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Shemesh Rewarded for COVID Response with Period of Unprecedented Growth



by **Cristina Diaconu** — August 3, 2020 in [Healthcare](#)



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Over the last 30 years, Shemesh Automation has steadily built a reputation in the packaging machinery space for providing expertly-engineered solutions across a wide range of vertical markets.

The COVID-19 outbreak though, has changed the business landscape completely. With shops, restaurants bars and gyms closed, demand for many products has simply dried up. This, coupled with the additional challenges in retaining a healthy and available workforce during a global lockdown has led to some of the world's most successful businesses facing a struggle to survive.

While some sectors have experienced a dramatic fall in demand, others such as the disinfecting wet wipes and sanitizer markets, have faced pressures of a different kind. The global need for such products has placed manufacturers under extreme pressure to reduce lead times and upscale capacity almost overnight. Those that adapted quickly have been able to survive, and even thrive in this most testing of environments.

Shemesh Automation's CEO Shai Shemesh commented: "The onset of the outbreak was a difficult time to navigate. We had committed to four global tradeshow this year across the cosmetics, nonwovens and general packaging sectors with a big investment in each – all were cancelled almost overnight. However, we had no time to lick our wounds because it soon became apparent that customers, particularly manufacturers of disinfecting wipes and hand sanitizers, were depending on us to meet an unprecedented global demand for their products."

"Right away, we understood our responsibility and in an unprecedented manner gained the permit to operate as a vital plant business and swiftly doubled or even tripped the size of some critical departments in the manufacturing plant in Israel, such as assembly and machining. We also drastically increased the size of our engineering team and deployed, despite extreme difficulties to motorize people, critical local service and sales teams to assist existing clients in the need to ramp up production in major territories such as the US, France and, of course, here in the UK."

Shemesh's Marketing and Financial HQ has been based in London for over 7 years now, with Mr Shemesh himself also basing himself in the capital. However, with UK manufacturers also needing to respond to the sudden uptick in COVID-driven demand, the decision was taken to expand the team yet further. Industry veteran Tony Bryant joined as Sales Director bringing with him over 27 years' experience in capital machinery sales. Tony joined Shemesh from another packaging giant, Ilapak, having previously headed up the EMEA region for Peco-InspX and the UK territory for Loma Systems.



"Our substantial growth in the UK region over recent years has meant that we were fortunate enough to be able to choose from a wealth of top-tier industry talent virtually the second this role became available". Mr. Shemesh explained. "Since Tony's very recent arrival we have sold a complete disinfecting wipes packaging line to a major UK manufacturer and the team here in the UK continues to do a fantastic job on the ground looking after the many clients we already have. **Indeed, I can proudly share that that between February of this year and the mid of 2021 Shemesh Automation's wet wipes division will have been proudly contributing to the overall production of well over 4,000(!) disinfecting wipes in either canisters, buckets or stand-up pouches produced on our machines every single minute around the globe.**"

Shemesh has undoubtedly stepped up to the plate during the COVID outbreak and ensured manufacturers the world over have been able to upscale their wipes and sanitizer operations. Their tried and trusted range of wet wipes packaging machinery includes complete turnkey lines running at up to 200ppm for the loading, filling, sealing, capping and labelling of round wipes in canisters.

With fitness venues and restaurants in particular having to ramp up their hygiene efforts just to stay open, larger industrial wipes in buckets have also seen an urgent increase in demand. **Shemesh's complete turnkey buckets packaging line includes an automatic bucket denester, the FGW-J liquid filling machine** (with special no-drip, no overflow spillage shower nozzles), the **SEALPRO-J conduction sealing machine** (with an automatic lids denester and fastener) and the **CAROLUS automatic buckets labeller** (with handle lifting and label orientation). Shemesh has already sold a complete wipes buckets packaging line to major UK manufacturer TechTex.

Also popular is Shemesh's **range of monoblock machines** including the **XPANDER** complete canister packer and the **CITADEL** monoblock for round wipes in flexible packs. **These monoblocks are unique in the industry as they encompass all aspects of downstream packaging including feeding, filling, capping, double-capping weighing, labeling QC and discharging.** With an ultra-small footprint, Shemesh's range of monoblocks are designed for operational flexibility and ultra-low, tools free less than 40 minutes format parts changeover for the entire line.

Whilst the XPANDER and CITADEL monoblocks have been making waves in the nonwovens sector for some time now, Shemesh's **SAMBAX monoblock packer for small and extra small bottles and vials** has proven to be a big hit among hand sanitizer manufacturers.

The SAMBAX series has a particularly wide variety of applications thanks to the engineering flexibility at the core of Shemesh's DNA. For example, the SAMBAX-Z, built to cater for extra small bottles and vials has also proved to be a valuable asset within the cosmetics sector given its ability to completely package mascara including liquid filling, brush insertion and over capping.

Eli Shemesh, the President of Shemesh Automation, believes it is a mixture of the engineering expertise and experience of his team, coupled with a 'customer first' ethos that has enabled Shemesh to thrive during a period of huge industry uncertainty: "After 40 years in the business, I can confidently say we have some of the best engineering minds at our disposal – with few of them with us since the start, such is the family ethos at Shemesh. However, I must say that while know-how and experience is one thing, it has also taken incredible levels of dedication from the team to allow us to scale up our operations so quickly and meet the demands of every customer we've engaged with. I'm extremely grateful to the Shemesh team for the growth that we are experiencing and I hear from satisfied customers every day who I know are just as thankful".

Building on his company's phenomenal success, particularly in the nonwovens sector over the past year, Mr. Shai Shemesh has set his sights on continuing the company's growth within other vertical markets.

"We are a family run and operated business, which was started by my father over 30 years ago. During this period, we have grown exponentially and boast a full range of filling, sealing, capping and labelling machinery that really is second to none, both in terms of empirical performance and innovation. Whilst our nonwovens arm, Shemesh Automation Wet Wipes has grown beyond all expectations this past year, we are also really pleased with our growth in our core Food & Beverage, Cosmetics & Pharmaceuticals markets. In fact, one of our most successful projects this year has been a 100ppm condiments filling, capping and labelling line we've installed at the plant of a major sauce manufacturer in the UK."

Never resting on its laurels, Shemesh has continued to innovate and enhance its machinery offering. This year alone has seen the launch of several new machines including the EXANE automatic air blast cleaner, and the MULTI-1. Applicable to the Food & Beverage, Beauty & Cosmetics, Pharma & Chemical industries, MULTI-1 is a fully automatic Horizontal FFS, stacker, packer and product auto feeder.

Encased in a single frame with a footprint that is smaller than a standard sofa at just under 2.5m x 1.5m, MULTI-1 can perform the functions of several machines which significantly reduces the need for large floor space, reduces overhead costs, and maximizes product output.

The MULTI-1 has been specifically designed for the creation of flat sachets. Whether it is sticks, sauces, powders, gels, liquids, pastes, creams or any viscous products, the MULTI-1 is designed to fill a wide range of flat sachets and boxes which are a perfect format for samples or product promotions.

With an expanded team, a significantly larger production facility and a suite of new and upgraded machinery, Shemesh is heading into the rest of 2020 with a refreshingly optimistic outlook;

"Undoubtedly, 2020 has been a challenging year for everyone, not just in the manufacturing sector, but across the entire business landscape. Having seen the fantastic response of our existing customers to our newly expanded team and enhanced machinery offering though, I'm convinced we're only scratching the surface of what Shemesh can do in the general packaging market. I'm extremely proud of how we have stepped up and delivered when our customers have needed us most and can say with confidence that there is plenty more to come from Shemesh" Mr. Shemesh commented.

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