Technical Report

Berlin, March 13, 2018

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Smart alternatives for the chemical industry

Plastic pallets from Cabka-IPS can effectively replace types CP1 through CP9 chemical pallets in many cases. Compared to traditional wooden load carriers, they offer countless functional and economic advantages: Users benefit from low weight, better hygiene, longer durability, trouble-free material flow, and more.

Continuing globalization on the supplier and customer level, and tough international competition, are bringing enormous challenges to companies in the chemical industry. More and more, processes have to be trimmed, production costs lowered – all while adhering to the strictest demands for quality, safety, hygiene and environmental protection. Moreover, demand is growing for customer-specific products and solutions, which makes the industry's value creation chains increasingly complex.

Special challenges for logistics

This especially affects production logistics. In the chemical industry, this involves a number of characteristics that fundamentally differ from those of other industries – from individual chemical procedures, to processing of bulk goods with various properties, to the hazards of the materials used. The enormous range of products and processes means that in transport and storage, a variety of systems and solutions also come into use. Depending on their properties, goods are stored in tanks, bags, large containers, "octabins", barrels or boxes. The right packaging not only protects the contents from external influences, but also ensures that aggressive or hazardous materials do not enter the environment.

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The containers are largely transported on wooden pallets that have been specially developed for the industry – they are called chemical pallets. These originally arose through a collaboration between Germany's VCI (Verband der Chemischen Industrie) and the APME (Association of Plastic Manufacturers in Europe). The goal was to reduce a large variety of pallets to a standardized selection. In a guideline, the associations defined nine types of chemical pallets with exact specifications for appearance and workmanship. They bear the designations CP1 to CP9 and are suitable for various goods. Chemical pallets are organized into an open pool, without central quality surveillance, and registered suppliers see to the production and repair. This results in higher quality standards and a better cost-benefit relationship than with previous wooden pallets.

Dirt, damage and weight are disadvantages of wooden pallets

Despite their positive features, wooden pallets don't just offer advantages: Their heavy weight makes handling more difficult and is also reflected in transport costs. Wood is vulnerable to humidity and contamination, which can also affect the cleanliness of items stored on it. Broken or splintered pallets can injure employees and damage packages, so they must often be repaired. Furthermore, irregularities cause mild disturbances in automated storage and transport systems, which are used more and more in the chemical industry. Another issue is that when the economy is good, wooden pallets often cannot be delivered in adequate numbers, leading to delays and bottlenecks. To improve logistics processes, even here users are increasingly focusing on alternative solutions.

Plastic pallets are becoming ever more popular. Compared to wood, they are superior in many ways: They hold their shape extremely well and last a long time. Shrinkage and breakage are not an issue. Precise dimensions and shapes ensure high process reliability and allow precise adaptation to warehouse and conveyor technology. Their

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low weight takes a load off employees during manual handling and saves money, fuel and CO_2 during transport. Their robust, vermin-free surfaces are easy to clean, achieving the highest hygienic standards. Nestable pallets additionally take up less storage space and reduce warehousing cost. Users benefit from countless functional and economic advantages.

One of the most renowned plastic pallet providers is Cabka-IPS. Based in Berlin, the company offers a comprehensive portfolio of solutions for almost any application. Even for the chemical industry, Cabka-IPS has a wide range of products of various designs, sizes and specifications as alternatives to almost all types of CP1 to CP9 chemical pallets.

Plastic pallets give wings to your product transport

Cabka-IPS has developed the Eco P3 especially for the industry. At 1,300 x 1,100 x 150 millimeters, it has the same dimensions as the CP7 wooden pallet, and is especially suitable for transporting bulk materials in bags. The deck extends beyond the skids and feet of the pallet, providing an extra large bearing surface, so that even smaller conveyor belts can move large quantities. Additionally, these "wings" allow more stable packing of the product with stretch film and offer forklift trucks the option of lifting the pallet at additional points. The Eco P3's six skids are designed especially wide. During block stacking, this prevents bagging on the sacks stored below and ensures trouble-free transport on roller and chain conveyors. At only 12 kilograms, the load carrier is considerably lighter than the wooden CP7 while offering an attractive price-performance ratio. At the same time, it is free of splinters and sharp edges, thereby protecting the stacked bags against abrasion and damage.

The Nest family of pallet products is a smart solution for many transport tasks. Its big advantage: When empty, the stacked pallets' feet grip into each other, which reduces

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volume by up to 75 percent. This considerably reduces storage and transport cost. Their light design makes handling easier with no loss of stability. For example, at 1,200 x 1,000 x 140 millimeters, the industrial-sized Nest i5 weighs only nine kilograms, depending on design, but offers static loads between four and eight tons. Users can adapt the load carrier's weight and load optimally to their own application. As an alternative to the CP1 chemical pallet, the Nest i5 is suitable for cartons, bags and more. Other Nest pallets are available in Euro or container-optimized dimensions.

The heavyweight champion

For especially heavy goods, the Endur family of robust premium pallets is a good choice. The gas injection process used to produce them results in hollow spaces inside the load bearing system, making them very rigid and resilient in high racks. The Endur i9 can carry up to 1,500 kilograms, for example. Just like the CP6 chemical pallet, this industrial pallet is especially good for storing flexible bulk goods, or "big bags". Weighing in at 26 kilograms, it is also amazingly light and easy to handle. It has anti-skid stops on and under the deck. As with all Endur pallets, anti-skid strips are available on request, to keep the load securely in position. The rounded edges reduce the risk of damage from forklifts. The Endur series is also available in a wide range of Euro, industrial and container-optimized dimensions.

Cabka-IPS uses recycled plastics in its pallets wherever possible. This makes them an especially economical, sustainable solution. When necessary, virgin material is also used, as in applications requiring food safety. Together with the customer, experts first analyze the entire logistics chain and then deliver the product – or special solution – that best meets the individual need. This ensures that the user can fully exploit the optimization potential of their logistics – whether in the chemical industry or another sector.

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Image 1: The Eco P3 is a consistent further development of the standard CP7 wooden pallet for the chemical industry – with all the advantages of a plastic pallet.

Image 2: When empty, the stacked Nest pallets' feet grip into each other, which reduces volume up to 75 percent.

Image 3: The Endur i9 heavy-duty pallet is produced with a gas injection process. This makes them particularly resilient and bend resistant.

Images: Cabka-IPS

The press release and all pictures are available for downloading on the website cabka-ips.com

Information about Cabka-IPS:

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CABKA-IPS produces plastic pallets and boxes in Weira (Thuringia, Germany), Ypres and Herstal (Belgium), Valencia (Spain), and St. Louis, MO (USA). The company employs over 600 people in Europe and North America. Cabka-IPS is represented with its products in more than 80 countries.

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