



Success stories

NRET PET LINE FOR SCHWEPPE'S ZIMBABWE LIMITED

## Greater value creation, smaller carbon footprint

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Thanks to its ultramodern non-returnable PET line from KHS, Schwepes Zimbabwe Limited has increased its output by 300% over its predecessor line. The bottler now also produces much more efficiently while saving more on resources.

NON-RETURNABLE PET

RETURNABLE PET

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PHOTOGRAPHY / ILLUSTRATION

Victor Moyo

## COVER PHOTO

In Minute Maid look: a typical Zimbabwean beverage kiosk advertises one of Schweppes' flagship brands.

Until recently, ↗ **Schweppes Zimbabwe Limited** on the Willowvale industrial estate in the capital of Harare bottled more in the low-capacity range. Since the installation and commissioning of a new non-returnable PET line featuring cutting-edge KHS technology, however, the beverage producer is now perfectly equipped to output much more. The new system comprises an ↗ **InnoPET BloFill** stretch blow molder/filler block for up to 36,000 bottles per hour, an ↗ **Innoket Neo** for roll-fed labeling, an Innopack PSP Advanced shrink packer and an Innopal PB N palletizer. Continuous monitoring by KHS inspection technology also ensures that only containers of perfect quality leave the plant.



The new system boosts Schweppes Zimbabwe Limited's production capacity by 300% over the previous line.



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Pleased with their new NRET PET line from KHS: Bradley Naicker (KHS sales manager for South Africa), Ropafadzo Gwanetsa (corporate affairs executive for Schweppes Zimbabwe Limited), Bhekimpilo Ndhlovu (plant manager for Schweppes Zimbabwe Limited) and Jane Bwerinofa (technical executive for Schweppes Zimbabwe Limited).

There were many reasons behind the decision to award the Dortmund turnkey supplier the contract, emphasizes Ropafadzo Gwanetsa, corporate affairs executive at Schweppes Zimbabwe Limited. “KHS is a reliable systems provider to our parent company Coca-Cola, where it’s valued for its expertise in highly-efficient filling and packaging systems. The same goes for its range of holistic services that includes extensive technical support.”

## **Production capacity increased by 300%**

Schweppes Zimbabwe Limited is especially enthusiastic about the speed of the line; compared to the previous setup supplied by a competitor, the production capacity has now increased by 300%. This means that even the warehouse will now also probably have to be expanded. After all, the company wants to continue to meet the growing demand for filled juice from

flagship brands Mazoe Orange Crush and Minute Maid and for Bonaqua and Schweppes still water – both on the local and regional markets.

The more professional production array also facilitates flexible processing of various packaging formats holding between 400 milliliters and two liters. “Being able to easily process a whole range of different container sizes on a single line thanks to automated processes and faster format changeovers gives us a great competitive edge over other bottlers,” explains Gwanetsa. “Operator intervention on the line has been reduced to a minimum, which has boosted our production efficiency.”



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The InnoPET BloFill PET block from KHS permits up to 36,000 bottles to be manufactured and filled per hour.

Gwanetsa substantiates this positive development with specific statistics. “We’ve cut our overall costs by about 80% compared to the former setup. This is also because we now need 10% fewer personnel.” The new KHS plant engineering also scores with an up to 30% decrease in energy consumption, savings in water and CO<sub>2</sub> and lower labeling costs. “Together with our parent company, we’re adopting an ambitious sustainability strategy with a directly noticeable cut in greenhouse gas emissions, plus we’re aiming for climate neutrality. Our state-of-

the-art KHS technology is helping us to successfully pursue this objective.”

## **Less plastic use thanks to lightweighting**

Further savings in resources are also being made by use of less plastic for the primary packaging. Thanks to proven KHS stretch blow molding technology, high-quality lightweight PET containers now consume up to 15% fewer raw materials. For Gwanetsa, a further major criterion with respect to sustainability is the long service life of the machines. “We’re factoring in the new NRET PET line for the next 20 years,” says the Schweppes expert. The longer a line is operated, the smaller its ecological footprint throughout its entire life cycle. This is confirmed by Bradley Naicker, KHS sales manager for South Africa. “Our machines are often in successful operation for customers over several decades. This alone means less impact on the environment.”



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Flexible design: the individual  
modules of the Innoket Neo can be  
freely combined.



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The Innoket Neo labeler with a roll-fed station ensures precise and efficient hot-melt, wrap-around labeling of PET bottles.

One particular challenge was the very limited amount of space available at the Schweppes site in Harare. In order to fit the new line into this small area, the experts from KHS installed it in an L shape instead of the usual rectangle – in record time. The first saleable product ran off the belt just six weeks after commissioning – the result of the excellent cooperation between the KHS project team and Schweppes Zimbabwe Limited.

## **Individual palletizing**

Special customer requirements also needed to be met in the robot-controlled palletizing section. As the PET bottles have certain special formats, the bottler also uses pallets whose dimensions don't match the norm. "We adapted our palletizer to the respective SKUs through individual robot programming and thus achieved an optimum result," Naicker explains.



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With its role-based access system, the ClearLine HMI (Human Machine Interface) facilitates the operation of KHS systems such as the Innopack PSP Advanced shrink packer.





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Proven efficiency: the modular Innopack PSP Advanced packaging machine processes up to 14,400 packs per hour.

Schweppes was especially pleased with how the systems supplier successfully handled the entire project. “Thanks to KHS’ holistic range of services, we benefitted greatly from the close support provided throughout the project’s duration. This applies to the training we were given, for example, that included the global transfer of knowledge from KHS engineers to our local team. After commissioning, we’ll continue to receive further training remotely,” says Gwanetsa. “Processing times are short and the engineers are always available.” The knowledge transfer process and maintenance of the system are largely supported by ↗ [KHS ReDiS](#) (Remote Diagnostic Service).

KHS man Naicker also looks back fondly on this particular project. “We’ve exceeded expectations regarding production capacities, economy and the use of resources. Schweppes is now bottling more beverages of a better quality at a lower cost and with a smaller carbon footprint.”



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Special PET bottles call for non-standard shapes and sizes of pallet which the palletizer was perfectly adapted to using individual robot programming.

## Any further questions?

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