

FLUID-BAG

the **HISTORY**



...behind the success of *liquids on the move*

This leaflet is dedicated to all the people that in one way or another have been involved in and contributed to Fluid-Bag's development during its first 30 years.

THE INSPIRATION

The history of Fluid-Bag begins in the 1970s when Christian Wiklund, a Production Engineer from Finland, was involved with a company that manufactured containers for the transportation of orange juice concentrate from Brazil to Europe.

Mr. Wiklund noticed that the metal drums these manufacturers used for the logistics were not the most efficient. In fact, the entire transportation process seemed to him overly complex since these manufacturers had to fill, handle, send, empty and clean the metal drums for each order. In addition, he especially noted the amount of air there was in these containers. The realization was an inspiring one and moved him to concentrate on finding new solutions for the transportation of liquids in the food industry.

Mr. Wiklund believed that the world was in need of a flexible, one-way, closed system that would ensure the quality and freshness of the products from start to finish.

Working in the same company as Christian Wiklund was a young man, named Alf Knutar. He also had experience in the segment of container manufacturing that addressed the orange juice concentrate industry. Rukka Oy, the company they worked for, decided to sell the division that manufactured Big-Bags (big container bags for the transportation of solid goods). Taking this opportunity Wiklund, one of his friends, Tom Stenmark and Alf Knutar decided together to purchase the Big-Bag manufacturing division and start up their own company, Oy Alfa Bag. They ran the company as co-owners with the Schauman Group.

Together, they enjoyed a period of great success with their new company. It was a time of hard work, mixed with a touch of good luck.

One Fluid-Bag equals about 5 drums, which makes it possible to save on logistic arrangements in terms of transport and storage costs.



The aim to avoid unnecessary transports of bulky, empty drums containing only air lead to the idea of the flexible Fluid-Bag container.



Christian Wiklund to the left and Peter Wikblad to the right are monitoring a test procedure.



Testing the vision

Despite the success of Oy Alfa Bag, Christian Wiklund was unable to forget the idea he had in mind: developing a more efficient container for the transportation of liquid goods. He sat down with Alf Knutar and they began to develop Fluid-Bag – at first, as a project and primarily based on what they had experienced from the orange juice concentrate industry.

They envisaged that the container ought to be strong enough to sustain industrial quantities of liquid and they knew that a lot of testing would be needed. So they began to “play with water”. They sewed bags, blew them up and threw them to the ground to test their material endurance.

The birth of a concept

Wiklund then joined forces with Dr Håkan Torstensson, a Swedish Technician, a Departmental Director at the Swedish Testing Institute (Statens Provningsanstalt) and a member of a group of reporters working for the UN classification agency where packaging regulations were discussed. They sent a proposal to the regulatory board for

packaging regulations with respect to the testing of flexible containers for fluids. A range of tests were conducted under Christian Wiklund’s supervision and in 1984, Fluid-Bag officially started its operations.

It is worth mentioning that no such test methods for flexible containers for liquids had been conducted until then. Fluid-Bag was a pioneer and a lone player not only with a one-of-a-kind product but also with the development of a standard for testing flexible containers for liquids.

