

PRESS RELEASE

Lorenz and Focke Achieve a Technological Quantum Leap in Packaging Line Design

New high-tech packaging line “Phoenix Universe” combines modular design, autonomous transport systems, and artificial intelligence – enabling greater flexibility, halving space requirements, and ensuring reliable product supply in a dynamic market environment



Caption: Focke and Lorenz: Joint Project “Phoenix Universe” – Compact Modules for Complete Secondary Packaging and Palletizing ©Lorenz Snack-World

Neu-Isenburg, May 7, 2025 – Snack manufacturer **Lorenz Snack-World** and packaging machinery specialist **FOCKE & CO** have jointly reached a milestone in packaging technology: In an exclusive partnership, the two companies have developed a **new generation of automated packaging lines**. The new line system “Phoenix Universe” reduces the required floor space in existing production facilities by up to 50 percent, allowing for capacity adjustments without the need for structural expansion. The goal of the joint development

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was to create a future-proof, sustainable solution that increases flexibility in terms of production volume and product variety within existing plant layouts.

As part of the exclusive partnership, Lorenz has gained access to one of the industry's most forward-looking packaging solutions.

"With this new system, we are securing our ability to respond quickly and flexibly to market changes and portfolio developments – both in terms of depth and breadth of our product range. We are proud to be the first FMCG manufacturer granted exclusive use of this technology. It provides the flexibility necessary to ensure a reliable supply of goods in the dynamic food sector," explains Dr. Michael Holtschulze, Director of Production International at Lorenz Snack-World.

The joint development also reflects Focke's strategic realignment. Jan-Eric Kruse, Managing Director of Focke Packaging Solutions GmbH, states: *"With Focke's strategic shift toward new focus industries such as food and snacks, the partnership with Lorenz came at exactly the right time. Our shared vision for a new packaging solution in the European snack market was a perfect fit and enables us to transfer our market leadership from other consumer goods sectors to innovative solutions for the food industry."*

Oliver Kuhls, Head of Global Engineering at Lorenz, adds: *"The realization of this vision required close, trust-based collaboration between both partners. The intensive exchange and team spirit were key to the rapid and successful execution of the project."*

Modular. Automated. Sustainable.

At the heart of the project is the highly automated line "Phoenix Universe" that largely replaces traditional conveyor systems. **Intelligent, driverless transport systems** (AGVs) take over material handling, which was previously only partially automated. Several packaging steps are consolidated into compact, modular functional units, which can be **flexibly and gradually** integrated into existing lines with a total system length of just 12 meters. Lorenz plans to successively implement the new modules across its production sites over the coming years.

The project showcases both companies' innovative strength in industrial and process design and goes far beyond previous approaches. While Lorenz had primarily automated individual production steps in the past, the collaboration with Focke now enables the comprehensive automation of entire manufacturing processes and adjacent tasks. This new technology allows for

flexible investment in capacity adjustments without the need for new construction, offering ecological benefits as well – from saving tons of conveyor equipment and reducing CO₂ emissions to avoiding land use and construction waste.

Flexibility, Autonomy, and Future Readiness

Lorenz and Focke pursued a clear vision: packaging technology should not only be more flexible and easier to use, but also smarter. The new line is based on:

- Standardized interfaces for full MES system integration
- Use of AI for real-time production planning
- Automated communication between production, logistics, and quality control

A central element is the reconfiguration of machines into so-called "strings", which simplifies the overall machine layout and significantly reduces dependency on individual equipment manufacturers and upstream processes. Thanks to the modular design, machines can be easily expanded or replaced – defective modules can be exchanged in under 8 hours without shutting down the entire line.

Smart Technology Meets Sustainable Innovation

The integration of artificial intelligence significantly enhances both product quality and production reliability. Errors are detected in real time, operators are immediately notified, and corrective actions are automatically suggested. Recurring faults are analyzed and sustainably prevented. This supports continuous quality assurance while minimizing errors, unnecessary waste, and rework.

Sustainability is deeply embedded in the system's concept. Eliminating extensive conveyor technology saves tons of steel and reduces CO₂ emissions through lower construction needs and energy consumption. Existing facilities can be utilized for longer periods, and reduced error rates help to avoid waste – altogether contributing to a more resource-efficient and future-proof operation.

About Lorenz:

Lorenz Snack-World is an independent family-owned business and one of the leading snack food companies in Europe, employing around 3,000 people. Its product range includes potato chips, peanut flips, pretzels, crackers, and nuts. Popular brands such as Crunchips, ErdnußLocken, Saltletts, NicNac's, and Naturals are well-loved across the continent, alongside innovations like Saltletts PausenCracker. As a family business, Lorenz has always pursued long-term thinking and responsible action – committed to high product quality, sustainable business practices, and forward-looking development.

About FOCKE & CO:

FOCKE & CO, headquartered in Verden (Aller), is one of the world's leading manufacturers of packaging machines. Founded in 1955, the family-owned company provides customized solutions for the tobacco, hygiene, and food industries. With over 21,000 machines installed in more than 70 countries, FOCKE is a recognized innovation leader in mechanical engineering.