**The biggest celebration of achievement and business excellence at the PPMA Group Industry Awards 2019**

**2 October 2019** |The processing and packaging machinery industry celebrated another year of outstanding achievement and business excellence at its eighth PPMA Group Industry Awards at the National Conference Centre, Birmingham, on 1 October2019.

Hosted by comic and TV impressionist, Jon Culshaw, this year’s prestigious gala evening attracted 449 people. They came together to recognise manufacturing excellence, technical innovation, entrepreneurship, customer service, sales and training support, as well as outstanding contribution to the processing and packaging machinery sector.

With 103 nominations received across 12 industry categories, the number of awards submissions this year was exponentially high, exceeding last year’s previous record-breaking tally by 35%. It was also the first time that the judging panel had to introduce a three-stage voting process due to the volume and quality of the nominations received.

The highlight of the evening was the announcement of two lifetime achievement awards – a first for the PPMA Group Industry Awards. They were presented to Michel Podevyn, President of Spiroflow, and Chris Holland, Managing Director of Holmach, for their influence and long-standing service to the industry.

During his long and esteemed career, Michel became a pioneer of the flex screw conveyor for companies within the food, chemical and mineral industries, previously dogged by blocked filters.

He was also the brainchild of a bespoke heavy-duty filling station in the early 1980s for a new Falklands Island airport, which was later adopted by food and chemical companies across the world.

Thanks to Michel’s commercial knowhow and ingenuity, Spiroflow’s export business now counts for more than 50 per cent of its turnover.

Similarly, Chris’ sharp rise to the fore in food research was recognised on a global level in the 1990s, after which he bought Peter Holland (Food Machinery) and rebranded it Holmach in 2000.

He made a significant contribution to the industry thanks to the introduction and spread of pasteurised ready meals. He also worked with European packaging suppliers to help eliminate plastics from ready meal production, and further helped to extend shelf-life and reduce food waste.

He remains a strong advocate for developing improved processing solutions and improving food standards.

Competition was extremely strong in all award categories, especially within the Innovative Packaging Machinery category that received the highest number of nominations. Through a series of ground-breaking technology, it made the judging process even more challenging.

For the second year running, the PPMA BEST (Business, Education, Skills and Training) Award, again served to highlight the importance of addressing the skills shortage. This award went to METTLER-TOLEDO Safeline in recognition of its excellence and commitment to employee training and skills development.

Continuing the theme of industry education, Jack Woolmer, an apprentice at METTLER-TOLEDO Safeline was named Apprentice of the Year 2019.

Speaking after the event, Tim Paul, Chairman of the PPMA Group of Associations, said: “Since its inception in 2011, our PPMA Group Industry Awards has become an established fixture in the calendar.

“In 2018, we received a record number of entries for our awards categories. This year, we exceeded that figure by 35%, so there was a lot to celebrate in October through hosting the largest ever PPMA Total Show and the biggest awards ceremony to date.

“The number and quality of awards is testament to the innovation, entrepreneurship and smart manufacturing synonymous with the processing and packaging industry.

“Even in these challenging times, it’s clear that the processing and packaging industry continues to thrive and show signs of new green shoots. I am proud to represent an industry that is helping to fly the flag for UK manufacturing,” he added.

The 12 award categories were judged by an independent panel of industry experts, professionals, engineers and end users.

**The PPMA Industry Award Winners 2019:**

**Apprentice of the Year Award**

**Winner:** Jack Woolmer, METTLER-TOLEDO Safeline

**Highly commended:** Joe Bacon, Projex Solutions

**Highly commended:** Tobias Cowan, HepcoMotion

**Environmental Initiative of the Year**

**Winner:** Garçon Wines

**Highly commended:** Samson Nano by Samuel Grant Packaging

**Exceptional Sales Performance**

**Winner:** Colin Mear Engineering (CME)

**Highly commended:** Epson UK

**Highly commended:** Minebea Intec

**Exporter of the Year**

**Winner:** Farleygreene

**Innovative Ancillary Equipment**

**Winner:** Clearmark Solutions

**Innovative Packaging Machinery**

**Winner:** TrakRap

**Highly commended:** Brillopak

**Highly commended:** Rotech Machines

**Innovative Processing System**

**Winner:** Jenton Group

**Innovative Robotics Solution**

**Winner:** Brillopak

**Highly commended:** Universal Robots

**Innovative Vision Solution**

**Winner:** Scorpion Vision

**Outstanding Customer Service**

**Winner:** OAL

**Highly commended:** Cox & Plant

**PPMA BEST (Business, Education, Skills and Training) Award**

**Winner:** METTLER-TOLEDO Safeline

**Highly commended:** Evolution Bottling & Packaging Solutions

**Lifetime Achievement Award** (x2)

**Winner:** Michel Podevyn

**Winner:** Chris Holland

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editor:**

**The PPMA Group Industry Awards 2019**

The PPMA Group Industry Awards is organised by the PPMA Group of Associations. https://www.ppmatotalshow.co.uk/awards/ppma-group-industry-awards

**About the PPMA Group of Associations**

The PPMA Group comprises the Processing and Packaging Machinery Association (PPMA), British Automation & Robot Association (BARA) and UK Industrial Vision Association (UKIVA). Its mission is to actively help its 600 members through services, tools and initiatives to thrive in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

**Issued on behalf of the PPMA Group of Associations by AD Communications.**

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