

MACHINERY

UPDATE

Issue 4, Volume XXXII, July/August 2021

The machinery only journal for processing & packaging | www.machineryupdate.co.uk

Automating changes

In our automation, robotics and vision systems feature we cover the latest technology that is helping firms to adapt to 'smart' and more sustainable ways of working



INSIDE



NEWS

The PPMA (the Processing & Packaging Machinery Association) will run its flagship PPMA Show at the NEC, Birmingham this year from the 28 – 30 September

NEW MACHINERY

Faedah Solutions has devised a paperless check system that it says, offers food firms a cost-effective system that even the smallest company can afford to buy and run. Find out more on page 12

INSTALLATIONS

Snack bags are now weighed quicker, with less giveaway and look great



PLUS

Registration for this year's PPMA Show which takes place at the NEC between 28 – 30 September, is open! www.ppmashow.co.uk

PUBLISHED BY

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MACHINERY UPDATE

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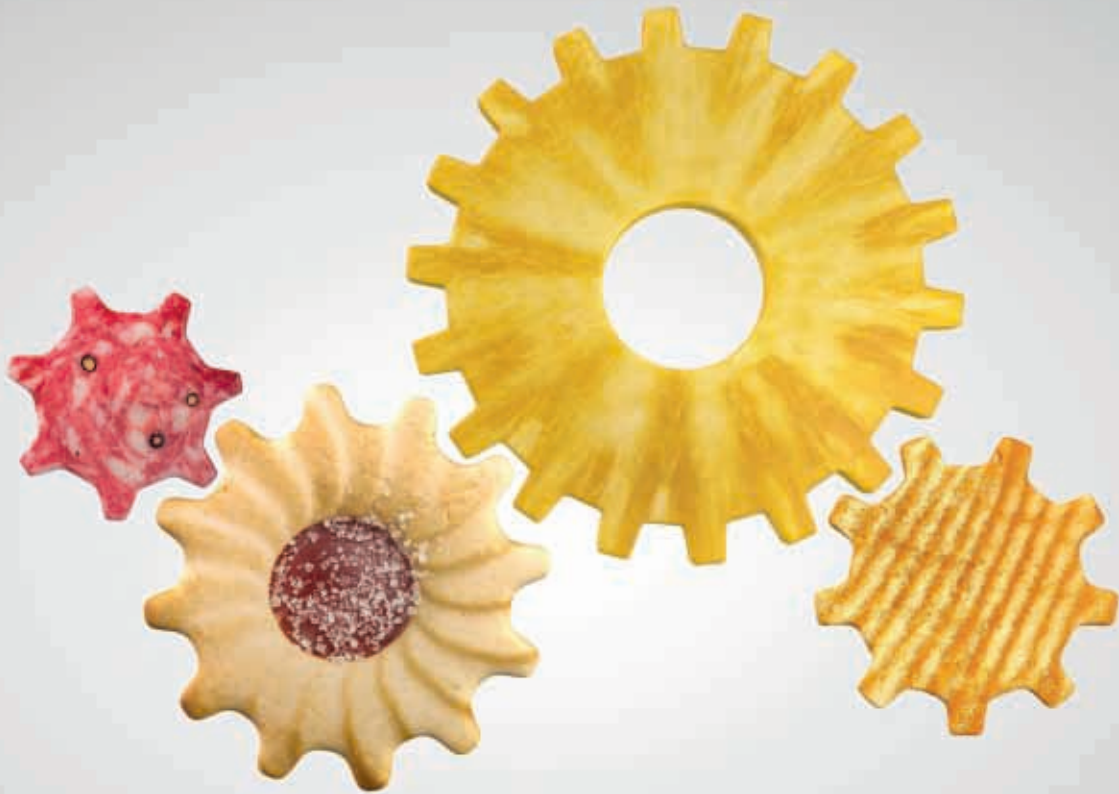
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PPMA matters

Show makes face-to-face a real thing



David Barber

CHAIRMAN, PPMA GROUP OF ASSOCIATIONS
(INCORPORATING PPMA, BARA AND UKIVA)

I can think of no happier news than the fact we are going to run our flagship processing and packaging machinery event, the PPMA Show, at the NEC, Birmingham from 28-30 September this year. Following last year's postponement, we have taken the decision to gather the industry together this autumn and run the three-day event once again.

We are therefore offering UK manufacturers the opportunity to see the very latest developments offered by our members across a huge range of technologies. A number of companies will be launching equipment and demonstrating machinery for the first time in a long time, as the global pandemic has wreaked havoc on the exhibition calendar over the last two years. And this gives end users a fantastic opportunity to see lots of new kit under one roof and learn about the benefits it can bring to their businesses in face-to-face conversations!

The PPMA Show will help to kick start UK manufacturing by demonstrating smarter ideas

This year's free-to-attend show will accommodate over 350 exhibitors representing 1,700 brands. Following much discussion with exhibitors and potential visitors, the overwhelming consensus was for a return to live events and as the show organiser, we are now working closely with the NEC to ensure the safety and well-being of all concerned.

Many food and drink factories have been running on near empty over recent months, and hopefully our show can help to meet any pent-up demand for new technology that will help them going forward. Indeed the pharmaceutical sector has also been working flat out to support the critical supply chain during the global pandemic.

It is therefore relevant that in this issue of *Machinery Update*, our annual automation, robotics and vision systems feature details many technologies designed to shape the future of UK manufacturing. Spanning 36 pages, we cover developments in automation, robotic options and vision systems that are all helping companies to adapt to change in a 'smarter' way. And with many industry commentators believing the combination of Brexit and COVID-19 will see a surge in investment in this area, our feature talks about how this might happen.

We feel proud that our PPMA Show and this magazine can play a positive role in bringing our manufacturing industries back to some kind of 'new normal' by helping to deliver the operational efficiencies that are critical going forward. ■



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The PPMA Show 2021 goes ahead this autumn

The PPMA (Processing and Packaging Machinery Association) has confirmed that its flagship PPMA Show will go ahead at the NEC, Birmingham on 28 – 30 September 2021.

Registration is now open for this year's eagerly awaited processing, packaging, machine vision and robotics event in Birmingham, and the announcement will come as welcome news to show-goers and industry influencers within the UK manufacturing sector.

Speaking after the decision to stage this year's event, show director for the PPMA Group of Associations Richard Little, said: "There were a lot of things to take into consideration when deciding to run this year's event; not least of all the safety and well-being of all concerned.

"Based on the advice we've received; the likely scenario is that all UK adults will have



The PPMA Show is widely accepted as being an important industry event

had or be eligible to receive their second COVID-19 vaccination by the time the show opens," he said. "Therefore, we believe restrictions that would materially impact our Show running will have been lifted.

The PPMA has also gauged the appetite of exhibitors and prospective visitors to attend a live show through a number of surveys, all of which generated a very favourable response.

"The overwhelming consensus among those within the industry is that they want to see the return of live

events; particularly in the food, beverage and pharmaceutical sectors," said Little.

This year's free-to-attend Show will house over 350 exhibitors, comprising more than 1,700 technology brands.

Since the Show's inception in 1988, it is now widely accepted as being the most important and influential industry event in the calendar for key decision-makers and purchasers.

Register for a free pass at the website below.

T 020 8773 8111

W www.ppmashow.co.uk



Rachel Hurst is the coo at Domino

Making engineering more inclusive will help redress balance

To mark International Women in Engineering Day, coo at Domino Printing Sciences Rachel Hurst encouraged more young women to choose STEM subjects during secondary education to help redress the large gender imbalance in both study and careers in engineering and other STEM-related roles.

"Young women who are on track to study STEM subjects need mentoring and nurturing," she says. "If we look at how many women are considering STEM and entering the engineering sector, it is not enough to bridge the skills gap; we need a step change.

"The reality is that a lot of engineering environments today are still male dominated and are not as inclusive as we need them to be," she says.

SPS 2021 will be complemented by a new digital event

This year's SPS, which is taking place from 23 – 25 November 2021, will have a hybrid format. By connecting the physical world of the fair with a digital add-on, the organiser Mesago Messe Frankfurt says it will be creating a holistic trade fair experience offering those interested around the world the chance to be part of the SPS 2021 event.

W www.sps-exhibition.com

sps
on air



THE EVOLUTION TEAM RAISES FUNDS FOR LOCAL BOY

Conquering Ben Lomond...

Fourteen members of the team at Evolution Bottling and Packaging Solutions based in Peebles in the Scottish Borders have climbed Ben Lomond to raise funds for a local lad, three-year-old Charlie Ramage who suffers with muscle disorders that have left him unable to sit, walk or talk. Add to their pot at: www.justgiving.com/team/EvolutionBPSLtd

Coding demo centre changes its location to help all customers

Markem-Imaje, manufacturer of product identification and traceability solutions, has moved its UK customer demonstration centre from its previous base in Manchester to Nottingham. The move sees the revamped centre relocate to the same location as the company's research and design centre, creating a central hub for customers at an easily accessible location. The commercial HQ remains in Manchester housing customer care, the helpdesk, sales and also service.

This new move also supports the company's remote working sales and engineering teams.

Two white papers that cover both EU regulations and Brexit are free

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This paper is for non-EU producers

Hold Tech Files has published two new white papers that are now free to download from the link below. The first explains how non-EU manufacturers can comply with EU Regulation 2019/1020 and the second explains the implications of Brexit for machine builders in all markets.

The new EU Regulation will be effective from 16 July this year and, says the company, has important implications for manufacturers and suppliers of a wide variety of industrial products. Of particular interest to manufacturers of industrial products in the white paper is the explanation of how to appoint an 'authorised representative' (that is required to fulfil obligations).

www.holdtechfiles.eu/links-and-resources



Brexit involving machine builders



Cama has been working since 1981

Italian company is celebrating its fortieth birthday

Cama Group is celebrating 40 years of innovation in packaging machinery. Since 1981, the family-owned business has partnered with customers of all sizes to offer secondary packaging systems that include cartoning and sleeving systems, case packers and robotic equipment.

Founded by Paolo Bellante, the company is now run by the family's second generation of Daniele and Annalisa. Today, the Group includes eight subsidiaries around the world including Cama North America as well as the UK, France, the Netherlands, Asia and Australia. The company has grown to 350 employees and now boasts 40 years of experience in the design and use of paperboard packaging and every year, invests 5% of sales revenue into R&D.

New Technical Centre of Excellence opens to better serve clients



The UK site will provide a dedicated R&D facility and offer customer benefits

BW Flexible Systems has opened a new Technical Centre of Excellence in Nottingham as part of its expansion plans to better serve customers across Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA).

The new centre, along with existing engineering and manufacturing centres in Italy and the Netherlands, will expand the company's product testing capabilities, enhance future customer collaboration for complex projects and increase partnerships with major material suppliers. The new facility will also complement BW Flexible Systems' existing

network of customer sales and service hubs in Italy, Russia, Dubai and South Africa.

The Technical Centre of Excellence in Nottingham will provide a dedicated research and development facility to maximise its technical expertise, and bring machinery experts, material partners and customers together to collaborate on new packaging solutions. This will include a focus on two areas of increasing need: developing automated solutions, as well as designing machinery that supports customers' increasing focus on packaging that uses sustainable materials.

Management buyout brings responsibility changes to grow Bradford-based supplier

Packaging, filling, capping and labelling equipment supplier Advanced Dynamics has completed a management buyout which has seen founder and former managing director Malcolm Little sell part of his shareholding in the business to sales director Tom Smith, who takes on the position of managing director.



New MD Tom Smith and executive chairman Malcolm Little

Little moves to the role of executive chairman, working alongside Smith to provide

strategic advice as the business enters its second chapter of growth.

"Having worked closely with Tom for more than five years, I am confident that he has the skills and ambition to drive the business forward as we

continue to expand our range and move into new markets," says Little.



Las Vegas event offers two shows

New technologies addressing the changing landscape of packaging and processing will be on display at PACK EXPO Las Vegas, that is co-located with Healthcare Packaging EXPO 2021, and takes place from September 27 – 29 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

With in-person trade shows suspended worldwide for well over a year, PACK EXPO Vegas is the first event in North America for attendees to fully experience, hands-on, the latest discoveries and developments. The two shows will be the only place this year that the industry comes together to experience a year's worth of product innovation research and education.

Organisers PMMI says that PACK EXPO Las Vegas and Healthcare Packaging EXPO's showcase of operations-improving and newly unveiled technologies will allow attendees to assess and compare solutions for current projects while inspiring future projects, all in a single trip under one roof. It's where executives and plant managers, engineers, brand managers and packaging designers come to see machinery in action, connect with suppliers, network and gain the latest perspective on many industries in over 40 vertical markets.

To learn more about PACK EXPO Las Vegas and Healthcare Packaging EXPO, its COVID-19 protocols and to register, go to www.packexpolasvegas.com

Regulations

The connected world brings safety challenges



Lee Ray

HEAD OF MACHINERY (UK) AT TÜV SÜD PRODUCT SERVICE

While Industry 4.0, or i4.0, is a growing global reality, the UK and Europe are lagging behind...

