

Touch, feel and visual impact decided the overall winners in this year's Can of the Year Awards.

While the Meguiar's Gold Class car wax can that was awarded the Can of the Year prize undoubtedly looked impressive – matching lithography brilliantly with deep-draw technology – it was that it worked so well that clinched the decision of the judges.

The container opened smoothly and the neat way in which the wax application sponge clipped into the lid ensured that the craft of Bob Brashear's development team at Ball Aerosol & Specialty Packaging would be recognised.

The Delegates' Choice at The Canmaker Summit was also a close runner for the top prize, and for similar reasons. Conceived by Austrian designer Ui Kerbl, the iT iS brand of wine cocktails using an impact-extruded can made by Tubex in Germany stood out from the other entries in the beverage can category because of its smooth-looking matt finish and neat debossing.

Kerbl pitched iT iS as a high-value, style-driven product that could find its way

Team effort

Two designs jumped out of the entries to grab the honours at this year's Cans of the Year Awards, presented last month during The Canmaker Summit in Chicago. John Nutting delves into their background

into a number of applications. Its debut was as a limited launch of wine cocktails – initial volume was just 60,000 – but at an eye-watering price of around 8 euros (\$11.5).

Its impact swayed the judges because it represented an image that could be held up with pride in any social group, which is possibly why the delegates chose it at the Summit.

For Ball's Brashear, who last year developed the winning car wax can for Meguiar's, it was very much a team effort. No sooner had he received the Can of the Year trophy from Allan Sayers, publisher of

The Canmaker, he called his team in Baltimore, Maryland, to give them the news.

It was the climax to a project that started early in 2006 when Meguiar's – with more than a century's experience of selling auto finish products – wanted to relaunch its professional car wax. The specification it supplied to Ball Aerosol and Specialty Packaging called for something less complex than the can it was using but with a striking appearance.

"Meguiar's is a premium appearance care brand and our products deliver the highest quality surface results avail-



● **Decorative**
Crown Speciality Packaging designed a decorative container for Perrier-Jouët's champagne using sharp embossing for the logo and a perforated pattern for striking effect

● **Promotional**
Crown Speciality Packaging in the UK developed its hip-flask shaped container to contain a glass Ballantine's bottle for Chivas Brothers Scotland. It uses four parts with a combination of bright tinplate, pearlescent inks and 'soft touch' varnish along deep embossing giving a stitched effect

● **Food three-piece**
Impress Metal Packaging developed its KDR highly-decorated shaped tinplate container for a range of cordials launched by H J Heinz under the Karvan Cévitam brands. With graphics by Mountain Design, there are 12 different versions

● **Beverage two-piece**
Tubex in Germany produced an impact-extruded aluminium can with matt lacquers and a debossed logo for the iT iS range of premium wine cocktails being sold in bars across Europe

● **Beverage three-piece**
Daiwa Can in Japan developed its 25cl can with laminated coatings decorated with 'foaming' inks to create a special texture for the Fire Hikitate Black ready-to-drink coffee sold in vending machines

CANS OF THE YEAR 2007

able,” said Mark Steiman, Meguiar’s product manager. “Extremely high-quality appearance results are very important to us and to our end users. We strive to reflect this expectation both in our product packaging and the surface results achieved through using our products.

“Meguiar’s was looking for innovative paste wax packaging and worked closely with Ball to develop a unique packaging solution,” said Steiman. “Special features include a self-contained, reusable applicator sponge stored within the tin lid and a specially designed screw lid to prevent moisture loss.”

Brashear takes up the story: “When we were talking to the customer, which was an existing account, they were purchasing packages for professionals and consumers. The professional pack was a traditional single-friction can, but they were interested in something for the consumer line that was easier to open and enabled the sponge to be repacked.

“The old type was difficult to open because of a plastisol sealing gasket in the lid. The customer wanted something that was less complex and offered a clean and

unique shelf experience.

“The design was carried out in AutoCad so that we could make a 3D solid model for presentation purposes. We also produced can prototypes from machined aluminum and rapid prototypes of the vacuum-formed plastic insert. All the production dies were designed and manufactured in-house. We believe we can shorten development and start-up lead times by bringing the tooling development and production in-house. We build expertise and bolster ▶



● Bottles

Takeuchi Press Industries in Japan developed its 60mm 35cl D&I Slim Bottle Can with a long neck and screw top to celebrate Asahi Super Dry Beer's 20th anniversary

● Ends, caps & closures

Coca-Cola's Blak coffee drink bottle made by Boxal has been marketed in France with an aluminium easy-open ring-pull crown designed by MaxiCrown in Sweden and made under licence by Japan Crown Cork. A special curl on the aperture of the bottle was developed by Frattini

● Aerosols

Impress Metal Packaging used pneumatic blow forming with expansion of 30 percent on tinplate 52x161mm cans to create Sara Lee's Ambi Pur Puresse air freshener aerosols. Distortion print, special crack-free overvarnishes and reusable shipping trays were also developed for its launch across Europe

● General Line

Ball's Aerosol & Specialty division in the US collaborated with Meguiar's to redevelop its Gold Class Car Wax container to improve the ease with which the customer could fulfil the product and enhance its use by the consumer with a patented dome lid design that contains the sponge. The screw top improved openability and keeps the sponge clean for continued use. Shelf presence was improved with high-gloss distortion printed graphics

● Prototype

Impress Metal Packaging has been developing its Beethoven range of microwaveable decorated steel trays that with aluminium peelable lids offer retortability and a shelf life of up to three years. Using Arcelor's Creasteel a range of novel shapes are possible

