

Brussels, 3 November – FEFCO scores in Barcelona with best Technical Seminar ever!



A new record of 958 representatives of the Corrugated Board Industry gathered in Barcelona on October 28-30 with their business partners for FEFCO's Technical Seminar to showcase opportunities offered by the latest smart technologies.

The event recorded a new high interest in the corrugated sector (+ 23% compared to 2013) and amongst the exhibitors with 110 stands and 76 exhibitors on hand.

FEFCO - the European Federation of Corrugated Board Manufacturers – hosted the seminar to examine how the so-called “industry 4.0” will change the corrugated packaging sector. Participants looked at how technologies like the cloud, big data, the internet of things, and intelligent automation will raise industry quality, reduce waste, and speed up production. Delegates were able to follow, connect and interact during the event through a special FEFCO mobile app.

FEFCO President Roberto Villaquiran urged the corrugated industry and its partners to think about how new technologies could help create better, more sustainable products, at a lower cost. *“Our production and processes will aim at highest quality as we serve our customers and respond to their demand for zero defects. We and our suppliers need to focus on a safe environment for our employees, for the benefit of all. We must believe in our strengths if we are to win the battle,”* he said. *“However, we cannot manage our future without suppliers that understand and support a need for change. Let’s use Corrugated 4.0 to step up our technology base so that we can meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.”*

Many companies have already demonstrated ingenious, new ways of embracing the 4.0 technologies to improve their production processes. The audience heard from selected producers on how they are meeting the new challenges, and from suppliers on what they expect from the industry.

The programme was put together by FEFCO Production Committee chaired by Marc Van Damme: entitled **“Corrugated 4.0: Smart Factories for Flexibility and Efficiency”**. It looked at a variety of issues, such as:

- how to organize smart factories in a flexible and efficient way
- what customers want from the corrugated industry
- how real-time data can improve energy efficiency in Industry 4.0
- how business value can be found in supply chain data

From within the industry, there were discussions on how to ensure smoother surfaces to improve printing, and how to build lighter, stronger and more environmentally-friendly boxes.

One of the most engaging debates concerned digital printing, and what it means for the industry. There were many examples of how it has already changed markets, how it will add

value and – eventually – volume, and whether its adaptability meant it was more than what one speaker called “*just another way of putting the cheese on the pizza.*”

Other sessions looked at how technology could help improve safety, reduce waste, improve quality control, and help manage one of the most persistent challenges for producers, moisture.

New technologies represent a challenge for the corrugated board industry, which has been around for over 130 years.

The Barcelona seminar showed how intelligent machines and processes, new sensors and detection systems, ultra-fine digital printing, and precision engineering can help re-shape the industry to become more flexible, innovative, sustainable, cost-efficient and safe.

For other information, or to receive event’s pictures, please contact Nathalie Schneegans: nschneegans@fefco.org

Note to the editors

FEFCO (European Federation of Corrugated Board Manufacturers) was established in 1952 and represents the interests of the European Corrugated Board Manufacturers. Headquartered in Brussels, FEFCO has 24 active members, all European national corrugated packaging organisations. The role of the Federation is to investigate economic, financial, technical and marketing issues of interest to the corrugated packaging Industry, to analyse all factors which may influence the industry, and to promote and develop its image.