

Aluminium tube and aerosol can manufacturers satisfied overall with demand in 2022

Aggravated shortage of skilled workers requires new concepts

Düsseldorf, 23 January 2023

Different developments for aluminium tubes and aerosol cans

The manufacturers of aluminium tubes and aerosol cans organised in the Tubes, Cans and Impact Extruded Parts Division of the German Aluminium Association (Aluminium Deutschland e. V.) are satisfied overall with their deliveries to the German market in 2022.

In the case of aluminium tubes, weaker demand at the end of 2022 led to a slight decline in deliveries of 2 percent. Nevertheless, the total volume of 765 million units is a thoroughly respectable result in view of the challenging economic situation. Deliveries of aluminium aerosol cans even enjoyed a strong increase of 15 percent to 573 million cans in 2022.

For tubes, the decline in deliveries was moderate, in particular due to brisk demand from the pharmaceutical sector, while the food and household sectors fell short of expectations. In aerosol cans, the volume-wise dominant market for deodorants was particularly convincing. But satisfactory demand for hair care products also contributed to the good overall result.

Sustainability and energy still at the top of the agenda

The topic of sustainability remains a central issue in the industry, along with the threatening development of energy prices in 2022. Aluminium packaging is very well positioned in terms of sustainability thanks to its convincing material properties, which ensure optimal product protection, and its excellent recyclability.

Although energy prices have calmed down slightly in the meantime, the situation is likely to remain volatile and somewhat unpredictable overall due to the continuing uncertain global political situation. In addition, energy price declines only reach industry and consumers with a noticeable delay. Further energy savings will therefore remain a central task for companies in 2023; especially since energy prices are not expected to ever return to pre-crisis levels.

Skills shortage as one of the biggest challenges

"One of the biggest challenges in the next few years will be the glaring shortage of skilled workers," knows the Division's chairman Clemens Behrenbruch. "Working on the production line in shifts is not popular with the junior staff of the so-called "Generation Z". Here it is important to increase the attractiveness of a modern, meaningful and crisis-proof job in the sustainable aluminium packaging industry through innovative company management, production planning and employee concepts. This also includes continuing to work on improving the image of packaging, which is still wrongly reduced to the idea of waste by large sections of the population. Only in this way will the industry be successful in the fierce competition for qualified workers."

Outlook for 2023 with many question marks

At present, the existing order backlog makes the industry cautiously optimistic for the first quarter. "However, should consumer sentiment and demand in the FMCG markets deteriorate due to the recession expected in Germany and the ongoing loss of purchasing power, the situation could worsen from the second quarter of 2023 onwards. Continued good demand from the pharmaceutical sector could have a stabilising effect. However, there are still too many question marks for a reliable medium-term forecast," Behrenbruch sums up.

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