

Gispol celebrates 30 years

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Gispol's Benji-design set up

The story begins in 1994. Lisbon, Portugal-based Gispol began working with the country's flag carrier [TAP Air Portugal](#) which quickly led to relationships with other industry distributors. At the time, [Gispol](#) was focused on injection moulding products, creating Business Class trays, cups, cutlery and the like.

The company then began its long-time exclusive partnership with Helios Market, Product and Production Development BV. The pair worked together for about 15 years, supplying airlines including [Saudia](#), [Oman Air](#), [Air France](#), [British Airways](#) and several others. Helios was then acquired by [deSter](#) in 2012. The two continued to collaborate, but eventually it was time for Gispol to take its first steps into the wider market.

To gain recognition, Gispol attended the industry's major exhibitions to get more familiar with distributors and developers. In no time, the company was supplying several new customers—many of which Gispol still works with.

In 2018, Gispol exhibited at the World Travel Catering & Onboard Services Expo ([WTCE](#)) for the first time.

“It was quite an experience. Even though we were working with airlines for more than 20 years at that time, we were not well-known,” Alves says. “You need to be patient because it’s not an easy industry to get connected with the right people. It’s a process that takes time and that takes investment. You need to be persistent. Then everything else starts moving.”

Customers spread word of Gispol’s capabilities throughout the industry, leading to more interest, partnerships and new customers.

The company has exhibited at WTCE consistently since 2018—aside from the years affected by COVID. 2023’s WTCE was very successful for Gispol, with the company displaying its airline products and investing in its booth which had many visitors.

“We are not the new people on the block. We are already a mature company in the industry. We try to show exactly what we are capable of. Not only manufacturing but supporting our customers,” Alves says.



Aijaz Khan, Publisher, PAX International (left) and Ricardo Alves, General Manager, Gispol

Gispol will attend WTCE this May, followed by the International Flight Services Association (IFSA) Global EXPO in October. The latter represents an important opportunity for Gispol to create more connections in the U.S. market.

“You must build up your relationships by going there more, again and again. We are just starting to build that up in the U.S., and we need to put our money and efforts there because it’s a very interesting marketing for our company,” Alves explains.

Gispol’s moves in Asia also indicate a promising future. It is partnering with [Air India](#) to manufacture and supply inflight products, complementing the rollout of the airline’s new global brand identity announced in December 2023. Some products will be manufactured in Lisbon, while others will be manufactured directly in India thanks to a new partnership. Alves could not share other details at the time of the interview.

“This will create the structure that we need to get into the Middle East and Asia market. Being present in that region will give us the leverage that we have been missing,” Alves says. “It’s very exciting for us. Our efforts are focused very much on the relationship with Air India. It is a huge opportunity to further develop our company.”

He also points out that Gispol works with several distributors and directly with airline customers throughout Europe and the U.S., such as [Iberia](#), [Air Europa](#), [Corsair](#) and [Delta Air Lines](#).

In the year ahead, Alves says Gispol is also focusing on increasing its presence at industry events, as well as investing in its product design and development. The company is expanding its team and capacity, and investing in equipment for printing, scanning and other materials.