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# The Canmaker

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**W**ith the pressure on any new canmaking project to start delivering cans to customers, and generating income, to meet investment targets, it's vital that the manufacturing equipment is delivered on time.

Often up to \$120 million is hanging in the balance, so the logistics skills of specialists have a key role to play.

Choose any current new canmaking project – and there are many running simultaneously – and the chances are that UTC Overseas is involved. With more than a quarter of a century of experience in freight forwarding and knowledge of a wide range of industries the New Jersey-based firm has become an important link between canmakers and equipment manufacturers.

UTC has many areas of expertise, serving other industries such as energy, power, construction, mining, pharmaceuticals, food, chemicals, textiles, as well as the beverage and canmaking sector.

Shipping a complete production line from the manufacturer to the factory site is not a simple process. Equipment is increasingly being sourced from a number of locations such as the US, UK, Germany, Italy, China and Thailand. Intricate coordination is critical so all shipments arrive on-time and in the proper sequence. The timing of deliveries has become a complex logistical operation as down time results in lost revenue for the customer.

At the centre of this global dance of activity at UTC Overseas are Martha Rojas, director of project development, and Dean Temple, its vice president, who are expanding to include food processing, beverage filling and other packaging categories.

"There are many freight forwarding companies, but only UTC specialises in this niche market," claims Rojas, who revealed the formation of the new division during The Canmaker Summit in Hong Kong. "What makes us different is our knowledge of the industry. We understand the equipment sequence of a canmaking line, and know the type of packaging necessary for each item of equipment."

"UTC is expanding its specialisation into other types of packaging equipment," said Rojas. "The goal is to maintain and strengthen UTC's relevance in the can manufacturing industry and to increase shipping activity in all packaging sectors – heavily focusing on food and beverage companies on a global scale."

The new division is called UTC MetPac and will be launched at the Pack Expo trade show in Chicago, says Rojas.

# Vital link

*A leading logistics firm that ships equipment for new canmaking lines is expanding into the wider beverage and food packaging industries. John Nutting talked to UTC Overseas*



"Our product knowledge, experience, reputation and service is well known in the canmaking industry and is our platform for this expansion. Dean and UTC's worldwide operations teams are a key component to our success."

Backing this up is a global network of 55 offices and 600 employees with the capability to track purchase orders and ensure local customs regulations are satisfied long before the cargo is shipped. Ensuring that the correct documentation is at the destination in advance of the shipment is key. It is vital that everyone involved, including project managers and engineers, knows when changes are made, so they can respond accordingly.

While much of the equipment for a canmaking line will fit into a standard 20ftx40ft container, described as general cargo and is handled routinely, some items such as cupping presses, the heaviest, and washers and ovens, the largest, need to be handled as 'breakbulk' cargo requiring specialized handling.

Sometimes events such as strikes, bad weather or production delays are accommodated by using alternative routes. One way is to use air transport, and UTC has expertise in chartering the

Russian-made Antonov, the world's largest cargo aircraft with lifting capacity of 150 tonnes, enough to accommodate the heaviest of canmaking equipment.

Beverage can plants are increasingly being constructed in emerging markets so UTC's skills for navigating previously uncharted jurisdictions come into play. So far this year, UTC has been involved in 12 new beverage can projects, shipping to Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

But there is always the unexpected: mudslides in Brazil that block roads and delay delivery; volcanic ash in Europe halting air travel; political unrest in Thailand delaying customs clearance; and being detained by military personnel in Kurdistan.

Under normal or strained conditions, UTC strives to stay on top of all shipments. "Providing 99 percent of the required equipment on-time is not good enough – our goal is 100 percent each project so plants can get up and running on time without delays," says Temple.

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