While i4.0 is a growing reality globally, research from McKinsey reveals that only 17 of the 44 members of the Global Lighthouse Network (manufacturers recognised as leading in their adoption of digital technologies) are in Europe. The UK is certainly lagging behind other countries and to date there is no certified SIRI (Smart Industry Readiness Index) assessor within the UK.

As many European manufacturing sites are brownfield, they lack the infrastructure to support new i4.0 smart factories. Hence some industries chose to follow the easier path of employing a low skilled and low paid workforce to carry out repetitive tasks.

The prevailing view appears to be that it is easier to build a new facility from scratch, rather than update current systems and processes – something that takes expertise, time and money.

Consequently, while manufacturers recognise the potential value of i4.0, many have been unable to translate that into workable transformation plans.

In 2017, Singapore launched the Smart Industry Readiness Index to help businesses (ranging from SMEs to multi-nationals) evaluate the i4.0 readiness of their facilities. Its accompanying Assessment Matrix was the world's first self-diagnostic i4.0 tool aimed at helping companies worldwide identify their i4.0 maturity level.

Realising that companies now need more help to better design and execute their transformation roadmaps, a new Prioritisation Matrix has been launched. This was developed by a partnership of the Singapore Economic Development Board, McKinsey & Company, SAP, Siemens and TÜV SÜD.

The Prioritisation Matrix partnership identified that the gap between awareness and implementation is often due to a company not having an effective i4.0 roadmap, and that prioritisation was critical to achieving this. Identifying focus areas that generate the greatest value drives both

- Today's state - an in-depth understanding of the company's current i4.0 maturity level
- Impact to the bottom line – identify the distinct i4.0 areas that can generate the greatest financial return
- Essential business objectives – the most critical business objectives should guide the selection of the i4.0 areas
- Reference to the broader community - emulate successes and learn from the mistakes of the manufacturing community. To translate the four TIER principles into practice, the Prioritisation Matrix helps to

- breakdown of profit and loss categories as a percentage of overall revenue. This allows more emphasis to be placed on Index Dimensions that have greater influence over the key cost drivers and prioritise those that deliver the greatest financial benefit
- 3 Key Performance Indicators – ranked to best reflect a company's desired future positioning and business outcomes
- 4 Identify proximity to the best-in-class – identify what the best-in-class have attained, to set pragmatic goals and aspirations. Identify the areas with the greatest scope for improvements. Companies that are already best in class in certain aspects could use this information to further widen the gap against their competitors.

However, the connected i4.0 world adds a new dimension in terms of machinery safety challenges. The Machinery Directive is currently under review as several gaps have been identified in the current structure which are highlighted in the "Report on the safety and liability implications of Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things and Robotics" by the EU Commission. This could see the Machinery Directive change to an EU Regulation.

A new i4.0 world could see the Machinery Directive change

informed decision making and effective resource allocation.

The aim of the Prioritisation Matrix is to therefore guide manufacturers to identify the areas of focus that will yield the greatest benefit to them. The ultimate aim is to alleviate uncertainties and help to accelerate the pace of i4.0 transformation. The Prioritisation Matrix should be used after companies have used the Assessment Matrix to determine the i4.0 maturity of their manufacturing facilities.

Let us first take a step back to the TIER framework, which provides a conceptual structure that underscores four key principles that companies must consider for holistic prioritisation:

quantitatively identify high-priority Index Dimensions where improvements will bring the most benefit. The idea is to offer an approach to help companies move in the right direction as they forge ahead with their i4.0 transformation roadmaps.

The Prioritisation Matrix formula brings together four inputs, each reflecting a key principle of prioritisation represented in the TIER framework:

- 1 Assessment Matrix Score – provides a baseline for companies to measure the impact of potential changes and track the progress of their transformation
- 2 The Revenue-Cost Profile

For more information contact www.tuv-sud.co.uk
TÜV SÜD is the PPMA Group's technical and legislative partner

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New Machinery

A paperless check system can help SMEs in the food sector

Faedah Solutions has developed a paperless check system that it says, offers the food industry a cost effective system that even the smallest company can afford to run.

Check Sure is not only mobile (working on any web enabled device), but it can interact with the line and stop it if a check is failed by the operator. The company believes that there are many systems that either capture checks to remove paper that are cost effective (but no interaction as solely Cloud based) or ones that are more expensive as they are installed on a line.

“Check Sure, however, is the best of both worlds,” explains

Wayne Johnson, director at Faedah Solutions.

“With its ability to run either on site servers or Cloud based on any web enabled devices, anything from mobile phones, entry level tablets to industrial PCs can be used.

“This puts the flexibility and choice in the hands of the manufacturer who is not therefore limited to what the supplier’s system supports,” he says.

Written in the latest software, Check Sure is designed with expansion in mind. Not limited to just checks, it can grow with any business and link into other systems, adding additional functionality. This,

for instance, can be anything from Bluetooth temperature probes to line data capture systems to



Check Sure CI is ideal for process manager usage

number of checks and the number of connections required. This allows companies to start off small or only purchase what they require at that time, but to be flexible enough to expand in the future. Indeed, the software can be installed free of any charges if the site only requires ten checks or less.

Meanwhile, the company has also developed Check Sure CI which is billed as an ideal tool for any continuous

improvement or process manager wanting to get the most out of their process, or who wants to calculate any ROI prior to a large scale purchase. This portable unit can be located next to any line or equipment and starts gathering line speed and total packs within a few minutes.

This system, which can be rented or purchased, can also capture other data (temperatures, weights etc).

T 01733 666751

W www.faedah-solutions.com

checkweigher links.

“Launching a new product during a global pandemic with lockdowns and site restrictions in place was a challenge, but it allowed us focused time on developing and testing the product to ensure that it met all the requirements of manufacturing industry once things started to get back to normal,” says Johnson.

In operation, the purchase of Check Sure is based on a perpetual license of the



Check Sure can be run on any web enabled device

A new spray system has been designed for sliced products that keeps each of them apart without any interleaving film

Multivac has designed a spray system to replace interleaves that separate thinly sliced or sticky products such as cheese, meats or vegan products.

With this sustainable liquid interleaving, there is no longer a requirement for conventional interleaving film between food slices and so the consumption of plastics during the packaging process can be reduced to a minimum.

However, these thinly sliced cheese, ham or vegan products are still presented



The new system is designed for slices

attractively in the pack, and the individual slices can be

removed cleanly by the consumer.

This new system can be integrated into existing slicer lines, and it is available for individual tests and product development in Multivac’s new Centre of Excellence for Slicers & Automation Solutions.

Precision nozzles on the spray system atomise a liquid interleaving medium, which is

both odourless and tasteless and can be tailored to the particular properties such as fat content, of the sliced product. It is applied evenly to the underside of the slices so that adhesion between the individual slices is reduced, but the product itself (taste, smell, colour) is not altered.

This procedure is common practice in the food industry with the likes of bakery products or sweets.

T 01793 425800

W www.multivac.co.uk

Robotic tool changer range is now designed for all robots and payload

Five new sizes have been launched to expand the existing MPS tool changer range from Stäubli, covering payload capacities from 15 kg to 80 kg, enabling the company to offer a robotic tool change solution for virtually all robots and payloads. Key characteristics of the new compact range include repeat accuracy of $\pm 1.5 \mu\text{m}$ and a wide variety of available transfer technologies.

Automatic tool changing systems can significantly increase the flexibility and productivity of a robot. Indeed, for many manufacturing processes and applications across a wide range of industry sectors, automatic tool change systems are the only way to address the specific and individual operations required.



The automatic tool changing system

All Stäubli robotic tool changing systems are based on a modular product concept, with three different ways for customers to obtain their ideal tool changing system. The MPS COMPLETE designation offers pre-configured complete systems ready for immediate use and are available on short delivery times. Stäubli's MPS MODULAR option offers readily available and production ready solutions tailored to meet individual customer requirements, while MPS CUSTOMIZED systems are designed around each unique application.

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Delicate products such as sliced apples, berries and even chocolate cookies can now be handled on an automated linear multihead weigher developed by Multipond.

This new weigher handles products gently and has the added advantage of being able to be integrated into a packaging line. It is a space-saving solution based on Multipond technology that makes it easy to clean in operation. It is billed as an extremely flexible production solution delivered in the smallest space coupled with maximum efficiency.

**SPACE-SAVING WEIGHER
ACHIEVES AN OUTPUT OF**

60

weighings a minute on products such as fresh fruit, pastries and a range of confectionery items

The drop heights within the product feed and product transfer have been reduced to an absolute minimum thanks to the linear design, while its compact construction is especially suitable for low height production rooms. It is also equipped with a transfer unit specially developed by Multipond.

The unit consists of counter-rotating conveyor belts with a centrally arranged timing hopper allowing the product to be presented to the packaging machine from a centred position. Optimised dosing and continuous product flow is delivered by the ARGUS 3D camera which delivers controlled filling of the weigh hopper.

T 01494 471580

W www.multipond.com

Adhesive melter delivers constant and reliable flow

The new EcoStitch melter series is, says Valco Melton, its most intelligent, versatile, and technologically advanced adhesive melter to date.

The latest features include Ethernet IP integration, digital pressure control, on-screen adhesive usage data and full OEM integration with all digitally-based data.

These EcoStitch melters do not require compressed air and also use precision gear pumps to deliver adhesive in a constant, reliable and repeatable fashion. There are four pump size options on all EcoStitch melters to fit specific application requirements. Its special digital closed loop pressure control feature allows food and drinks companies to digitally monitor, adjust and also have built-in, bespoke line adhesive pressure control.



The EcoStitch melters have eight possible hose/gun connections to deliver flexibility

Adhesive usage data is another new feature within the EcoStitch melters which allows users to monitor and measure the amount of hot melt adhesive being pumped through the system. Using either a customer input trigger or an additional photo-eye, the EcoStitch melter does not just calculate how much adhesive is used in a day, per hour or per year. It will also show users the average adhesive grams per product directly on the screen.

Ethernet IP Communication is available on all EcoStitch melters that plug into existing PLCs and be visible/accessible through existing HMIs.

“Now you can fully control your melting system, pumping system and adjust pressure with this integrated solution,” says Valco Melton’s UK sales manager Mat Garner.

INSTALLATION OPTIONS

Other features of the melters include the rear facing manifold and universal base plate which allows for installation onto almost any existing platform. The EcoStitch melters have eight possible hose/gun connections which means one melter is suitable for any application requirement.

T 01952 677911

W www.valcomelton.com



New vertical spindle attachment offers film loading gains

A bespoke vertical spindle attachment has been designed by Packline in response to a customer requirement to load rolls of film onto food processing machinery from several different angles in a confined space. The attachment enables the rolls of film to be loaded from the left- or right-hand side as well as upwards, without the need to re-manoeuver the lifting machine itself.

The new vertical spindle attachment can rotate through 360 degrees to facilitate loading onto the processing machine from any position. In addition, the vertical spindle has been ‘offset’ from the main lifting carriage of the lifter to gain easy access to the processing machinery from any angle.

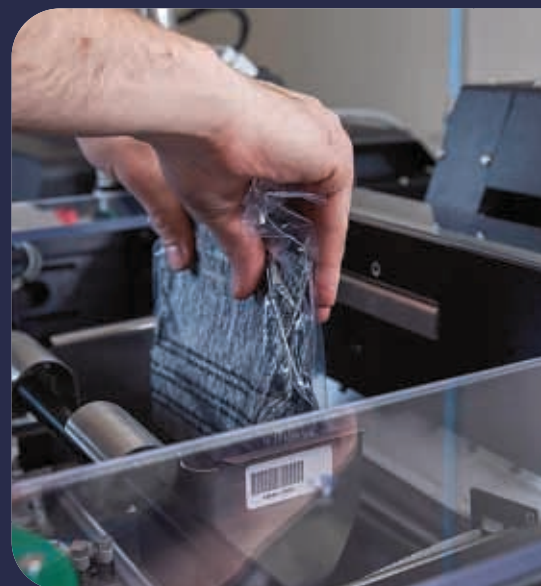
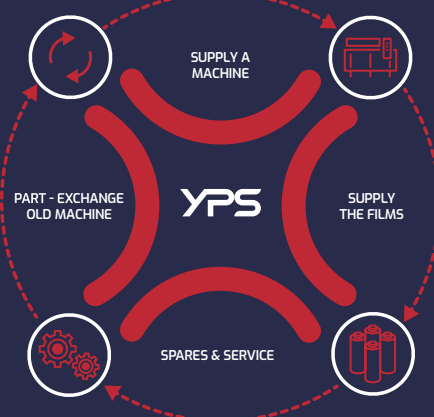
The lifter is also equipped with a stabilising carriage.

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New Machinery



Containment of material is key

Handling is critical for TiO2 in use

Spiroflow is taking steps to advise its customers on its range of conveying solutions that are ideally suited to the safe handling and containment of titanium dioxide (TiO2) powder. The move comes as a result of legislation changes made by the European Commission in February 2020, in classifying TiO2 as a suspected carcinogen (cat 2) by inhalation. The regulation becomes official on 1 October 2021, which means businesses handling TiO2 will need to upgrade the containment of their processes, so that their operators are protected.

Even products containing as little as 1% TiO2 will need to be included from this October.

Handling TiO2 in a production environment can often be problematic, particularly in conveying, where due to its cohesive properties, equipment such as screw conveyors can stall and ultimately fail. Dust and containment is also a major consideration.

