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**PRESS RELEASE**

**ITC is a Creative Hub for Circular Thinking Packaging Solutions**

Heilbronn, Germany, February 4, 2021 – ILLIG Maschinenbau is a leading global supplier of thermoforming, packaging and tooling systems for plastics and cardboard. With "Circular Thinking" as its guiding principle, the company develops sustainable solutions for packaging manufacturers. The ILLIG Technology Center (ITC) team works with customers to develop, test and evaluate products to market launch and through to production on ILLIG systems. The ITC packaging laboratory is the link between application, tool and machine development.

ILLIG bundles Pactivity® around packaging development in the ITC at the company headquarters in Heilbronn where product development partners work closely with ILLIG engineers and designers. Product ideas quickly take shape with 3D printing. In the laboratory, material properties of cardboard, paper and plastic are analyzed using optical scanners, microscopes, polariscopes, microtomes and tensile testing machines. Additional equipment includes a heat cabinet for determining shrinkage, and devices for checking the adhesive properties of material combinations, tightness and topload of the molded parts.

**Circular economy solutions for all**

Optimized packaging can reduce the use of non-renewable raw materials and make recycling possible in the first place. Thermoformed packaging is thin-walled, resource-saving, and can be produced economically and is very well suited to the circular economy. In addition to recyclable material, the use of alternative and new materials in thermoforming is easily accomplished. Current ILLIG systems process bio-based and biodegradable plastics as well as new material combinations into high-quality formed parts.

“Thanks to the decoration technology in thermoforming IML-T®, numerous new packaging variants can be seen in the food packaging arena. This also includes the solid carton blisters produced on ILLIG packaging systems," explains Sven Engelmann, Head of ITC and Packaging Development.

Pactivity® also includes designing optimum production systems for different package types. In this development process, tooling systems are becoming increasingly important. ILLIG production systems are known for industry-leading overall equipment effectiveness (OEE) and have many options for process monitoring and control. Numerous parameters of the tooling systems additionally increase the output of the entire system. The many innovative solutions created in the ITC hub set standards in the packaging industry, as demonstrated by the latest I-PACK® development with IML-T®.

**I-PACK® – 50% less plastic**

Consumers, retailers and packaging manufacturers are demanding sustainable and easily recyclable packaging solutions that meet all hygiene, product protection, logistics and convenience requirements. With I-PACK® (ILLIG intelligent packaging), ILLIG offers easily separable plastic-cardboard combinations with reduced plastic use. I-PACK® trays, cups and lids are produced on established IML-T® production systems. ILLIG implemented the technical challenge of designing a recyclable tray with mono-PP inlay with over 50% plastic reduction and also PET inlay for food products. In a matter of weeks, the specialists were able to develop and evaluate the application, design the tooling, and install the IML-T® production system at the customer's site.

**Our knowledge for your benefit**

Complexity, quality and cost-effectiveness of packaging applications are constantly increasing. Changing preferences mean that packaging manufacturers must quickly adapt to material selection and sustainability requirements. ILLIG knows, understands and meets these requirements like no other. Decades of experience combined with a wide range of industry-specific know-how are the basis for innovative machine, tool and packaging systems from a single source. These stand for individual solutions with which packaging manufacturers can safely and flexibly master current and future challenges such as recycling, upcycling, re-use, monomaterials and reduction of valuable materials in packaging.

**About ILLIG GROUP**

ILLIG is a leading global supplier of thermoforming systems and tool systems for thermoplastics and cardboard. The company's product and services portfolio includes the development, design, manufacture, installation and commissioning of complex production lines and components. With the unique 360° packaging development, Pactivity®, and the high-performance packaging systems, ILLIG supplies its customers with resource-friendly and sustainable solutions, and supports packaging manufacturers in design for recycling. With its own subsidiaries and sales agencies in over 80 countries, ILLIG is locally present in all markets around the globe. For 75 years, the family business has been serving its customers across the globe as a reliable partner for the cost-effective manufacturing of complex precision parts with innovative technology of unsurpassed quality and comprehensive global service.

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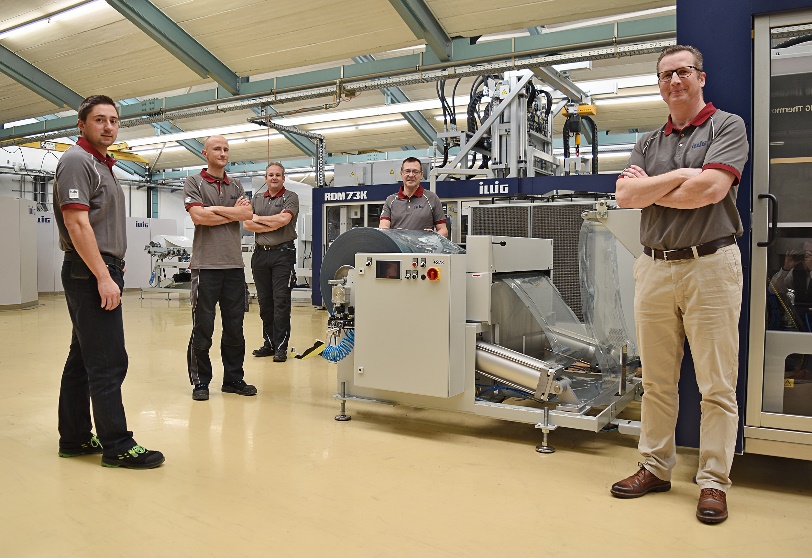


Image1: Sven Engelmann (right) with his ITC team in Heilbronn makes applications a success.



Image2: Sustainable I-PACK® applications produced on ILLIG IML-T® systems.