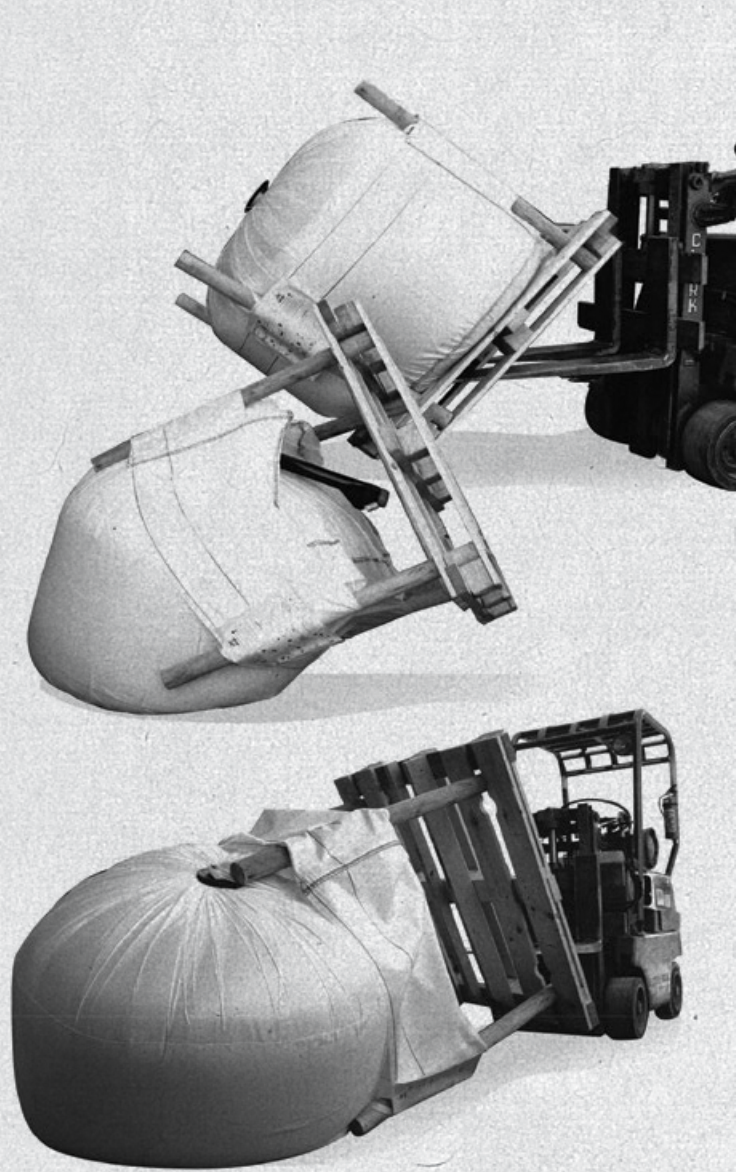
At the time, Fluid-Bag had no other competitor with the same concept

Early recognition

The mid-80s brought big changes to Fluid-Bag and the company suddenly found itself in the spotlight. In 1985, Fluid-Bag was selected as the biggest news at the Scanpack Fair in Gothenburg, Sweden. This instantly brought with it international headlines.

In 1986, Fluid-Bag won the Dutch, De Zilveren Noot competition. This also resulted in big international headlines and meant a direct ticket to participate in the WorldStar competition in Tokyo which Fluid-Bag won in 1986. Following immediately on from these acknowledgements, Fluid-Bag began receiving enquiries from all over the world.

Although the prizes meant a big opportunity for advancement for a young Fluid-Bag, this recognition came somewhat prematurely because it produced great interest in the product, but the company was not completely ready with its development. It had no automated production line and so manufacturing was rather limited.



The very first version of the Fluid-Bag was a horizontal, longer container model.





The perfect match

During the mid-90s a considerable product development project and an extensive investment programme were carried out. The second generation of the inner-bag was born. A new generation production plant with specific machinery for the production of generation II-bags was designed and produced by Solving. Fluid-Bag was now able to weld all the components in the bag which meant a big improvement to the entire production process.

Solving's vast experience in machine technology was first class and resulted in a production technology that is as unique as the Fluid-Bag container.

A change of direction

In 1998, Fluid-Bag hired a consultancy company to come up with a business strategy assessment. Risk capital was obtained providing that the entire business strategy would radically change. Some of the changes the company faced included: a new Managing Director, a new business board and new agents.

In order to further develop the business, Fluid-Bag needed a Managing Director with broad international experience and with expertise in big industries. Roger Nybäck was the candidate. He had been employed for 11 years as Managing Director of KWH Pipe, a company with over 800 employees and factories around the world.

When Mr. Nybäck became the new Managing Director and minor shareholder of Fluid-Bag, Peter Wikblad took the preferred position as Technical Director. These days, Peter Wikblad continues to play an important role in the company contributing his extensive knowledge and experience to the development of Fluid-Bag's efficient solutions.