Spiroflow regularly provides solutions for the safe and efficient handling of TiO2 through either their flexible screw or aero-mechanical conveyors. "As material handling specialists, we have always understood the need to test materials and to offer a proven solution to the customer," says Jeannette Carter, a regional sales manager at Spiroflow with a NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety.

T 01200 422525

W www.spiroflow.com

Pack stacker combines speed with reliability

Jenton Ariana has launched an automatic food pack stacker for end-of-line high speed collation where minimal operator intervention and reliability are critical.

Capable of operating at speeds of up to 150 packs per minute, Jenton's new collating system features multiple stacking finger modules to drop packs into the stack incrementally in a controlled manner. In addition, stepper-driven infeed and outfeed belts control entry and exit of the trays.

The colour touchscreen makes the stainless steel machine easy to set up for a large variety of pack sizes, materials, including plastics, card and foil, and stack heights up to 150 mm high, while all settings can be stored against a name. The packs are fully contained to ensure neat, stable stacks.



Jenton Ariana's new pack stacker can run at up to 150 packs per minute

Packs exit the outfeed of the converger and enter a short buffer conveyor where the speed is accurately controlled to ensure correct spacing between packs for stacking and indexing. The packs then drop into the collating pocket.

The collating conveyor consists of an inclined belt with flights positioned at a distance to suit the maximum pack length. Adjustable side guides ensure the packs enter the stacking area uniformly

and can be moved to suit different pack widths. After a stack has been collated, the inclined flighted belt indexes forward to allow the next stack to collate.

This sequence continues until the stacks reach the unload section at the end of the conveyor, where they can be removed by the operator.

T 01256 892194

W www.jenton.co.uk

Flexible part feeding option is easy to install and configure, and delivers rapid changeover

RNA Automation's VariPic flexible feeding system offers a compact package for the handling of complex and varied products, pre-configured and ready to use for fast integration. This solution combines robotics with intelligent vision software to deliver a complete system for flexible part feeding, as demonstrated when handling a Typhoon valve seat with a Springfit disposable mask skeleton (seen in the picture).



T 0121 749 2566

W www.rnaautomation.com

A range of conveyor combinations is offered with the VariPic system

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New Machinery



Thermal transfer option will double a line speed

Manufacturers can now print codes with high resin thermal transfer ribbons at up to 600 mm per second (2 feet per second) which, says manufacturer Markem-Imaje, is nearly double the speed of any other comparable option.

Maintenance is also reduced in this thermal transfer overprinting (TTO) application. The company is confident that existing high resin ribbon users will improve their profitability with greater throughput, while more companies can benefit from the extra durable and crisp prints provided.

While high resin ribbons achieve the durability required in the challenging production and/or shipping conditions, until now coding speeds have been limited to between 300 and 400 mm a second (0.98 - 1.31 ft/s), adversely affecting overall throughput. Printheads have also tended to wear out quickly, says the company.

The industries most



Products as diverse as nuts, crisps and antibacterial wipes can now benefit

commonly using high resin TTO printing are food and pharmaceuticals, for a whole host of products.

The advanced design of the SmartDate Xtreme Plus printhead means companies can now produce crisp, high resin codes at up to 600 mm/s (2 ft/s), nearly twice the speed of the market's next fastest coder using high resin ribbons. Markem says that production throughput no longer needs to be sacrificed in order to ensure durable codes.

All Markem-Imaje printheads, including this new SmartDate Xtreme Plus, come with a six month, or 40 kilometre (25 miles) warranty, so manufacturers can enjoy 60% more trouble-free coding than other comparable options, even in this challenging application.

The printhead can be used in new SmartDate X65 coders or retrofitted into existing SmartDate X65 units.

T 0161 864 8111

W www.markem-imaje.co.uk

Smart camera solves challenging OCR and detection work

Acrovision says the In-Sight D900 smart camera, powered by In-Sight ViDi, is a deep learning-based hardware and software solution that enables factory automation customers to easily solve challenging OCR, assembly verification, and defect detection applications. These inline applications are often too difficult to program with traditional, rule-based machine vision algorithms and require reliable, fast and consistent results not possible with human inspection.

In-Sight ViDi applications are built with the familiar and easy-to-use spreadsheet platform which simplifies application development and factory integration. They are deployed on the In-Sight D900 smart camera without the need for a PC, making deep learning technology accessible to non-programmers.

The In-Sight D900 offers all the modular benefits of the In-Sight 7000 such as IP67 rating, integrated lighting, flexible lenses, filters, and covers, plus HPIT illumination.

T 0845 337 0250

W www.acrovision.co.uk



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www.wirebelt.co.uk



Latest format has extended the range of gummy delivery forms

Baker Perkins and Rousselot have extended the range of gummy delivery forms for the functional and pharmaceutical sectors by developing a completely new format called the gummy cap. The important difference is the incorporation of the active ingredient in a liquid or gel centre-filling instead of the gelatin gummy.

Gummy caps combine the taste and texture of a gummy with the efficient delivery of a capsule and may be used in a wide range of nutraceutical and OTC healthcare products.



Up to 1500 kg an hour is the output

This new delivery form reflects the rise in popularity of gummies for medicinal purposes, particularly among children as compared to capsules, gummies are visually appealing with a pleasant taste. Taking a daily supplement in this format becomes a treat, not a chore and the ability to create a variety of 3D shapes with the option of sugar-free production also extends marketing opportunities.

The gummy cap process maximises the utilisation of expensive active ingredients. As an example, an 80 mg Vitamin C gummy cap requires 30% less Vitamin C in the formulation than a traditional functional gummy.

T 01733 283000

W www.bakerperkins.com

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New Machinery

Cardboard multipacks can be produced on latest line



KHS's Innopack Kisters CNP machine handles cardboard can toppers from Smurfit Kappa and other manufacturers

KH S Group's new Innopack Kisters CNP (Carton Nature Packer) processes can toppers made of cardboard at a rate of up to 108,000 cans per hour. With the help of its recently developed CNP machine, the turnkey supplier says it is establishing a further sustainable form of secondary packaging on the market.

The Innopack Kisters CNP has been designed as a modular system that can be individually added to, as and when required. This means that operators can switch to different cardboard materials

or alter the pack size, among other options. The company believes that this new unit delivers the flexibility required by brand owners for different secondary packaging options.

KHS has also found a partner for its sustainable packaging system: the cardboard can toppers, which are available in both a closed (TopClip) and open (GreenClip) versions, are by Smurfit Kappa.

"Thanks to Smurfit Kappa's many years of expertise, coupled with our complex specialist knowledge in mechanical engineering, we can offer our customers

a future-proof packaging system that's sustainable, consumer friendly and gentle on resources," explains Sören Storbeck, global packaging product account manager at KHS. The machine also handles non-Smurfit Kappa produced packaging and can be used for both standard and sleek can formats holding between 250 and 580 ml. The alternative to classic plastics film or plastics rings can also handle various sizes of multipack containing four, six or eight containers.

T 0121 713 6900
W www.khs.com



More detail at sound.leybold.com

Online sound checks for vacuum pumps is a free service tool

Leybold says it has taken a big step towards the digitalisation of its product line by offering an online sound check for vacuum pumps on its website.

This new free tool gives users immediate feedback regarding the condition of their vacuum pumps. Customers can simply record a sequence of a pump's sound with a smartphone or tablet at sound.leybold.com or by uploading the sound file. The sound analysis is then used to determine whether the pump is running properly or if a service is due for optimum performance.

This feature initially applies to the Varodry and Novadry oil-free screw vacuum pumps but will be extended to its other pumps.

T 01372 737300
W www.leybold.com

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New Machinery

Modular conveyors are designed to simplify packaging coding for users

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Rotech Machines has launched a new range of modular conveyor systems, designed specifically for food, pharmaceutical, medical and industrial packaging operations.

The small, modular, interlocking conveyors offer customers greater packing and coding flexibility, allowing users to pack goods and print codes at speed in any location. The all-in-one conveyor systems are particularly beneficial where space is limited, where coding and packing is currently performed in different locations, or where a conventional industrial conveyor is too large.



They are independent or interlocked

Each Rotech conveyor is designed for the easy installation of a range of small, high-speed printers anywhere on the line, such as thermal inkjet or large area printers. Users can rapidly apply codes onto all packaging types including cartons, bottles, flat packaging or direct printing onto outer boxes. Available with either fixed feet or castors, the free-standing modular conveyors will improve packaging efficiency, save space and speed up output, says Rotech.

T 01707 393700

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Pods work in a wastepaper stream

Paper packaging is a sustainable option across food sectors

As the demand for more sustainable products continues to grow, Syntegon can provide food and non-food manufacturers with a new paper-based packaging solution of shaped paper pods which are formed on its TPU1000 form, fill and seal system at up to 15,000 an hour.

These sustainable portion packs are made of fibre-based material with a filling volume of up to 100 ml. This makes them suitable for product samples, inserts, refills, portion packs and disposable packaging. They can also be used to package dry and chunky food like biscuits and chocolate, but also viscous foods like yoghurt and even non-food products, such as batteries and decorative cosmetics.

T 01332 626262

W www.syntegon.com

ATEX certified entrance solutions are introduced

Assa Abloy is launching ATEX certified entrance solutions that, it says are precision engineered to meet all quality and safety standards.

ATEX areas exist wherever flammable gases, vapours or combustible dust come in contact with oxygen, or where sources could generate sparks, flames, rising temperature or static energy. The new Assa Abloy HS-PX3 family of high-speed doors are composed of materials suitable for ATEX use.

The company says that some doors on the market only feature ATEX-certified components, whereas this range ensures that every single element (and the door as a whole) is independently verified and graded to meet the international requirements for safe use in hazardous areas on a site.

The three options are called HS9010PX3, HS8010PX3 and HS8020PX3. They are designed for ATEX environment category 3 and are medium



Assa Abloy offers three new options for the ATEX environment category 3

sized: maximum 5500 x 5500 mm. Designed for heavy-duty operations, inside and outside usage, the doors offer an opening speed up to 1 m/s.

“Our ATEX entrance solutions enable a continuous flow of goods and people, as well as improved working conditions,” explains Paul Dale, marketing officer industrial door solutions at Assa Abloy. “The fast opening

and closing speed improves your traffic flow, provides employee comfort, and saves energy.

“These entrance solutions allow for partitioning to reduce the size of required Ex and ATEX areas which, in turn, further reduces costs, increases safety and productivity,” he says.

T 0330 094 5620

W www.assaabloyentrance.co.uk

New tray sealing feature can be retrofitted for customers to increase sealing capacity within their existing equipment

Proseal has launched a new feature to enable customers to achieve increased sealing capacity within their existing equipment. The new GT-Max system, which can be retrofitted to all Proseal GTO, GT1, GT2 s and e models, has been seen to increase production speed by up to 25%. The enhancement is incorporated within the machine's existing footprint, retaining each tray sealing machine's already compact dimensions, while allowing



The GT-Max system is launched

companies to further boost speeds and throughput without altering or extending the existing line layout.

The Max system is compatible with all seal cycle

types including skin deep. Customers are able to utilise all their existing tool formats as well as a range of new Max formats available.

“Increasingly competitive markets are putting even greater pressure on production time and targets,” explains Tony Burgess, sales director at Proseal. “Maximising capacity is therefore all the more essential, but for many companies the challenge is to deliver this within their existing factory footprint.

“Our latest GT-Max feature provides the perfect solution, enabling both new and existing customers to obtain enhanced performance and even greater value out of their tray sealing machines,” he continues. “Along with a variety of additional upgrades that are also available, this demonstrates our commitment to the future proofing of all our machines.”

T 01625 856600

W www.proseal.com

New Machinery



The Arol Reverse offers benefits

Returnable bottle caps can now be unscrewed easily

Arol has developed Arol Reverse for bottlers looking for an effective way to unscrew pre-threaded plastics caps and threaded aluminium caps from glass and rPET bottles that have been returned.

In operation, the unit can safely unscrew caps with a diameter from 28 to 38 mm at speeds up to 60,000 caps an hour or 1,000 a minute. It can have between 3 to 30 heads, has a quick format change option and includes special handling parts in stainless steel for rPET bottles to prevent scratches to bottles. There is also a no de-capping feature to prevent bottle neck damage.

T 00 39 141 82 05 00

W www.arol.com

Skin thermoformer for a range of fresh foods



Quality enhancements have been achieved on the PowerPak SKIN.50 by the new top film guiding and pre-heating station

GEA has launched the latest version of its skin thermoforming packaging technology – the PowerPak SKIN.50.

This new machine provides processors of sliced products, meat cuts, sausages, fish, hard cheese and high-end products such as seafood, with high-capacity packing of products of up to 100 mm high that protrude up to 50 mm above the level of the packing tray.

The PowerPak SKIN.50 can also perform vacuum and modified atmosphere packaging functions on the same machine.

This thermoforming

packaging machine brings together a high production capacity and excellent packing quality with the minimum of wrinkles in the finished pack, says the company. GEA has achieved this high capacity through clever engineering that gives an index length of up to 600 mm, up to eight tracks and four rows of product.

