can continue to deliver value for all stakeholders."

Juan Jose Freijo, Brambles' Chief Sustainability Officer, said: "Beyond our own impact, we also recognise Brambles' central role in supply chains uniquely positions us to influence change and help bring others into the circular system. Our achievements in 2023 underscore the importance of collaboration in this mission, and it is deeply rewarding to see our call to build regenerative supply chains taken up by so many CHEP customers and suppliers in the network and partners across the industry".

The report highlighted external recognition of its achievements, including ranking first in its industry category in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index; being named third most sustainable company in the world in Corporate Knights' Global 100 list; inclusion on the Bloomberg Gender Equality Index for the first time; and attaining Global Top Employer recognition and Top Employer status in four regions and 25 countries.

New appointments

Meanwhile, Brambles' board has announced the appointment of Alice Black as its Chief Legal Officer. Carina Thuaux has been promoted from the role of Deputy Group Company Secretary to become Group Company Secretary & Corporate Counsel.

The company has also announced the retirement of Robert Gerrard as Chief Legal Officer and Group Company Secretary after 20 years, and the retirement of George El Zoghbi as a Non-Executive Director.



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Combilift's CB70E wins Italian Terminal and Logistics Award

Combilift, the manufacturer of multidirectional trucks, articulated forklifts and straddle carriers has announced its Combi-CB70E has been awarded the Italian Terminal and Logistics Award, which recognises innovation in the operational field and its commitment to operator training and safety.

The Italian Terminal and Logistics Award is a significant industry recognition, presented annually to highlight the skills of operators in port, intermodal and logistics terminals both in Italy and abroad.

The new Combi-CB70E is a further addition to Combilift's ever growing range of electric models which offers powerful performance, extensive battery life and unrivalled ergonomics. This model, in the vibrant Combi-green livery, boasts the distinction of being the shortest 7t capacity counterbalance truck on the market whilst also benefitting from multidirectional ability, enabling

the versatile space saving handling of both long and bulky loads.

Martin McVicar, CEO and Co-Founder of Combilift accepted the award at the GIS expo in Italy, alongside the company's EA Group partners. He said: "We are honoured to receive the Italian Terminal and Logistics Award for the CB70E. This recognition validates our unwavering commitment to innovation, safety, and training in the material handling industry. The CB70E is a perfect example of our dedication to providing our customers with efficient, eco-friendly, and safe solutions."

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