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EnterpriseStories - Go Green with Microwavable Meal Pack

It's sturdy, eco-friendly, convenient and well-designed for microwave cooking technology. Spotting a relatively untapped segment within the packaging industry in Singapore is the reason for his invention.

Leonard Lau tells ACE Editor more about his innovative, award winning food packaging.

Microwave Packaging Adventure

A visit to his humble production house is an eye-opener to how this small enterprise produces about a million of his revolutionary paper-based food packaging solution to deliver to customers monthly. Conceptualised and manufactured by Microwave Packaging, the story of Leonard Lau is one of innovation by experimentation.



"It took me a total of 5 years to fully develop the design and the machine to manufacture before finally bringing my first invention -HealthyPack- to market. This microwavable food pack offers far more than any ordinary food container," said Leonard, 49, Managing Director of Microwave Packaging (S) Pte Ltd, who has more than 30 years in the printing and packaging industry before he became an entrepreneur.



His innovation has also made him one of the winners in the World Star Packaging Award 1999 from the World Packaging Organisation in USA, Asia Star Award in 1998 Beijing/Tokyo and Singapore Star Award in 1997. The various accolades reinforce Leonard's breakthrough in bringing about great packaging and cooking efficiency within the box, "I'm proud that a small fry inventor like me can make a difference and this proves that you never know till you try," he added enthusiastically.

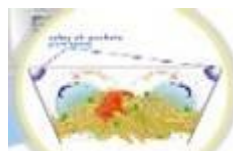


Thumbs-up Features

Cooking using microwaves was first discovered by Percy Spencer in 1940s and the widespread use of microwave ovens in 1970s has revolutionised cooking ever since, because consumers started believing in its function.

Similarly, it took a while for Leonard's product to be positively accepted. Now he admits, "Slowly yet steadily, those who believed in our worldwide patented microwave packaging food container are beginning to switch to ours than from conventional packaging." How his packaging differs and makes one go "wow" is then the question.

"We specialise in paper-based food containers that are highly regarded in both design and material quality. Our trapezium shaped, interlocking cover-over-base design with pin-hole pressure release valves not only allows food to be kept warm longer but it also enhances quality freshness by preventing food to become soggy, which is unlike other completely sealed packages that build up pressure," explained Leonard earnestly.



"The food box is also made stronger by being able to withstand up to 37 kg compression, especially during stacked handling and transporting, thus it is easily portable in large quantities." Quite amazingly, it is also washable, reusable aside from its microwavable and freeze-in capability.

Going Green

Microwave Packaging is also proud of their commitment as a GreenLabel accredited product. "All our paper containers are from materials certified to be eco-friendly and of food grade FDA compliance for maintaining high hygiene levels." These green friendly disposable boxes are being used by clients in Singapore and overseas.

"The pool of clientele who has come on board with us includes Singapore Air Force, SATS, 7-Eleven, Tori-Q, Crystal Jade and other overseas customers from US, UK, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Dubai."

Journey of Small Steps

The food packaging trade involves more than just churning containers at low costs. What Leonard saw in this relatively unexplored segment, is creating new opportunities for growth from his patented microwave-packaging invention. "Conventional disposable packaging options such as plastic, polystyrene foam, paper-boxes and etc, we are basically offering an alternative to efficiently benefit clients from food operators right up to end-user consumers, both in costs and functionality," said Leonard.

On his next plans, "Personally, my journey in this business begins with small steps. Observations, ideas for improvements and stamina are part of the fun to keep me moving on. We now have other product lines like Soupér Bowl, ONEdé Cup, multiple food compartments for full set meals preparations as well as panels to be utilised for advertising purposes - all within our packaging."



"Definitely it wasn't all a bed of roses for me, but a worthwhile opportunity to embark on what I believe in and proud that [Microwave Packaging](#) is a true 'Made-in-Singapore' product and brand that seeks to reach out to the world."