● Food two-piece

Impress Metal Packaging in France has been making retortable drawn aluminium luncheon meat cans with peelable foil easy-open ends for Daesung Corporation in Korea, the latest version of which is this 4oz size launched in July 2007





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CANS OF THE YEAR 2007

Category awards

CAN OF THE YEAR

Ball Aerosol & Specialty division (USA) for Meguiar's Car Wax

DELEGATES' CHOICE

Tubex (Germany) & iT iS Basic (Austria) wine cocktail can

AEROSOL CANS

Gold: Impress Metal Packaging (France) for Sara Lee's Ambi Pur air freshener

Silver: Exal Corporation (USA) for Blade Panther deodorant

Bronze: Boxal (France) for RGX Iced deodorant

BEVERAGE CANS, TWO-PIECE

Gold: Tubex (Germany) & iT iS Basic (Austria) wine cocktail impact-extruded can

Silver: Showa Aluminium (Japan) for Asahi Prime Time Beer aluminium can

Bronze: Rexam BCE (Russia) for Baltika 1-litre aluminium can

BEVERAGE CANS, THREE-PIECE

Gold: Daiwa Can (Japan) for Kirin Fire Blank coffee

Silver: Daiwa Can (Japan) for Coca-Cola's Georgia Extra Bitter coffee

Bronze: not awarded

BOTTLES

Gold: Takeuchi Press (Japan) for Asahi Super Dry beer DWI bottle

Silver: Tubex (Germany) for Vodstar vodka bottle

Bronze: Exal Corporation (USA) for Octane 7.0 energy drink bottle

DECORATIVE CANS

Gold: Crown Specialty division (UK) for Perrier-Jouët champagne tinline secondary container

Silver: GM Metal Packaging (Hong Kong) for Ringtons tea caddy

Bronze: Ball Aerosol & Specialty division (USA) for The Peanut Depot centenary tin

ENDS, CAPS AND CLOSURES

Gold: JCC MaxiCrown (Japan) for easy-open crown on Coca-Cola's Blak bottle

Silver: Bericap (Germany) P2 REL ALU plastic closure for industrial cans

Bronze: Brasilata (Brazil) Biplus Pail for Sayerlack Renner

FOOD CANS, TWO-PIECE

Gold: Impress Metal Packaging (France), CLM 4oz aluminium luncheon meat can

Silver: Daiwa Can (Japan) for Super Milk Gaba chocolates aluminium can

Bronze: not awarded

FOOD CANS, THREE-PIECE

Gold: Impress Metal Packaging (France) for shaped Heinz KDR Syrup container

Silver: Daiwa Can (Japan) for Dydo WORC Bottle Can

Bronze: Hindustan Tin Works (India) for Nestlé Milkmaid easy-open can

GENERAL LINE CANS

Gold: Ball Aerosol & Specialty division (USA) for Meguiar's Car Wax

Silver: Petrox (India) for two-piece drawn paint can

Bronze: Exal Corporation (USA) for AGY Plus additive bottle

PROMOTIONAL CANS

Gold: Crown Specialty Packaging (UK) for Ballantine's secondary container

Silver: Independent Can (USA) for PEZ Elvis Can for candies

Bronze: Boxal (France) for Coca-Cola Reggae bottles

PROTOTYPES

Gold: Impress Metal Packaging (France) for Beethoven drawn microwaveable trays

Silver: Boxal (France) for Profil 53/3 smooth necked aluminium bottle

Bronze: Toyo Seikan (Japan) for Metashine finish on aluminium aerosol cans

employee involvement by solving problems through an internal production team.

"That way the company doesn't have to go to third parties. It keeps up your experience and you know about the problems of producing the can.

"The dome posed a specific challenge, as the top surface is not flat, but features a spherical radius. We were focused on forming the surface without wrinkles or imperfections. The customer's products have a strong reputation for enhancing the appearance of automobile surfaces; obviously, the packaging needs to reflect the same quality finish as a freshly polished automobile.

"The production line for the lid has five forming operations (using deep draw presses) and three fulfilment operations: these are inserting the sponge, inserting the plastic cover and tamping into position.

"For making the bottom we used an existing line but we had nothing to make the special thread. So we developed an expansion die and we get extremely consistent results. It's very innovative.

"The can is then complete for the customer who only has to fill the wax and torque the lid on. They don't have to make a complex outer box and they do not need to package the sponge. The new design eliminates a lot of the complexity from the customer's packaging line.

"The can bottom uses distortion printing. The placement of text and graphics is calculated using a mapping program and steel blanks coated with a distortion grid are used to validate all calculations. A 'flat' artwork template is provided to the customer for artwork development. This template also allows the customer to avoid 'earring zones' when designing graphics. We currently produce cans featuring metallic and opaque designs. Decoration is done out of house.

"Deep drawing operations cause the can sidewall to suffer a reduction in gloss level, so we post-repair the bottom sidewall with a gloss stripe, giving the can a glossy, 'wet' appearance. The coating is a roller coated UV-cured gloss varnish.

"Another clever touch is the vignetting of the decoration on the dome so that the line is on the draw line. Any pack design has a certain number of limitations in its design. Good design can conceal that limitation."

And the new design has worked by boosting sales of the car wax. "First launched in late 2006, the innovative tin was featured on-line, in Meguiar's catalogue and through trade material," said Meguiar's Mark Steiman. "We have seen significant sales increases at our major accounts based solely on the premium and innovative appearance of the new packaging."