Roger Nybäck came to the business facing a better scenario. The recession that had impacted Finland in 1991 was now not as deep as it had been. The market had matured and people had begun to invest more.

Significant changes followed. With Nybäck on board, Fluid-Bag now had strong financial acumen, a new business-oriented focus that was a step forward from the previous production development focus and a strategic direction for every business activity.



Peter Björk

Christian Wiklund

During this period Fluid-Bag experienced significant growth and extended its operations into more demanding business segments. With new bag designs and appropriate equipment, Fluid-Bag was able to offer superior systems, for example for the management of high viscosity products. Also during this period, Fluid-Bag improved its quality offering by obtaining ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certification and later certification for ISO 22000. All these improvements helped Fluid-Bag to become an undoubtedly strong competitor in a range of market segments.

Steps forward

Fluid-Bag Asia Ltd. was founded in 2006, initially as a sales office for the Asian market. Later came warehousing and logistics for the region and then manufacturing facilities for

transport bags and the purchasing of Flexi-pallets and other components locally in Asia. Today the company employs over 20 people on the Chonburi Industrial Estate.

In early 2007, Fluid-Bag improved the hygiene standard of its production site with the collaboration and mentoring of Bayer HealthCare. This was a major step that enabled the company to enter the food and pharmaceuticals industry at a different level. The two most significant changes that occurred during Bayer's participation were that the entire production facility was sealed for protection and the concept of traceability of products was extended.

Roger Nybäck would retire in 2008 at which point Solving became the sole owner of Fluid-Bag. Solving would later purchase the entire building where the company's headquarters are located today (Karviks Hall) in Jakobstad.



Wacker Chemie uses Fluid-Bags for their silicone products and has been a very important customer through the years.



Fluid-Bags filled with Bayer HealthCare's Bepanthen ointment at GP Grenzach's production facilities.

New Beginnings

In February 2009, Jan Backman, an Industrial Engineer from Finland was installed as the new Managing Director of Fluid-Bag. With 15 years' experience as head of the Department of Sales and Project Management in Wärtsilä, a leading global company in lifecycle power solutions with a presence in more than 200 locations in 70 countries.

Jan Backman arrived at Fluid-Bag with a modern style of leadership. A change in the image of the company, an enhanced continuous focus on hygiene, cleanliness and additional certification together with a new approach to business management and a new strategic global focus are just some of the items on his agenda for Fluid-Bag's further growth.



Toyota's manufacturing plant in Burnastone UK where Fluid-Bags are used for sound damping pastes for vehicles. Automated Fluid-Bag Discharge Rollers empty the bags and are connected directly to the vehicle production line.

Fluid-Bag now has an established and solid product base and is able to focus fully on global growth as a complete logistic solution with total systems for filling and discharging.

Fluid-Bag has ambitious growth plans and actively invests in marketing, product development and in boosting company personnel, both locally in Jakobstad and in the form of a growing network of distributors, agents and sales offices around the world.



Production continues to be firmly based in Jakobstad, and the current renovation of production facilities is part of a long-term strategy. The company's offices, warehouse and production space are all being renewed and enlarged to ensure that future needs can be met.

Fluid-Bag's focus has always been to offer its customers a range of comprehensive bulk packaging solutions that take into account the economy, environmental impact and logistics.

Fluid-Bag is proud of its achievements in pioneering its one-of-a-kind packaging solution. Today, Fluid-Bag continues to work with internationally recognized companies across a broad range of market segments.

The PowerbagPress is the latest addition to Fluid-Bag's range of discharge equipment. With the strong PowerbagPress it's possible to discharge even almost solid materials from a Fluid-Bag.

Fluid-Bag's containers



reduce product waste, ensure better quality protection, contribute to more efficient logistics, enable a higher and more consistent production rate and help to improve the economic results of its customers.



A big thank you to everyone that has shared information and participated in the interviews.



FLUID-BAG

*Liquid on the **move...***