Quality enhancements have been achieved by using a new top film guiding and pre-heating station. This avoids tapering of the film, makes the top film easier to form (so prevents wrinkles) and improves the overall

appearance of the package. It also ensures the correct alignment during sealing.

The modular design of the GEA PowerPak SKIN.50 thermoforming packaging system allows a choice of feeding, labelling and end of line equipment to meet customer requirements.

GEA says the versatile skin packaging process is becoming increasingly popular for fresh and premium-grade foods as it wraps all products perfectly, even those with irregular shapes.

T 01908 513500

W www.gea.com

Latest smart blister inspection system is delivering more features to users while being easy to use for the operator

The continuous improvement of Jekson's blister inspection system means it is now a smart inspection unit involving deep learning and advanced artificial intelligence capabilities. This latest system has an operator friendly user interface with a simple to run teaching wizard for the automatic setting up of the system and its tolerances with no human intervention or manual selection needed. Additionally, all the data



The BiSmart system delivers real-time information to users

generated by the latest BiSmart system is streamed to the cloud and premise servers, effectively creating its own learning database, fully industry 4.0 ready, and allows all details on

each rejected tablet and blister to be available in real-time, at all times.

The system, which is easy to integrate into any blister machine, can also be customised to suit individual needs. These additional requirements can, for example, include pinhole detection and/or vision inspection of the blister and its content, before, during and also after sealing.

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W www.jeksonvision.com

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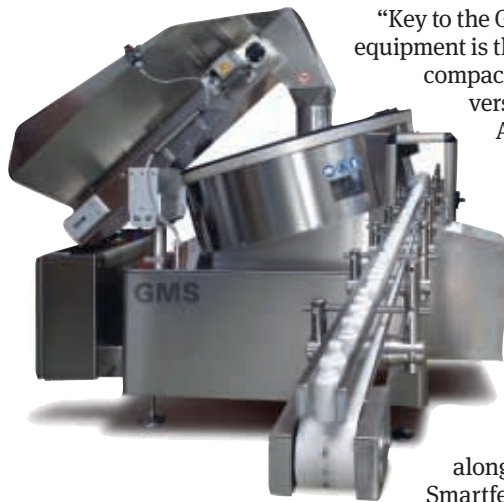
New Machinery

Bottle unscramblers are now available in the UK

The range of bottle unscramblers from Spanish company GMS Feeding Systems is now exclusively sold and supported throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland by the packaging machinery division of Advanced Tooling Systems UK. This equipment has served the European pharmaceutical, medical, cosmetics, chemical and personal care sectors for over 25 years.

"We are extremely pleased to formalise this longstanding relationship between both companies and very proud to represent such an established brand," says Richard Aitchison, technical sales & product manager at ATS Group, Packaging Machinery Division.

"We are very pleased to secure the partnership with ATS Packaging and this agreement confirms our commitment to the UK and Ireland by providing local service and support," explains Xavier Sánchez, managing



Unscramblers are a compact option

director of GMS Feeding Systems.

The GMS range of bottle unscramblers is suitable for a wide range of products and pack formats – anything from a 3 ml medical/pharmaceutical application (vials, stoppers, syringes or nasal sprays etc) up to 1 litre plastics containers for FMCG style products at speeds of up to 250 bottles per minute.

"Key to the GMS range of equipment is that they are compact and also versatile," says Aitchison.

The range of bottle unscramblers available includes flexible step feeding and high speed rotary disc orientating solutions along with the Smartfeeder robotic solution which is designed for complicated part orientation with vision inspection options.

Service technicians from ATS Packaging have already completed formal training on all aspects of mechanical, electrical and control system support with remote diagnostics after-sales support being offered as standard to all customers.

T 01622 678143
W www.ats-packaging.com



Automated guided vehicles are added to automation offer

Robotics and automation company RMGroup has announced a distributor partnership with ASTI Mobile Robotics, manufacturer of automated guided vehicles (AGVs).

The move sees RMGroup include AGVs and autonomous mobile robots (AMRs) in its product portfolio which, says director Rosie Davies, provides a natural extension to the company's existing automation capabilities and will provide a complementary offering.

"This partnership means we can now offer a seamless, integrated solution for all product and pallet handling requirements," she says.

ASTI has offices in Spain, Germany, France and the US and specialises in the engineering of AGVs for blue-chip customers across a range of sectors.

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W www.rmgrouppuk.com

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Installation News



The turntable stretch wrapper

Stretch wrap delivers safe pack for beers

When the Black Sheep Brewery in Masham needed to complete its new turnkey packaging operation, it turned to Yorkshire Packaging Systems (YPS) for a solution to deliver consistent wrapping results. The brewer needed a robust stretch wrapping unit to complete its new line, and it was also looking for a fast installation.

YPS supplied a turntable stretch wrapping machine manufactured by Robopac, which more than met the brewery's speed requirements of five pallets an hour. It boasts a power pre-stretch film carriage to maximise the yield from each roll of stretch film and improve the load containment force for each pallet. A pump truck ramp was also supplied to ensure easy and safe loading of product onto the turntable.

The equipment was delivered and commissioned in less than one month from the date of initial enquiry and has been preparing consistently wrapped pallets of trayed bottles, cans and casks for transit ever since.

"We have significantly reduced damage to our bottles during transportation since utilising the new pallet wrapper, much to the appreciation of our customers across the UK and as far around the globe as New Zealand," explains Robert Theakston, md of Black Sheep Brewery.

T 01484 715111
W www.yps.co.uk

Traysealer and labeller are delivering operational gain

Celtic Coast Fish Company has replaced its manual packing processes used to pack and label its fish products to speed up operations and improve pack presentation.

Volume, efficiency, presentation and space were all key considerations when deciding the best solution for the business to increase its output and reduce manual processes. Celtic Coast had worked closely with Multivac on previous projects and made contact to discuss potential options.

This saw the traysealing packaging machine upgraded from a manual draw system to an automatic traysealer to help increase throughput. With its space-saving design, Multivac's T 300 traysealer was selected to provide Celtic Coast with the output it required. Indeed, it delivered a threefold output increase.

The solution also improved pack quality and presentation through the use of various packaging formats including



The T 300 traysealer and L 310 labeller from Multivac have been installed

Multivac's Multifresh skin packaging. The T 300 traysealer can also be configured with multiple tracks to enable quick die change for various pack sizes which was an important feature for the business.

A new labelling solution was also required. Multivac's L 310 labelling system was chosen as the most suitable to label the wide variety of products Celtic Coast produce. The new labelling system removed the need for intensive manual labour and increased

production output. It also enhanced pack appearance with the application of high-quality labels while also improving the accuracy of label placement.

The recipe management feature of the new L 310 labeller also enabled operators to save recipes for the various pack formats to reduce time when changing between different pack sizes to ensure the label was placed perfectly.

T 01793 425800
W www.multivac.co.uk

A four-side sealing process has increased efficiencies while expanding the services

Workwear rental and cleanroom laundry supplier Micronclean has said its investment in three new Beck Serienpacker SXJ packaging machines has helped increase efficiency and allowed it to expand its service offering to customers.

Purchased from Friedheim International, the three machines have replaced existing machinery that had become unreliable.

"We found that the Beck Serienpacker SXJs were



The unit was supplied by Friedheim

similar in design to our existing kit but were capable of far higher throughput speeds than the older

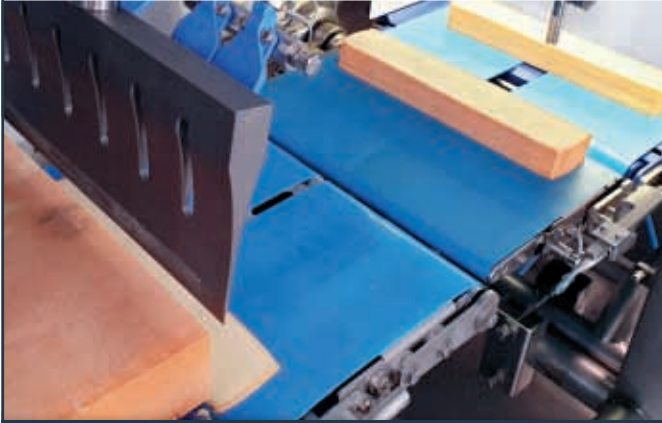
machines, which, for us, was the perfect solution," explains Micronclean plant manager Andy Grist.

Since the three machines were installed, Micronclean has seen a huge improvement in production, with the new machines reducing the amount of rework required on packaging defects, leading to significant savings on time and costs.

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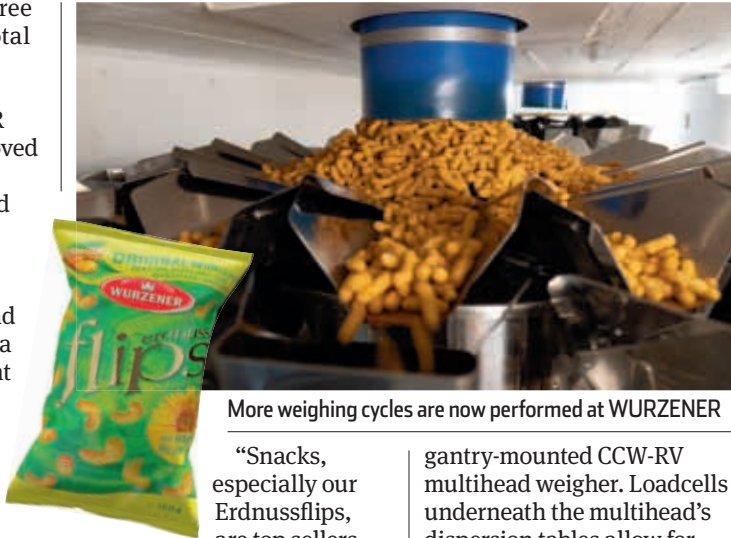
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Installation News

Integrated packaging systems have delivered all-round gain

The installation of three Ishida integrated Total Packaging Systems (iTPS) at German snack manufacturer WURZENER Nahrungsmittel has improved weighing speeds by about 75% and almost eliminated product giveaway, while delivering higher quality snacks bags with fewer rejects and less product and film waste. This has led to a fast payback on investment for the company.

The Ishida iTPS's are part of three new packing lines for the company's range of extruded corn snacks, including its top-selling peanut-flavoured Erdnussflips, onion rings and cheese puffs. The iTPS is a fully integrated snack food packing system which combines a multihead weigher from the CCW-RV series with the Ishida Inspira, the efficient bagmaker specifically developed for snack foods. Both machines are seamlessly integrated and operated via a single control panel.



More weighing cycles are now performed at WURZENER

"Snacks, especially our Erdnussflips, are top sellers at WURZENER," explains managing director Stefan Kuhl.

Each individual snack weighs just 1 g, which can present a challenge for an automated weighing system. It is also essential to minimise any build-up of seasoning during the flavouring process, as this can reduce speed and require more frequent cleaning.

In operation, funnels guide the snacks to the

gantry-mounted CCW-RV multihead weigher. Loadcells underneath the multihead's dispersion tables allow for a consistent product flow to the radial feeder troughs. The vibrating troughs transfer the product to a set of 14 pool hoppers, which hold them for a short time before supplying them to another row of 14 weigh hoppers.

As soon as a weigh hopper becomes empty and is available for its next filling process, a signal is sent to the corresponding pool hopper.

The system's software then takes just a fraction of a second to calculate the three best weigh hopper combinations, check them again and select the combination that comes closest to the required target weight.

These multihead weighers can complete many more weighing cycles than WURZENER's previous volumetric system along with a significant improvement in accuracy.

Weighed snacks are then transferred to the bagmaker via a high-speed parabolic chute with integrated throat metal detector.

The Ishida Inspira bagmakers are suitable for a wide range of film materials and sizes. At WURZENER, the Inspira bagmakers produce pillow bags between 75 g and 450 g and, says md Stefan Kuhl, the result is snack bags of a "higher quality across the board", with fewer rejects and less product and film waste.

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Reliability has been appreciated

Tray sealers for ready meals have delivered efficiency

Tray sealing technology from Proseal is supporting the continuing expansion of Chefgood, one of Australia's leading producers of home-delivery ready meals.

Two Proseal GTOe tray sealing machines have now been installed at the Chefgood factory in Moorabbin, Victoria, replacing the company's original tray sealer from another supplier. The greater efficiency and higher speeds of the new machines – some three times faster than the previous unit – has enabled Chefgood to achieve a much greater throughput, handling about 35,000 trays every week.

Chefgood also cites the machines' excellent reliability as a key factor in their selection as well as the KPI benefits gained from their reporting features.

T 01625 856600

W www.proseal.com

Double or triple bagging for sterile product usage

Double or triple bagging of pharmaceutical items is required when their final point of use is an operating theatre or another vulnerable area, requiring extreme hygiene measures and the Schur Star packaging machine is proving ideal.

The system can handle trigger sprays containing IPA or ethanol liquids, where the bags are removed in stages before being transported to the final point of use.

The bagging process for such

products is extremely labour intensive and can never match the consistent workflow of a fully automated process on a Schur Star unit. The concept of pre-made bags offers a precise bag intake ensuring that the bag will always be placed correctly for the filling process.

