

rolling AHEAD

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You've heard of one-horse towns, right? Well Kingsey Falls, Que., is a one-company town. But don't let that fool you into thinking Kingsey Falls is small-time.

For 36 years now, this rural community in Quebec's Eastern Townships has been home to **Cascades Inc.**, a world-scale company made up of six industrial groups involved in the manufacturing, converting and marketing of specialty papers and packaging materials. These groups—which include **Cascades Inc.**, **Norampac Inc.**, **Paperboard Industries International Inc.**, **Rolland Inc.**, **Perkins Papers Ltd.**, and **Boralex Inc.**—specialize respectively in the production of specialty products, containerboard, boxboard, fine papers, tissue papers and energy.

Cascades Inc. employs close to 12,000 people and operates some 100 units in Canada, the United States, France, England, Germany and Sweden. In Kingsey Falls alone, Cascades Inc. has 10 plants—some of which are what the company calls “profit units,” and others which provide services and supplies to those units as well as the rest of the corporation.

One of the profit units in Kingsey Falls is **Cascades Conversion Inc.**, a paperboard converter and manufacturer of packaging products for the pulp and paper industry. In association with **Sonoco Products Co. Ltd.**, Cascades Conversion manufactures roll headers—paperboard discs of varying sizes used to protect the ends of industrial-sized paper rolls.

“We supply all the major pulp and paper companies [with packaging materials]. You see, paper is sold in sheets or in [large] rolls—we manufacture the roll headers which cap the ends of those rolls and protect them [during shipping],” says plant engineer Martin Caya.

In fact, roll headers are all that the Cascades

Conversion plant in Kingsey Falls makes. But at a rate of roughly two million headers per week—or more than 35,000 tons per year—that is more than enough work to keep the plant running full steam.

“We are one of two companies in Canada manufacturing roll headers,” says Caya, “and we [serve] the north-eastern U.S. market, in addition to most of Canada.”

Currently, there are more than 50 employees working at the plant. All together, Cascades' 10 operations in Kingsey Falls employ roughly 800 people.

CUSTOM CUTTING

Cascades Conversion uses a custom-built rotary die-cutter to produce the headers. The die-cutter features a cutting head from Cherry Hill, N.J.-based **Ward Machinery Company**, “but the rest of the machine was custom-built by Cascades,” says Caya. In addition to the custom machine, Cascades has two other die-cutters, all of which are kept running flat out.

Sheets of paperboard—called “planks” in industry parlance—are fed into the die-cutters, which then cut a disc of the appropriate size. Once cut, the discs emerging from the die-cutters are stacked on a pallet. The pallets are moved to one of two stretchwrapping stations where they are wrapped—or in some cases, strapped—for shipping.

Caya says that the customer determines the manner in which the roll headers are shipped.

“Some want the headers strapped; some want them stretchwrapped. Some customers want us to use square pallets, and some want us to use round ones.



Cascades Conversion plant engineer Martin Caya poses with the company's Wulftec WCA-200 dual-turnstile stretchwrapper. The two turntables help keep Cascades' packaging operation moving efficiently.

“We do what the customer wants because we're a customer-oriented company.”

Currently, Cascades is using two stretchwrappers manufactured by Ayer's Cliff, Que.-based **Wulftec International**.

“We were using another stretch wrapper before the Wulftec equipment was installed, but it wasn't well-designed, so we looked for another solution.”

The first Wulftec stretchwrapper—a model WHP-200 purchased four years ago—worked so well that when Cascades decided to add another machine, Wulftec was a natural choice.

“We went with [Wulftec agent] **Les Emballages Jean Cartier inc.** to buy the second piece of equipment—a model WCA-200 dual-turnstile stretchwrapper,” Caya says, adding that Wulftec's geographic proximity to the facility made the purchasing decision that much easier to make.

“Cascades has other plants using similar equipment,” he says, “plus Wulftec is close by, so they can be here if there is a problem.”

Caya says that the new custom-built stretch wrapper's two turntables allow Cascades' to keep its packaging line moving efficiently.

“The stretchwrapper has two turntables, but only wraps one bundle at a time. It's a cost-effective approach to our packaging needs,” he says.

While the Wulftec equipment more than meets Cascades' packaging requirements, Caya acknowledges that the current layout of the plant's packaging line is less than perfect.

“We are looking to make a single packaging line that flows more [efficiently] from the die-cutters to the [shipping] doors.”

He adds: “We will also have a lift to move the pallets in-line from the die-cutter.”

But for now, a packaging line redesign will have to wait. Caya just recently returned from a trip to Europe, where Cascades is preparing to bring yet another similar converting operation on-line to serve local papermakers.

And that just might mean a cross-Atlantic trip is in the cards for some Wulftec machinery. □



Using a custom-built die-cutter, Cascades Conversion produces more than 35,000 tons of roll headers, used to protect the ends of paper rolls.

For more information on:
Wulftec stretchwrappers
Cascades Conversion

Circle 429
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