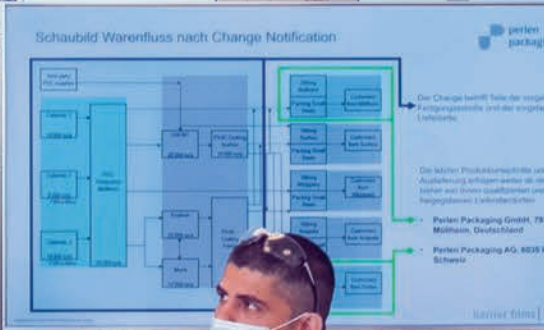




A grid of video feeds from a virtual meeting. The top row shows three participants, and the bottom row shows two. The 'perlen packaging' logo is visible on several feeds.





New supply chain developed

The coronavirus pandemic prompted a steep increase in the demand for medicinal items. An additional production line was installed in China in record time to ensure that sufficient volumes of films could be provided for the blister packs required.

Freely available medicines such as painkillers, immunity boosters and dietary supplements were in great demand in 2020 during the coronavirus crisis months. Shortages in medicines were even seen in some countries in spring, and rationing had to be occasionally adopted for pharmacy sales. Most of the medicinal items concerned are packaged in blister packs with low- or medium-barrier films.

It became clear as early as February 2020 that the production capacities for medium-barrier duplex films might become stretched at Perlen Packaging's European manufacturing sites. Sure enough, incoming order volumes for these products doubled in the two subsequent months. So the specialists of the Packaging Division were swift to embark on preparations with their teams in Perlen, Müllheim and Suzhou to establish a new China-sourced supply chain for these product lines.

The mono films required were duly ordered from Asia-based suppliers, the Chinese production team planned the additional production line and production was ramped up at the Suzhou plant from May onwards. In addition to transportation by sea, this work also entailed creating new rail transport options to Europe via the Silk Road route.

"In record time, we were able to establish a second duplex film supply line for our customers worldwide and thereby enhance both our delivery reliability and our own flexibility," concludes Lars Kirchhoff, Perlen Packaging's Chief Sales Officer. "And with physical travel simply out of the question, this was all achieved through regular videoconferences among our various teams."

Photo (from left): Customer Service Officer Sara Ringli, Regional Sales Director Tomasz Falkowski, Head of Slitting & Packaging Jeton Shabani and Regional Sales Director Karl Wind of Perlen Packaging in Perlen conduct a videoconference with Perlen Packaging colleagues in Switzerland and China.