In operation, integrated robots collect and insert the items



The rectangular fill opening is a key user gain



The system handles unevenly shaped products

precisely into the bag – both single and double index filling – and fold the bag top down. Integrated air evacuation units handle these steps fully automatically, while irradiation dots can be placed automatically for added security.

Only one operator is

required to keep an eye on the control panel and continuously provide supplies to the conveyor.

With its rectangular fill opening along the entire width of a bag, the Schur Star machine is ideal for filling unevenly shaped products. These include pharmaceutical items such as wipes, utensils, labware, hospital supplies, and surgical kits.

T 00 49 461 99750

W www.schur.com

Remote access and maintenance has become an imperative in helping the global customers of a sleeving machine range

Software engineer at Sleeve Technology Coen van der Kant is using Ixon for remote access and remote maintenance on the company's sleeving equipment used for printing labels on personal care and food products by multi-nationals such as Unilever and Campina.

Coen has been working at Sleeve Technology for two years and is responsible for programming and controlling the machines. "When I started here, we didn't use a remote

access solution," Coen recalls. "I had worked with another solution before, but I wasn't really happy with them, but through one of our partners we learned about Ixon's IXrouter."

With sales all over the world, and a focus on service, the need for remote access to machines quickly became clear. "We need to be able to connect to our machines as quickly as possible for troubleshooting," says Coen.

T 00 31 857 441 105

W www.ixon.cloud



Sleeve Technology is developing new modules for film unwinding and this new equipment will also be equipped with an IX router from Ixon for remote access

Installation News

Monitoring the cold chain for COVID-19 vaccines is crucial

A maximum of 48 hours in 14 days; that is the time frame for which one of the new COVID-19 vaccines is permitted to be out of the cold chain during the filling and packing process.

This makes an efficient cold chain tracking system – like the one Uhlmann Pac-Systeme has set up for an international pharmaceuticals company – all the more important. It monitors the cold chain throughout the entire process – from delivery of the vaccine to the final freezing of the packed vials.

Producers of C-19 vaccines need to build supply chains for millions of doses within the shortest possible time frame, as the active ingredients can degrade if the cold chain is broken for too long.

“With our digital cold chain tracking, we are helping to ensure the maximum number of vaccine doses can be provided,” explains Georg Schick, global product manager track & trace at Uhlmann.

The digital solution operates as follows: The vaccine batches are registered when they are received. From this point, the system records every time they are checked into the cold chain and checked out for filling or packing. This is achieved by printing the vials in the filling station with a UV code which can then be read by the VisioRead camera system.

The Uhlmann Control Terminal T1 prepares and



Georg Schick works on track & trace at Uhlmann

and time spent, in the cold chain which is compared to the maximum time permitted outside of the cold chain. The resulting cold chain status is displayed at every checkpoint via a traffic light system. If the cold chain is broken when a processing step takes too long, the system triggers an alarm. This allows the packaging process to be controlled accordingly, and the largest possible number of vaccine doses to be ‘rescued’.

Schick says digital monitoring of the cold chain is much more precise and provides real-time reporting. It can be used to detect critical batches early, allowing them to be

given preferential treatment or at least be removed as soon as possible. In addition, Uhlmann’s tracking system can be integrated into an existing track & trace process, extending the scope, accordingly.

T 01252 743120

W www.uhlmann.de

records the serialisation data and the aggregation. A central server collects all of the data and this is where the batches to be monitored are created and finalised, and where the reports and documentation are produced.

Uhlmann’s system documents withdrawals from,

This project demonstrates how digital solutions lead to improved safety, efficiency and productivity

Jet mixers are increasing the yield and reducing cycle time

Ytron-Quadro (UK) has supplied three more Ytron-Y directed jet mixers to Yeo Valley Farms Production. These side entry units are installed in 9,000 litre vessels in the yogurt mix plant at the Blagdon facility, replacing top entry marine blade propeller mixers that were originally installed. Ytron-Y units were selected to ensure an homogeneous mix and to quickly incorporate/fold in foam generated during the powder



Yeo Valley Farms Production at Blagdon

addition phase of the process.

T 01494 792898

W www.ytron-quadro.co.uk

A fabrication project proved to be a creative pastry challenge

This year has seen WMH take on two fabrication projects that gave its welder-fabricators a chance to get creative in the form of seasonal pastry cutters for an artisan baker.

Unable to source cutters of



Cutters needed to be robust in use

robust enough quality, the client approached WMH to see if it was possible for them to create bespoke versions.

The first cutter was for a heart profile designed to cut seven inter-leafed shapes at a time across a width of dough that had to integrate with an automated production line. This product worked so well, the client returned before Easter for a single hand-cutter for bunny shapes.

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Installation News

Materials flow system delivers benefits to eCommerce trades

Interroll and Teknokom have devised a fully automated and remotely monitored materials flow system for the Karaca Group.

The automated order picking system for Cookplus in Istanbul, Turkey includes the RollerDrive EC 5000, MultiControl, and the Modular Conveyor Platform (MCP) from Interroll. The system combines advanced features such as travel control, automatic invoice printing, dynamic volume measurement, with cargo label applications and real-time monitoring.

The order picking system was delivered and installed by integrator Teknokom and is a key part of a modern, 6,000sq m distribution centre of Cookplus in Hadimköy near Istanbul which serves customers all over Turkey. Cookplus is the eCommerce brand of the Karaca Group, a company in the tableware, kitchen and home textile market, operating with 2,700 dealers and shops.

The zero-pressure-



Interroll equipment has helped to increase capacity at the Turkish company

accumulation conveyors used for this materials flow solution have a length of more than 220 metres interconnecting a variety of picking stations with the packaging and shipping areas on two floors of the facility. The efficient and energy-saving conveying of totes and parcels uses about 190 RollerDrive EC 5000 units being controlled by 60 Interroll MultiControls cards connected to a programmable logic controller (PLC) and also a warehouse management system.

“With our new solution we dramatically increased the performance and capacity of our distribution and fulfilment centre by avoiding a variety of complex manual internal processes,” says Ertugrul Celebi, chief operating officer, logistics & supply chain for Karaca. “Just as important to us as increasing our efficiency was further improving customer satisfaction through very fast and reliable deliveries,” he says.

The advanced conveyor system is managed by

software developed by Teknokom, a long-standing member of the Rolling On Interroll program, Interroll’s international partner network. The software applications use the data gathered by Interroll’s MultiControl cards for monitoring purposes.

One example is an intelligent travel control feature which allows bypassing picking stations or a complete floor if no action from operators is needed. Moreover, at the end of the picking operation, before packaging, a printer automatically equips every order with the respective invoice for the products.

Upon entering the shipping area, a label applicator automatically pastes a barcode label to each order for the forwarding agent; this label contains all of the necessary information, including the order destination, volume information and a list of the parcel’s contents.

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Flow wrapper provides pack variety required for produce

Produce wholesaler Cross and Wells has installed an Atlanta flow wrapper from Ulma Packaging to meet increasing demand for product variety.

“We chose Ulma over other machinery suppliers because they recognise that all packaging requirements are unique, and therefore require maximum flexibility and versatility,” says Steve Wardell, managing director at Cross and Wells. “It is especially important that we can accommodate all produce types and dry goods, so we can best respond to specific customer expectations.”



Product variety is handled by Ulma

“Ulma stood out to us because they were able to provide a quality, reliable and cost-effective solution,” he continues. “Simply put, Ulma was able to out-perform other options when it came to cost, so they were a very attractive option.”

Cross & Wells’ key considerations were versatility in terms of package length and size as well as cutting speed. The electronically controlled Atlanta was chosen for its versatility and flexibility in product changes. “It offers excellent dynamics in its sealing operations,” explains Oliver Early, regional sales manager at Ulma. “Minimised production downtime is a real value-add for us,” says Wardell.

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Registration is required for access

Digital platform is designed to keep everyone informed

Following the success of its digital shows which were held last year to present the latest technology advancements in the absence of trade fairs, Marchesini Group has developed a new solution to stay close to clients.

With the global pandemic still preventing travel and close contact between people, the Group has decided to create EXTRA (marchesini.com/extra) which is an interactive digital platform designed to allow users to get better acquainted with the company's vast range of solutions as well as access various presentations, webinars and tours of the company's production facilities.

EXTRA went live in May and the interactive platform can be freely accessed following initial registration.

www.marchesini.com/extra

Last autumn, Shawpak was selected to supply ten thermoform machines for a project in the USA packing a COVID-19 vaccine delivery device.

These machines were selected because of their compact size as well as their ability to be integrated within an automated production cell where the device is automatically assembled and then robotically loaded into the Shawpak. A vision and reject system was also incorporated within the Shawpak scope of supply checking OCR data to ensure it was compliant with strict US FDA and Pharmaceutical standards.

The ten Shawpak machines will have the capacity to produce nearly 1.5 million C-19 vaccine delivery devices every 24 hours using only two operators per shift. The Shawpak process has a condensed loading area, designed to make automated



The Shawpak units are integrated within an automated production cell

loading simple and cost effective through the use of a 4-axis robot.

In this application Shawpak was able to supply a fully integrated solution which included the proprietary thermoform machine, inline thermal transfer printing, vision inspection, robot

loading of the product and a reject system, all within a 3sq m footprint.

"We believe this is a unique machine for a unique solution," says Tony Crofts, sales and marketing director at Shawpak.

T 01332 755622

W www.riversidemedical.co.uk

A new Robot Demonstration Vehicle is designed to provide potential customers with a COVID-safe way to see robotics

Stäubli is addressing the challenges of postponed or cancelled exhibitions head on through its investment in a new Robot Demonstration Vehicle, to provide potential customers with a COVID-safe opportunity to see first-hand some of the latest robot developments in its range.

"With little opportunity to participate in traditional industry events this year, the timing of our new mobile showroom has become the best way to connect with our



The vehicle allows visitors to see robots in a safe and managed environment

customers," explains Stäubli's Simon Jenkins.

With the vehicle on a customer site, individuals can

view the robot demonstrations and supporting video material at their leisure. Robots that are currently showcased

within the vehicle include a collaborative TX2-60, using a combination of sensors and light-guards to allow visitors to interact with the robot in a safe Man Robot Collaboration display.

A second demonstration is centred around Stäubli's TS2-40 SCARA robot which performs a series of high-speed handling and laser tasks, using an automatic tool changer as part of its routine.

T 01952 671917

W www.staubli.co.uk

Manufacturing deal boosts UV tech to help protect against COVID-19

Manufacturer of packaging automation and UV systems Jenton has turned to PP Control & Automation to help it meet growing demand for its technology that helps to deliver clean air in indoor spaces.

Jenton Group has signed a deal with the strategic manufacturing outsourcing specialist to produce 100 units of its GRU-V product, a wall-mounted UV air disinfection device that exposes ducted air to ultraviolet (UV-C) light.

This process disinfects more than 99.99% of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in the air (the virus that causes Covid-19) and is increasingly being purchased for use in workplaces across the UK, Europe and the US, as well as in residential, commercial, healthcare, medical and education settings.

INCREASED DEMAND

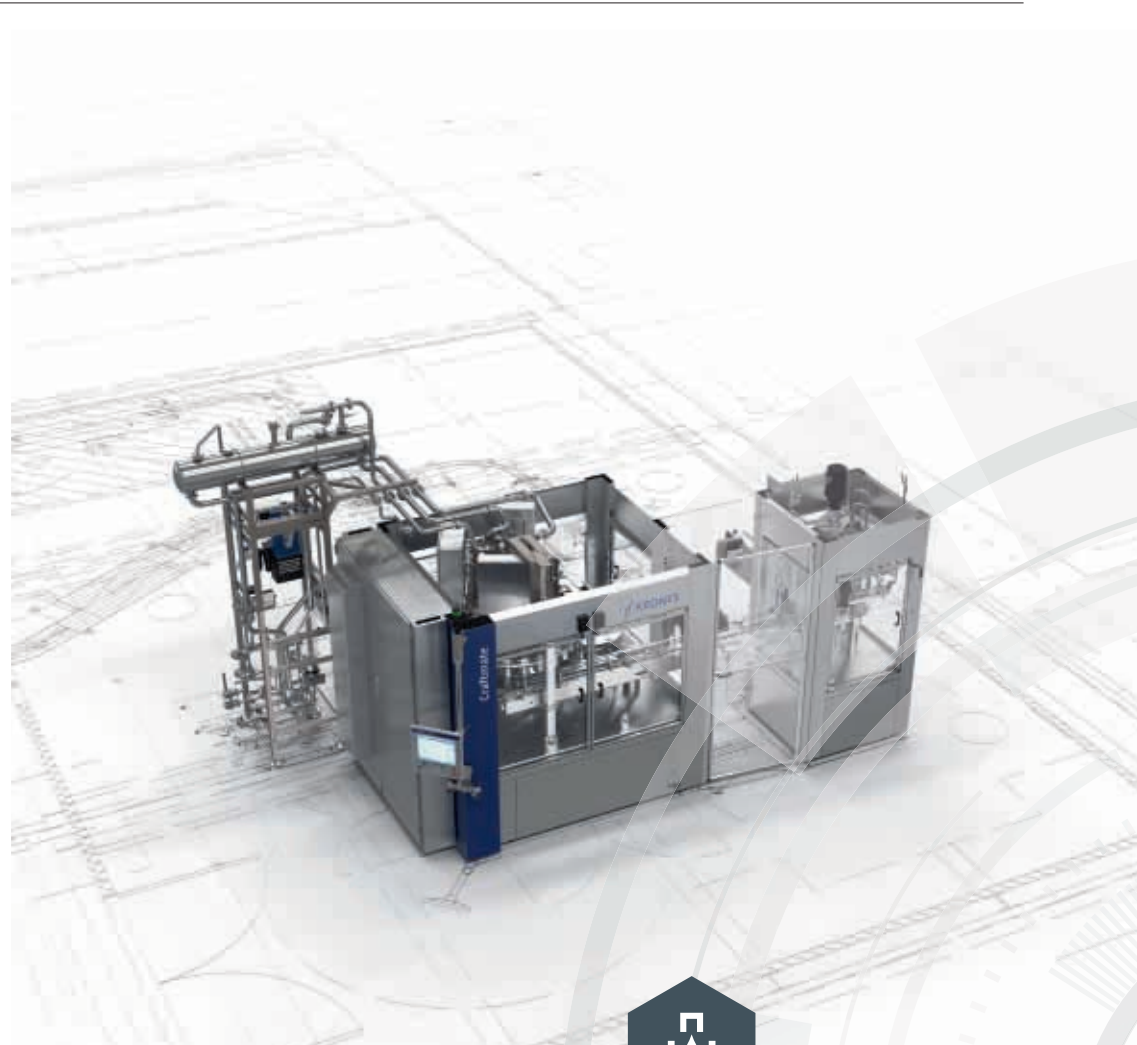
“We have seen a significant increase in demand for GRU-V and this accelerated the need for us to outsource manufacturing so that we can satisfy existing orders and also have a blueprint on how we cope with future sales,” explains Richard Little, director of the Jenton Group.

