Press release

ALPLA Werke Alwin Lehner GmbH & Co KG

**ALPLA receives international awards for revolutionary development in extrusion blow moulding**Foaming reduces material consumption with full functionality and recycling capability

*Hard, 10 March 2016 – ALPLA, the world's leading specialist in plastic packaging, has been working with partners to develop foaming technology in extrusion blow moulding (EBM) for around four years. After receiving the Smart Packaging award from the Austrian government in 2014, this sustainable procedure has now also received the internationally renowned PackTheFuture and WorldStar awards.*

The successful application of foaming technology in the production of EBM plastic bottles is the result of years of research and cooperation between ALPLA, Unilever and MuCell®. In microcellular foaming technology, a gas is injected into the middle layer of the bottle wall. This creates bubbles in the material, similar to the structure of a honeycomb. Plastic consumption and weight are reduced by up to 15 per cent.

**Resource- and cost-efficient**ALPLA has been producing shower gel bottles in Lübeck for the European market for Unilever using this procedure since 2014. According to its own figures, Unilever will save up to 275 tonnes of plastic per year across Europe for this product line. The technology will be installed in other ALPLA sites soon for customers in the body care and household products industries.

The process is a purely physical one and does not require any chemical additives. The bottles are therefore fully recyclable. ‘The thickness of the material is reduced, but the thickness of the wall remains the same. The bottles therefore have practically the same high level of functionality in the bottling plants and during transportation and handling as conventional EBM bottles,’ René Plattner, head of packaging management at ALPLA, explains. For the end user, the bottles look and function exactly the same.

**Multiple award winner**

ALPLA recently received two international awards for this technology: the PackTheFuture 2015 award in the Ecodesign category and the prestigious WorldStar award from the World Packaging Organisation in the Health & Beauty category. ‘These industry awards highlight the potential of foaming for more sustainable packaging solutions,’says ALPLA CEO Günther Lehner, pleased with the success.

In November 2014, ALPLA won the special prize from ARA (Altstoff Recycling Austria AG) as part of the Austrian ‘Smart Packaging’ state prize.

**For more information about the company:** [**www.alpla.com**](http://www.alpla.com/)

**About ALPLA:**

ALPLA is one of the leading companies in the field of packaging solutions and is renowned throughout the world for producing plastic packaging of the highest quality. Around 16,500 employees at 159 locations across 42 countries produce high-quality packaging for brands in the food, beverage, cosmetics and cleaning industries. ALPLA celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2015.

**Fact box: MuCell® foaming technology**

MuCell® microcellular foaming technology was developed at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston, Massachusetts. The company MuCell® Extrusion LLC specialises in marketing and developing this technology. For more information, see <http://www.mucellextrusion.com/>

**Image texts:**

**ALPLA\_PackTheFuture\_Verleihung.jpg**: ALPLA received the PackTheFuture award in Paris in November 2015. The award aims to promote the innovation potential and sustainability of plastic packaging in Europe.

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**ALPLA\_Foaming\_Produkt.jpg**: These bottles have been available in Europe since 2014. Unilever estimates annual potential savings in Europe of around 275 tonnes of plastic for this product line alone. The middle layer of the three-layered bottle wall is foamed. The structure is similar to that of a honeycomb.

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