



ICCA/ WCO Global Summit and FBA Annual Meeting Combine for A Successful Event in Florida

Choose the Planet. Choose Corrugated.

Corrugated and containerboard industry leaders from around the globe gathered May 20 – 23, 2019, at The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida for the International Corrugated Case Association (ICCA)/World Containerboard Organisation (WCO) 2019 Global Summit and Fibre Box Association (FBA) Annual Meeting.

Together, the combined event included four general sessions over two days along with several opportunities to network across country boundaries with corrugated and containerboard industry peers. The event attracted 187 participants from 58 companies and 20 countries. Each General Session hosted a grouping of speakers on similar topics.

General Session I began at a high level, reviewing first the global economic trends impacting the corrugated and containerboard industries and then diving deeper into both containerboard trends and box trends, with a view of how corrugated products intersect with global economic trends, customers, and ultimately, the consumer. Paul Leclair from Canada’s Numera Analytics kicked off the session with an overview of global economic trends. He detailed the current drivers in China, Europe and the U.S. leading to an expected global economic slowdown this year and the implications for manufacturing. Next Klaus Spielmann, president of WCO, shared how economic indicators are impacting containerboard production around the world. The session concluded with a report on the latest ICCA Global Forecast. Neil Osment of NOA PRISM shared topline report findings for the impact of downstream prospects on the demand for corrugated packaging.

With a solid grounding in place, General Session II challenged attendees to think beyond the landscape of today’s business. Doug Stephens, a retail futurist, took attendees on a ride through the fast-changing retail environment. Given the ever-expanding role of e-commerce, he said brick and mortar retail will become more about a consumer’s experience. He shared examples of retail stores that let consumers experience products before purchasing them including cold chambers that let you test outerwear, food retailers that become exhibitions of cooking techniques and retailers who let you experience music and lighting in furnished pods with friends. Mr. Stephens also talked about packaging’s role in the “unboxing experience”. He believes product manufacturers will need to do more to differentiate their products and build brands in an e-commerce world and that packaging will play an important role in this evolution.

With the future in mind, the session continued to explore two global conversations that could impact corrugated and containerboard industries. Eric DesRoberts from the Ocean Conservancy’s Trash Free Seas initiative talked about land-based strategies to address marine debris. Plastics in the oceans is a hot

topic worldwide and is leading to legislation regulating packaging waste in many countries. Switching from packaging's end of life to its beginnings, Cecilia Alcoreza from the World Wildlife Fund shared a perspective on deforestation. Ms. Alcoreza's presentation proved that not everyone shares an understanding of the industries' record of sustainable forestry management. Both presentations by Mr. DesRoberts and Ms. Alcoreza illustrated the importance of the corrugated and containerboard industries telling the sustainability story of corrugated products.

The session ended with the business of the Fibre Box Association. FBA President and CEO Dennis Colley provided an association update, followed by the election of incoming directors to the FBA Board of Directors and the introduction of officers for 2019-2020. John Kelley, outgoing Chairman from Dusobox passed the Chairman's gavel to Jeff Chalovich of WestRock.

The next morning, General Session III focused on retailers' thoughts on corrugated packaging and how box plants and some new papermill technology can meet their future needs. Ivy Barney from Walmart shared Walmart's approach to making every day easier for busy families. She detailed the inbound quality at Walmart that enables seamless product flow from supplier to shelf and eliminates loss in operations through the design and execution of quality packaging and freight. Following Ms. Barney's presentation, Saverio Mayer from Smurfit Kappa expanded on how not just governments, but also retailers, their suppliers and consumers are reacting to plastic packaging concerns. He addressed the need for a new innovation model that could change the way we look at all packaging. He said sustainable packaging is the key to reducing packaging waste. Ulf Tillman from IKEA continued the session with a presentation about how his company is going all in for a more sustainable future. Mr. Tillman discussed democratic design in packaging to create a better everyday life for many people. He shared examples of how packaging is an integrated part of the product development process and the product offer. He showed examples of paper honeycomb interior packing to replace Styrofoam and the efficiencies of using corrugated pallets rather than wood pallets.

With the aid of his Alexa, Lars Engel from BHS Corrugated gave us a sneak peak inside the box plant of the future. Mr. Engel shared how technology, automation and the changing needs of customers are allowing box plants to reduce their footprint with less machine centers, smaller rollstock rooms and no printing plant storage. He said this big leap is a necessary step in improvements to stay competitive.

The session ended with a presentation on a new papermill technology that allows communities to divert 90 percent of their waste from the landfill and recycle it into usable products. The innovative pulping process called Juno™ was presented by Erik Wist of Georgia-Pacific. Mr. Wist said the process could take things like fast-food waste, sanitize it and separate out recyclables like fiber for papermaking.

General Session IV highlighted two additional impact areas for corrugated packaging – transportation and performance demands of new supply chain models. Alan Karickhoff from the American Trucking Associations talked about driver shortages and the challenges facing trucking companies in getting product to the last mile of e-commerce delivery. Then A.J. Gruber, president of ISTA, closed out the meeting with an energetic and engaging look at what it takes to keep pace with the performance demands of evolving retail.

In addition to the outstanding line-up of speakers, the event also played host to a number of other industry meetings that took advantage of the gathering. The American Forest & Paper Association held both its containerboard kraft sector meeting and its renewable bag council meeting in conjunction with

the event. ICCA held an association leaders' meeting for associations members. The International Corrugated Packaging Foundation and FBA both held their board of directors' meetings with the event and the FBA held its Executive Conference at the same location prior to the start of the Annual Meeting/Global Summit.

Spouses and companions who traveled to the event were treated to two outings that explored Palm Beach heritage. The first tour took participants to the famed Worth Avenue for a guided tour and time to shop. The tour ended with lunch at a renowned Palm Beach eatery. The second tour gave participants a glimpse of the golden age of Palm Beach with a tour of the Henry Morrison Flagler Museum. A railroad tycoon in the early 1900's, Henry Flagler was responsible for much of the development in Palm Beach during his time including the building of The Breakers, the event's host hotel.

The Gala Dinner that ended the event on Wednesday evening was a nod to Mr. Flagler in The Circle at The Breakers. The round, floor-to-ceiling windowed banquet room was adorned with towering flower arrangements and candelabras reminiscent of Mr. Flagler's era.

The event was the sixth successful Global Summit co-sponsored by ICCA and WCO. The two organization began holding co-sponsored events in 2007 in Sydney, Australia and have followed the success of that event with Global Summits in Tokyo, Japan; Montreal, Quebec, Canada; Paris, France; Taipei, Taiwan and Shanghai, China and now in Palm Beach, Florida, USA.

The next biennial Global Summit will be held in 2021 in Europe.

Presentations from the event can be accessed with member logon credentials on the ICCA website.