PP Control & Automation immediately created a dedicated manufacturing line at its factory, with a team of engineers assigned to understand the build, before putting in place bespoke production processes that allow for consistent throughput along with a repeatable quality.

The first shipment of GRU-V systems has been successfully delivered on time, on budget and to the quality standards required.

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Adapting to change in a smarter way

Commentators say that the combination of **Brexit** and **COVID-19** will see a surge in automation purchases – but is this true?

According to a global survey of large and small businesses across Europe carried out by ABB last year, 84% of respondents said they will introduce or increase the use of robotics and automation in the next decade, while 85% said the pandemic had been ‘game changing’ for their business and industry, with COVID-19 a catalyst for accelerating investment in automation.

More details of this survey can be found on pages 56-57, but Julian Ware, UK & Ireland sales manager for ABB Robotics believes there are three reasons why switching to robots could help tackle COVID-19. “They provide the flexibility to handle uncertainty, they can work alongside a workforce and they also provide round the clock operation,” he says.

Meanwhile, Stäubli’s Simon Jenkins believes the capability of today’s technology to achieve end to end automated manufacturing, via industrial robots, collaborative robots, mobile robots and automated guided vehicles, is a perfect example of what the company can offer. “The agile approach to manufacturing which can be achieved through Industry 4.0 connectivity also makes it possible to fulfil the growing trend across a number of sectors for customised or personalised products,” he says.

Adaptive manufacturing is also key for personalisation, says B&R Automation, as can be seen on pages 72-73 of this feature.

We all know that the global pandemic coupled with Brexit has caused major uncertainty and challenges within the UK food industry but James Bedford, systems application manager at Multivac UK, says that introducing intelligent automation solutions can make a major contribution to businesses in the food industry to design efficient, hygienic and cost-effective production lines, regardless of the budget.

He believes that an holistic approach is the most productive and it is good to remember that automation can be implemented at any stage in a line, in all food production facilities. “You are never too small to save big,” he explains. “It is important to make the distinction that automation does not have to focus on robots but can be as simple as adding a conveyor belt.”

Systems integrators are also playing

“An agile approach to manufacturing can offer many user gains



Rockwell Automation has added Cisco’s Cyber Vision solution to its range of cybersecurity threat detection offerings for its customers

a crucial role in the delivery of the latest automation systems by helping businesses to overcome any apprehension and misunderstanding they may have surrounding automation. One such integrator is ALS Mechatronic, a company that works with robots from Fanuc. “Where we really add value is by providing solutions to problems and helping manufacturers to figure out what they actually need to improve their workflow,” Andrew Steward, md of ALS tells *Machinery Update*.

The company has also seen a resurgence in onshore manufacturing, and UK businesses looking for more local solutions to their automation challenges.

Another recent change has seen the benefits of remote intervention coming to the fore. Ishida Europe, for instance, has reported a significant increase in the requirement for remote support since the start of the pandemic and is now providing 250 times more support to customers remotely than pre-COVID.

“We use cutting edge remote support and our machine uptime rates have actually been even further improved,” explains Ishida’s operations director Ian Robinson. “Zoom or Teams have benefits, but as simple two-way video communication tools, they are limited,” he says. “We use augmented reality (AR) through phones, tablets and ideally smartglasses in order to maximise the benefits to our customers.”

Robinson believes one of the company’s



main strengths is its ability to integrate AR into the ticket platform so that any of the company's technicians around the world can assist in the resolution.

Meanwhile, Eddie Storan, head of global service at Domino Printing Sciences believes that just as manufacturing industry is on a rapid journey toward digitisation, so are today's service engineers. "The traditional break and fix model of service and support falls short of the increased demand for overall equipment effectiveness (OEE) performance which is why the Domino engineer of the future is a form of intellectual capital focusing on data-driven decision making and customer outcomes," he says.

FUTURE SERVICE ENGINEERS

"Their technical expertise, combined with the ability to interpret and act upon historical and real-time customer data, will underpin a partnership model that can enable true OEE to minimise waste, optimise performance and profits, and ensure modern production lines are equipped to deal with even the most volatile of circumstances."

Ross Townshend, business unit manager EMEA at Ishida also believes that data will have an increasingly important role in the future of food production. "Key to achieving this is to ensure the supplier can match their software expertise with engineering experience and market knowledge," he tells *Machinery Update*.

But with all this data floating around, let's not forget security. For instance, Rockwell Automation has added Cisco's

Cyber Vision solution to its existing LifecycleIQ Services portfolio of cybersecurity threat detection offerings. As the deeper integration between IT, cloud and industrial networks creates security issues that become digitisation obstacles, Cyber Vision provides full visibility into industrial control systems to build secure infrastructures and enforce security policies – achieving the continuity, resilience, and safety of industrial operations.

It is worth remembering that the Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC) can help organisations negotiate the automation and robotics journey. "From providing guidance on the most appropriate applications, developing user requirement specifications and preparing business cases, it ensures businesses receive the solutions they need," says its chief automation officer Mike Wilson.

"The MTC is vendor agnostic recommending the most appropriate delivery partners for your project," he continues. "Our independent advice and support helps companies execute successful projects and also achieve performance improvements for their businesses."

The next 34 pages cover the very latest developments in automation, robotics and vision systems – enjoy!

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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

Now could be the time for change, believes **BARA**

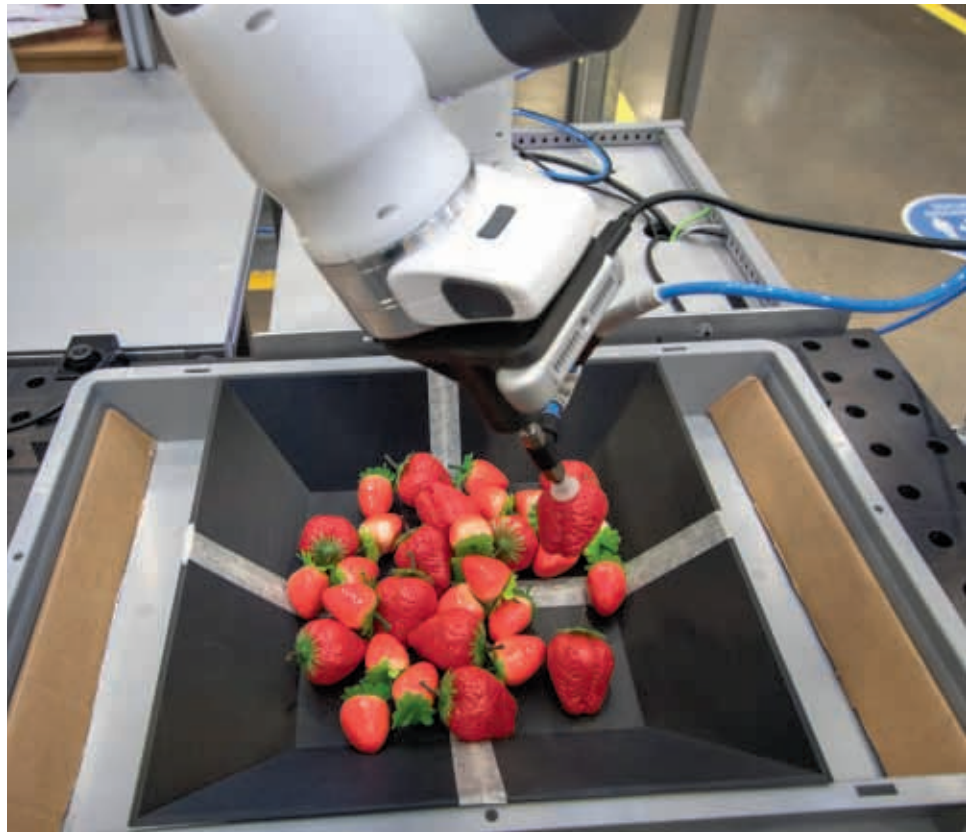
Chairman of the British Automation & Robot Association (BARA) Mike Wilson says UK productivity has not really improved since the financial crisis of 2008 and to be competitive, this must be addressed. Increased capital investment in the latest manufacturing technologies, including robot automation, is required, he says and while this presents a challenge, there are reasons to be optimistic as we now have the best conditions to enable the successful adoption of the latest robot automation.

Robots are not the answer to all problems, but there are many applications where robots could be deployed to improve productivity, provide consistent quality, and undertake arduous, mundane, or dangerous tasks.

The rising minimum wage, coupled with labour shortages as a result of Brexit, are driving increased interest. The pandemic has also had a major impact with the challenges of dealing with social distancing and problems with extended supply chains. Manufacturing must improve its resilience and automation has a role to play in achieving this.

The cost of finance is currently very low, which improves the economics for capital investment. The Government's recent announcements of an extension of the Annual Investment Allowance as well as the Super-Deduction allowance for investments in plant and machinery make the financial challenges easier. There are also leasing options available which, when set up correctly, can result in a financial return from the day the robot automation starts work.

Perceptions of risk have been a major barrier up to now but the increased availability of collaborative robots provides many opportunities as they are generally easier to apply and use than traditional industrial robots which



Reasons for optimism?

BARA believes we should look forward in a positive way to a renaissance of UK manufacturing driven by robot automation

makes it simpler for businesses that are new to automation to acquire the skills they need.

It is important to recognise there is a learning curve associated with the adoption of robot automation. This is not just the operation of the system once it is installed and commissioned, but also the informed procurement of the solution in the first place. It is often better to start with a simple operation even if this does not provide the best return on investment. It is then imperative that a User Requirements Specification is developed to detail what is needed and the parameters against which it will then need to operate.

Finally, it is important to select the most appropriate supplier.

These steps can seem daunting to companies who are new to automation, particularly when there are many equipment vendors and system integrators offering solutions. It is often better to engage independent support, to help work through these procurement steps and ensure the right foundations are in place for a successful project. This support is available and can be accessed via BARA and all of its members.

In summary, we have automation solutions, finance, independent support and an increasing realisation that automation is required. "We should look forward optimistically to a renaissance of UK manufacturing driven by robot automation," he says.

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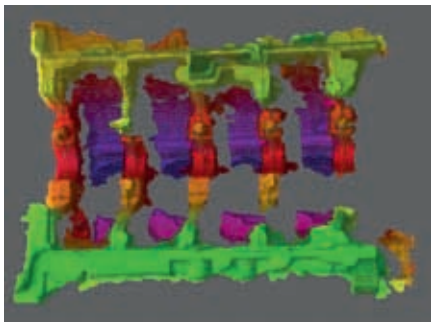
Machine vision is addressing 'new normal' challenge

Machine vision companies are well placed to help end users meet challenging trading conditions post-Brexit and help them recover from the effects of C-19, explains UKIVA chairman Neil Sandhu

Neil Sandhu, chairman of the UKIVA (UK Industrial Vision Association) believes the major economic challenges being faced by the UK are also bringing opportunities which the industrial vision industry is well placed to take advantage of. Here, he explains why.

The economic effects of the pandemic have been severe on labour-intensive industries due to the transmissibility of the virus, while changes to the immigration rules and right to work in the UK have significantly impacted sectors that rely on low-cost workforces. Both of these factors can be addressed by automating more processes and procedures, with vision technology making a major contribution.

Yet the vision industry faces an



A 3D image of an automotive engine block

additional challenge; raising the broader awareness of just what is possible when implementing vision solutions.

