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## PRESS RELEASE

### New Carrera I-500 entry level flow wrapper: king of the class

IMA ILAPAK has drawn on 50 years of market leadership and synergies within the new IMA FLX hub to take entry level flow wrapping performance into uncharted territory.

The Carrera I-500 is a formidable new flow wrapper that is 100% faster than its predecessor, whilst offering new robust and ergonomic architecture, balcony style design and extended film and product size range capacity. Multiple automatic feeding options, standard full stainless-steel construction and Industry 4.0 capabilities combine to make this a sophisticated system that leads the category in terms of performance, flexibility, modularity, hygiene and connectivity. The 'I' in the name alludes to the machine's 'made in Italy' credentials, giving users a guarantee of the build quality, they can expect from this Italian-engineered flow wrapper.

The Carrera I-500 succeeds the Smart machine, which has been IMA ILAPAK's trusted entry level flow wrapping platform for the last 15 years, with an installed base of over 2,000 machines worldwide.

Explaining the company's decision to develop a next generation entry level flow wrapper, Christian Ballabio, HFFS Technical Sales Support Director at IMA ILAPAK, says:

"The entry level flow wrapping market is very buoyant at present, but the majority of machines rely on older, basic technology, offer minimal automation and connectivity capabilities and are not suitable for 'wet' environments. There is a shortage of options for companies wanting more than just a basic, budget flow wrapper."

He continues: "This is where the I-500 comes in. It pushes the boundaries of entry level performance, delivering efficiency, sealing integrity, build quality and functionality that are unrivalled in this class of machines. We're not looking to challenge players at the budget end of the category, we're looking to create a new 'top tier' that goes above and beyond what is already on offer, thereby reaching new audiences."

IMA ILAPAK has combined the architecture of its market-leading Delta & Carrera HFFS platform with the shared know-how & expertise available within the IMA FLX hub to present a top tier entry level flow wrapper that can run at linear speeds of 40+m/min – twice as fast as its predecessor. The electronic digital platform, planetary gearboxes, servo motors and slip ring technology that are common to the whole IMA ILAPAK HFFS range are key to this machine's superior efficiency and performance.

Whilst efficiency gains are often at the expense of sealing quality, on the I-500, the design of the transversal sealing unit ensures superior sealing performance. Heavy duty shafts and surrounding bearings allow for greater and more consistent seal-jaw pressure, and the use of micro-metric adjustment and new sealing profiles enables tool-less and repeatable adjustment of the sealing head for different material structures & thicknesses. The longitudinal sealing system is equipped as standard with three independent modules rather than two, enabling precision control of individual sealing parameters, as well with independent pneumatically adjustable pressure control. This contributes to higher sealing quality and allows complex materials to be sealed at higher speeds.

As well as underlining the machine's 'made in Italy' build quality, the 'I' in I-500 stands for 'intelligent'. Unusually for a machine in this class, the I-500 is equipped with full Industry 4.0 capabilities, including remote connectivity, OEE reporting, and the ability to connect to local networks or Scada systems. The machine also boasts a new, advanced HMI, now available on all of IMA ILAPAK's horizontal

machines. This intuitive, icon-based HMI delivers enhanced operator UX (user experience) through easier navigation, expanded content, an additional lots/batch management feature and the facility to view all statistics and analytics.

Leveraging the FLX hub synergies and group company expertise, IMA ILAPAK has built more pack dimension flexibility into the I-500 than is usually available on an entry level machine. The I-500 increases the range of film and product sizes that can be handled by 25% versus the Smart model. This extends the machine's application reach into new areas as it enables larger pillow packs to be produced.

"Entry level machines are typically deployed as workhorses - they are expected to run different products and pack sizes. The ability to run large as well as small packs makes the I-500 very attractive to a producer looking for one machine that can run off a range of pack sizes," explains Christian.

As well as dry foods such as baked goods, bars, biscuits, snacks and non-food items, the I-500 can also tackle challenging fresh and frozen applications that have historically been the preserve of higher level, more expensive machines, due to the hygiene demands they entail. Fresh food, ready meals, cheese, meat and other proteins can be packed on the I-500, thanks to its full stainless-steel construction and specific hygienic design features & options. Within the new design, for example, the film reel position has been elevated to allow full visibility and accessibility to the entire film and product path. In addition, the machine's cantilever frame, combined with hygienic design philosophy, ensures easy and quick cleaning and inspection without the need to remove parts.

A further advantage over more basic systems is the number of automated feeding options that are available with the I-500. With the Smart, 95% of applications were manually fed, however, multiple automatic feeding configurations, along with ancillaries such as coders and labellers make the I-500 a future-proof investment for companies of all sizes.

"The I-500 is equally suitable for aspirational start-ups as it is for larger companies who are looking for a flexible add-on to cope with seasonal demand or to trial a new product," notes Christian.

IMA ILAPAK's engineers are also harnessing the IMA group and FLX hub capabilities to design an inverted version. This will offer all the same functionality and features as the standard I-500, with a 930mm film width and 450mm wide jaws, to cater for larger items. The inverted design of this flow wrapper means that the film is fed from the bottom reel, which makes it particularly suitable for heavy, soft, or difficult to handle products.

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## IMAGES



Image 1

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IMA ILAPAK, with its vast suite of flexible packaging solutions, can satisfy every form, fill and seal packaging requirement of the food, medical device and wet wipe industries. Besides horizontal and vertical packaging machines, its portfolio includes systems for modified atmosphere applications, product handling solutions, counting and weighing systems and complete, fully automated lines. IMA ILAPAK has a global presence and is part of IMA.

IMA Group is world leader in the design and manufacture of automatic machines for the processing and packaging of pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, food, tea and coffee.

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