For many years, machine vision has been a mainstay of automated inspection for quality control purposes across many industries. The need to make repetitive measurements accurately, at speed and objectively without reliance on human interpretation is as valid today as it ever was. Tasks such as detecting the presence/absence of features, part-alignment, part-measuring, surface inspection, 1D and 2D code verification, character reading and label inspection have become common-place. But the industry doesn't stand still.

Even through lockdowns, new products have come to market. Cameras with higher resolution and higher frame rates enable faster and faster processes to be monitored. Improved lighting provides the illumination intensity needed for these faster inspections. New software tools extend the range of measurements that can be made. Alongside this, newer technologies can automate inspections that were previously not possible.

For example, the evolution of affordable and accessible 3D imaging enables volumetric measurements to be made, and also pass/fail decisions based on product shape, proportions and even surface quality.

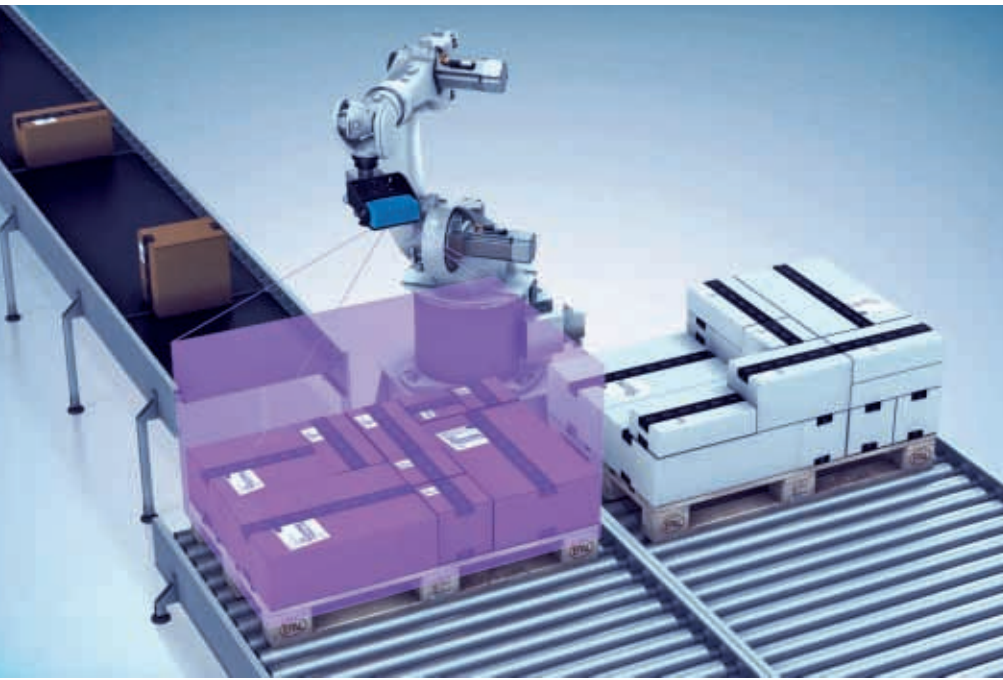
Hyperspectral imaging combines infrared spectroscopy with machine vision to identify the chemical composition of areas within an image, offering major new possibilities for differentiating items on that basis, or identifying chemical impurities in products. Industries that depend heavily on human inspection either do so for reasons of cost or because

they are reliant on human interpretation based on experience that has been built up over a period of time.

These types of applications used to be problematic for machine vision, but deep learning techniques, using artificial neural networks to imitate the way the human brain works for recognition and decision making, are changing this. Today, vision systems can be trained to recognise defects, even in items that have natural variations.



Neil Sandhu is UKIVA chair



3D Time-of-Flight measurements provide real-time depth information for robot palletisation

This offers huge potential for industrial vision to be used in a range of industries such as automotive, food and agriculture, logistics, pharmaceutical, semiconductor and traffic. For example, in agriculture it could be used to distinguish crop-types from surrounding vegetation or identify when crops are ripe and ready for picking.

Robot automation means fewer human overrides, vastly improved productivity and fewer product recalls. The versatility of robot-based automation has been greatly enhanced through the use of vision technology to guide the robot. Rapidly maturing 3D imaging methods such as structured light, laser profiling, stereo vision and Time-of-Flight, combined with highly advanced image processing software have made 3D robotic systems more sensitive and powerful.

They can recognise shapes, textures and 3D objects faster and more accurately, both for gripping and collision avoidance purposes. They are used in pick-and-place, machine tending, assembly, palletising and depalletising, bin-picking and packaging, as well as automated applications in warehouses. And the inclusion of artificial intelligence brings even greater versatility.

AMRs or autonomous mobile robots (robots that can understand and move through their environment without using a fixed predetermined path or being overseen directly by an operator) are one example of change. Helped by advances in 3D vision technology, they are already starting to replace automated guided vehicles (AGVs) within high volume UK logistics environments.

In the UK, vision-guided cobots (collaborative robots) have made a big impact in automation applications. The availability of smaller robots that are designed to work alongside humans, together with greatly simplified vision interfaces, have provided a powerful entry point to stimulate interest in robot automation, even if a larger robot system is eventually specified once the application has been assessed in detail.

They have also resulted in a growing number of vision suppliers in the UK that are able to provide complete robot solutions, rather than just components.

As automation has become more versatile and accessible, it has become abundantly clear that it is less essential to have an in-depth understanding of the underlying technology and more important to be aware of what can be achieved by automation. To that end, UKIVA is continuing to help inform people about the latest vision developments through two broad-based information platforms: the online Machine Vision Conference Technology Presentation Hub 2021 and a roundtable webinar.

The Technology Presentation Hub (www.machinevisionconference.co.uk) is now live, and features a programme of about 40 video presentations delivered by an impressive array of internationally renowned experts in machine vision. The Hub offers information aimed at a variety of knowledge levels, making it suitable for newcomers to machine vision right up to experienced practitioners.

The roundtable webinar, meanwhile, featured a panel of six vision industry experts exploring the capabilities offered by the latest technologies from an industry perspective rather than discussing specific products. This webinar is available on-demand from www.ukiva.org

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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

By the time a manufactured product is ready for shipping to a customer it may already have travelled miles, just within its own production and warehousing environment. “Even in otherwise automated manufacturing plants, much of this transportation is heavily dependent on manual labour, from forklifts to manual carts, making it subject to human error,” says Ross Lacy, mobile robot production manager at RARUK Automation.

For these reasons, increasing numbers of facilities are now using autonomous mobile robots (AMRs) to optimise workflows throughout manufacturing and warehouse environments. AMRs require no additional infrastructure, and instead use built-in sensors, cameras and intelligent software to navigate efficiently and safely around workers and equipment.

“Importantly,” says Lacy, “it is easy to program, update and optimise robot missions following the introduction of new workflows or when production requirements at a site change.”

It is also simple to integrate the software into existing systems such as ERP, MES and WMS to ensure the automatic lineside delivery of materials, he says. Alternatively, the robots can be set up to travel regular ‘bus routes’, stopping at defined areas to deliver and/or pick-up raw materials or sub-assemblies.

“Automation can radically improve materials handling efficiency,” says Kenny Watson, automation sales manager at Linde Material Handling. “No more so is this relevant than when it comes to automated guided vehicles (AGVs), which are already making many warehouse operations more streamlined by fulfilling simple transport from one point to the other



Sick's solid-state safety scanner is designed to boost productivity for small AMRs currently being adopted

Getting more mobile is key

Manufacturing plants are now en-route to automating their internal transportation with many new options...

at the press of a button, without the need for any sophisticated software.”

Modern technology is allowing warehouses across the world to become more efficient than ever – most notably through AGVs and remotely controlled trucks in the warehouse. “We have seen a real shift towards this across all industries because of the current cost of resources

and the need to find more cost-effective and faster ways of working,” Watson tells *Machinery Update*. “Making automated technology more efficient is therefore widely recognised as the key to future success – with functions such as vision systems really leading the charge.”

Watson says that Linde Material Handling is trying its best to help customers

understand the realities of their automation journey. “Since the pandemic began, and with the needs of our customers at front of mind, we’ve made some really exciting new developments with our products too, like the new C-Matic AMR which will be available by the end of this year,” he says.

With the increasing employment of AGVs

being seen in factories and warehouses, there are opportunities for companies that can develop and supply technology into this developing market.

One area of key importance is the motive power source employed to drive these vehicles. In addition to delivering the power required, these drive units must be compact and as efficient as possible in order to maximise battery life.

An example of such technology is the 'Smartris' drive unit from Lafert, which is equally suitable for tow vehicles, assembly line trucks and mobile robots to mention just a few of its potential applications. Two ranges are available currently, the ECO Line and PRO Line to give an extended range of performances to match specific end user requirements.

VERY COMPACT UNIT

The Lafert Smartris is a compact, battery-powered unit comprising a Cycloid gearbox, servo motor drive and wheel with rubber tyre. It features a gear in-wheel design that provides low floor levels demanded to help maximise an AGV's space and load carrying potential.

Overall dimensions of the Smartris from the smallest to the largest units are 110 to 196 mm (flange) and 249 to 309 mm total length. Motor only lengths are 157 to 196 mm.

Payload capacities of the existing systems range from 800 up to 2,700 kg.

Meanwhile, Sick UK has launched the first multibeam safety scanner in the world to use safe, solid-state LiDAR technology to enable small autonomous vehicles and line-guided shuttle systems to operate more quickly and productively.

With the scanGrid2, small transport vehicles like AMRs operate safely at higher speeds and with higher payloads for a

much lower cost-of ownership than has been previously possible using conventional safety laser scanners.

"In the first pilots using the

scanGrid2 on a small AMR, we were able to demonstrate that the maximum vehicle speed could be increased by about 75% from 0.4 m/s to 0.7 m/s,"

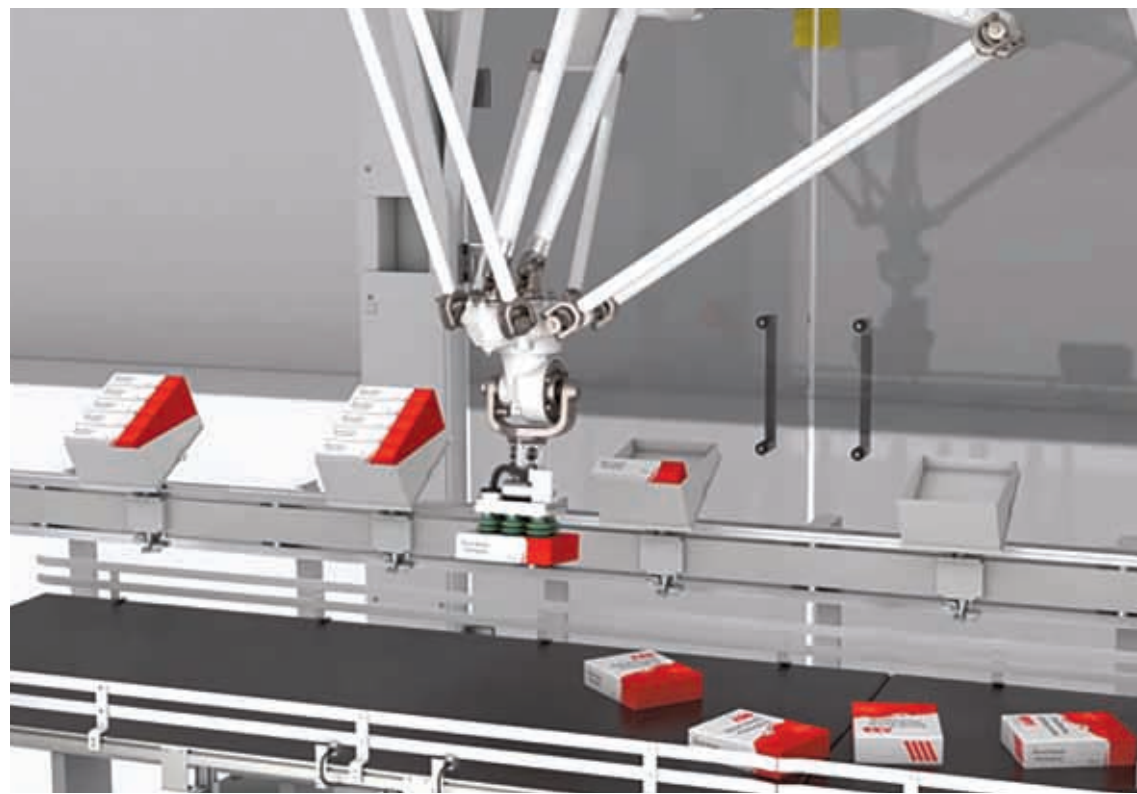
says Dr Kidman of Sick UK.

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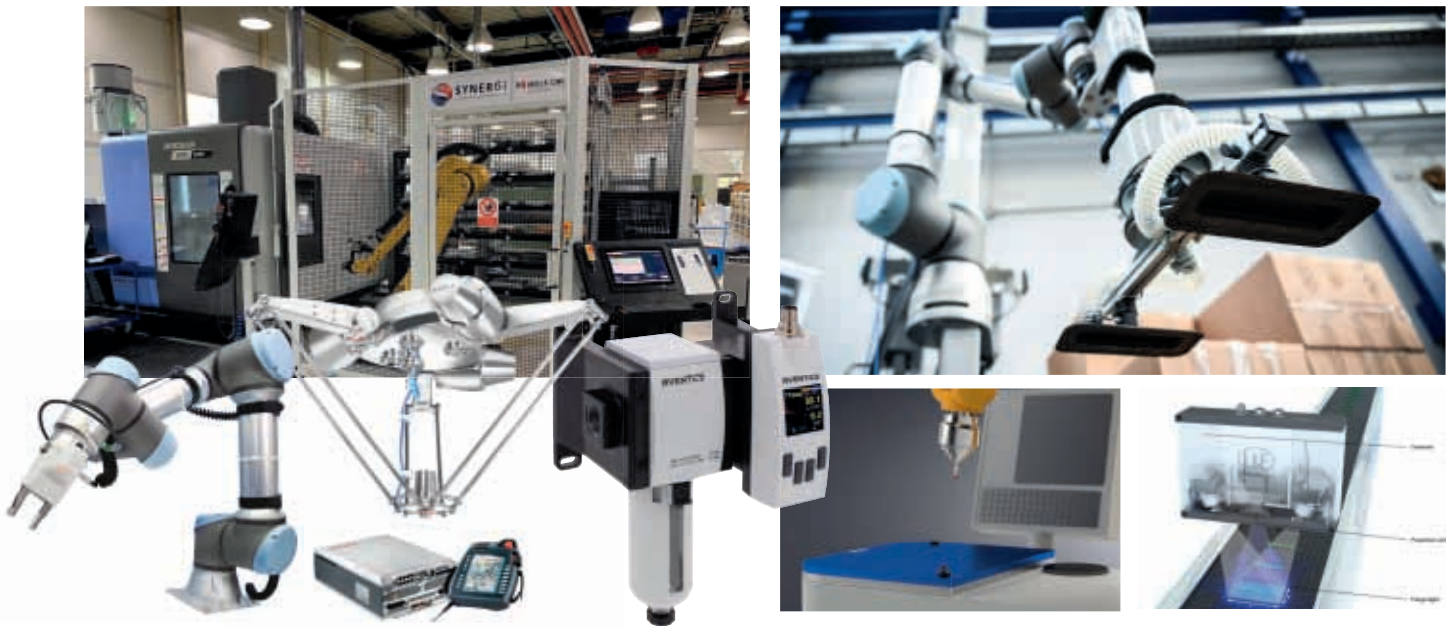
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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems



A range of technology (left to right) devised by Mills CNC and TAWI at the top and by SMC, KUKA, Emerson, WDS and Micro-Epsilon at the bottom

Meeting diverse needs

PPMA members are answering a whole heap of automation challenges and here we highlight some of the latest to be designed and installed...

Answering automation needs of manufacturing industry can range from the tiniest widgets to enabling equipment to a complete line, and here we highlight just some of the latest...

Mills CNC Automation, for instance, has recently supplied high-end audio equipment specialist Linn Products with an advanced, custom-designed and built SYNERGi automated manufacturing cell. The cell represents a significant investment for Linn and comprises a new Heidenhain-controlled Doosan DVF 5000 (5-axis) machine and a Fanuc industrial 6-axis robot with a 45 kg payload capacity.

Since being installed some five months ago, the cell has proved its worth – running overnight and over the weekends...unattended: delivering significant productivity gains and process efficiency improvements.

Meanwhile, SMC has introduced a new range of affordable, compact and lightweight end of arm tooling options that have been designed with easy plug and play for immediate use. Furthermore, URCap and TMComponent files are available for easy integration with Universal Robots and Omron Techman.

The options include a 2 finger gripper, a vacuum gripper and a magnet gripper, all of which are built using

standard SMC components to deliver a cost-effective solution.

At the same time, KUKA says it is rounding out its portfolio with the compact parallel arm robot and providing a high-performance production assistant at a great price. The new KR Delta is particularly suitable for pick and place tasks.

Now available from TAWI UK is the range of products from Cobot Lift that are capable of increasing the lifting capacity on collaborative robots up to 45 kg. One of the newest options from the company are vision guided robot solutions that can be used on depalletisers.

Danfoss Drives is a recent customer that took delivery of a flexible cobot solution that according to Fatos Topalli, production engineer at the company, was a great alternative to an otherwise bulky conveyor belt solution.

According to Dieter Michalkowski, a global account manager at Emerson, one area that is ripe for intelligent

automation is energy management. But, he says, while the benefits of IIoT energy management tools are clear, the way to unlock them may be less so. "It is easy to assume that IIoT solutions are anything but simple, but the reality is there are plug and play IIoT devices that can monitor the air consumption of existing systems, all while requiring minimal setup and commissioning time."

Other new products include a range of high precision 3D snapshot measurement sensors suitable for automated inline measurement of geometry, shape and surface quality of objects that are available from Micro-Epsilon.

Meanwhile, WDS Components says its ball lock system allows for repeatable positioning as well as accurate clamping. Originally designed for high precision repeatability for manual loading, this system has now been adapted to be used by a robotic arm. The company also supplies O rings and balls to keep down maintenance costs for the automatic system.

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The industrial internet of things, or IIoT, is bringing benefit

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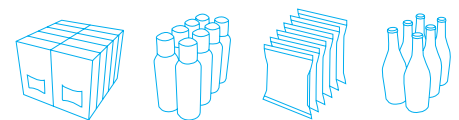
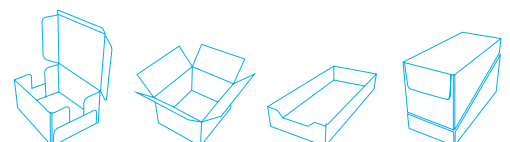


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WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO PACK?

WHAT TYPE OF CARTON SHOULD IT BE?


Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

Robotics are delivering food goals

Swedish traditional flatbread producer Polarbröd turned to PWR Pack for a robotic system to increase its running efficiencies while accommodating new packaging formats as the company expanded into the export market.

A bespoke solution was therefore designed that would fit into the limited space available in the factory and have the flexibility to cope with a number of packaging formats while also respecting the need for waste reduction to meet the customer's drive for a sustainable operation. A high speed solution was designed and delivered for the robotic packaging of crackers into carton trays and boxes, as well as top loading of crackers, the handling of five types of carton packaging formats and all the different product recipes.

PWR also contributed to the design of the carton trays and boxes to make them 'robotic automation proof'.

The customer was delighted with the custom-made solution as it fitted all of its needs and gave them control over the process, rather than purchasing a one size fits all solution. A stand-out was the in-house developed PWR Smart Control 4.0 software that is helping the expanding food business to hit high sustainability rates and its production KPIs.

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PWR's bespoke system is a sustainable option



Dassault Systemes believes brands have to meet today's eco-conscious consumer demands

Look beyond the product...

Dassault Systemes believes its 3D experience platform can help drive sustainable packaging

“To achieve authentic end-to-end sustainability, from sourcing to the post-consumption experience, consumer packaged goods (CPG) packaging manufacturers must abandon entrenched, linear working processes, in favour of a more flexible, data-driven approach to their packaging design and development,” says John Moseley, marketing EuroNorth at Dassault Systemes in the UK.

“The flexibility to adapt quickly to new consumer trends and industry compliance and regulation is absolutely vital and the only way for CPG packaging manufacturers to address all these challenges is by digitising the entire supply chain,” he explains.

Dassault Systemes says that its 3DEXPERIENCE platform can empower businesses and their manufacturers to innovate swiftly and more sustainably than before. It provides business and people with virtual universes to imagine sustainable innovations. Its collaborative solutions transform the way products are designed, produced, and supported,

fostering social innovation and expanding possibilities for the virtual world to improve the real world.

One way to achieve this is by using virtual twin technology across the entire value chain. By implementing a full virtual supply chain, it is possible to ensure that it is optimised and as sustainable as possible from package design to delivery to the retailer or the consumer's home.

“The platform provides a virtual environment, collaborative tools and solutions that enables CPG packaging manufacturers to ‘close the loop’ for sustainable packaging,” says Moseley. Key characteristics include a 3D designing solution that allows industrial customers to reduce the number of physical prototypes and realise substantial savings in product development cycle times.

It also allows businesses to construct and compare different material compositions to determine the best option for sustainable packaging and choose the best trade-offs in order to balance materials and inventory.

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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

Robotic filler offers vision for liquids

Spanish firm AiCROV offers a robotic filler that incorporates 3D artificial vision that is designed for high capacity production lines that require a high level of automation and precision in the filling process and increased flexibility to change the type of container being used.

Represented in the UK & Ireland by Engelmann & Buckham, this robot filler can fill any type of liquid or viscous product into large-format containers, drums and IBCs from 25 to 1,500 litres.

The key advantage of the incorporation of this type of robotic filler into a line is the use of 3D artificial vision, which provides maximum adaptability and flexibility in production, explains Albert Rovira, ceo at AiCROV.

John Orme, sales manager for the AiCROV range of fillers at Engelmann & Buckham, can see how this solution will help his customers.

“This range encompasses the latest technology available to provide the best automated solution for filling and capping larger containers,” he tells *Machinery Update*. “With the flexibility of the robotics, and vision systems to accurately detect the bung hole, position the filling nozzle and to replace the bung, this proven solution offers filling security and operator safety for customers.”

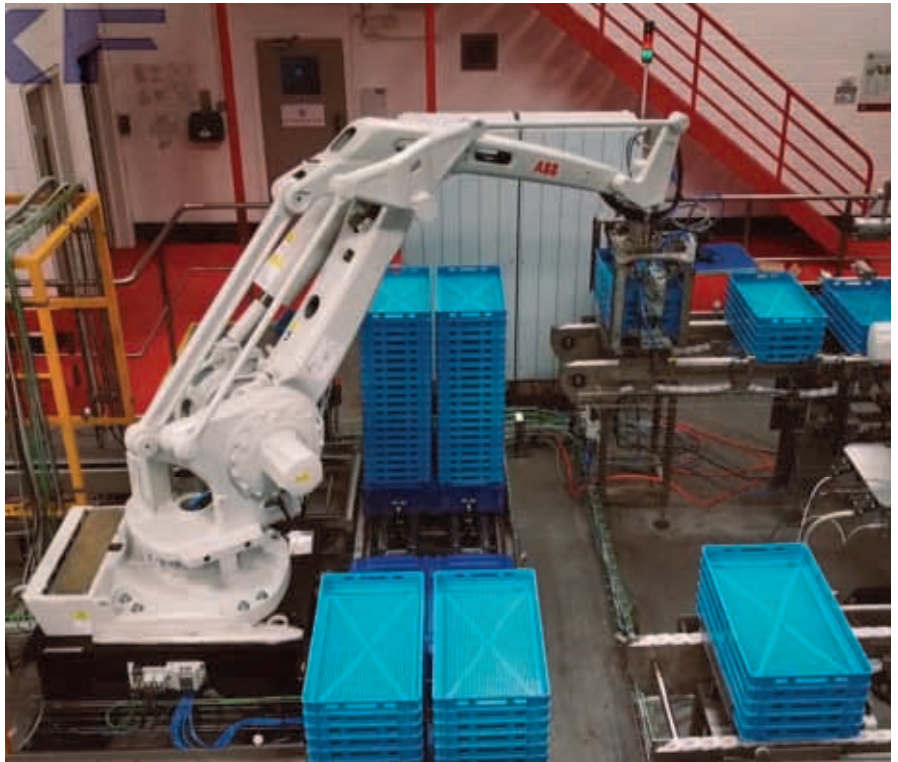
When integrated into an automatic conveyor line, this solution can also include automatic uncapping, capping, and sealing of containers and is suitable for hazardous and/or flammable environments.

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Maximum adaptability and flexibility offered



The system has been installed by CKF using machine guarding and Leuze safety light curtains

Sweet handling of tray process

CKF has devised a bespoke robotic system to handle trays for a confectionery manufacturer

CKF has designed, installed and commissioned a new robotic tray handling system that incorporates two ABB robots for a multinational confectionery manufacturer in one of its UK facilities.

Two ABB robots (an IRB660 and an IRB460) are controlled via MultiMove and share the same IRC5 controller. In operation, they function together to de-palletise product filled trays, tip the product into a mixing bed and then re-palletise the resulting empty trays.

Pallets loaded with 50 product filled trays are transferred into the cell to the IRB660 fitted with CKF bespoke tooling. The product trays are separated into stacks of five by the robot tool, then delivered and collated into a tray de-stacker which enables the second robot (an IRB460) to then pick two full trays at a time before depositing the

contents into a mixing bed.

Specialist tooling designed by CKF and using SMC rotary actuators allows for two trays to be rotated 180 degrees at a time to empty the contents. The facility for multiple tips is made available to the operator from the HMI for tricky to handle product types. The empty trays are delivered back to the working range of the IRB 660 which re-palletises the empty trays.

The pallet conveying system is from the CKF standard range and the tray handling conveyors have been designed specifically for the client's application. A Siemens S7 PLC drives the system, housed into a two bay, stainless steel floor mounted cabinet, while Festo servo-pneumatics are used for the tray de-stacker for position and throughput.

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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

A survey of 250 UK SME and large manufacturing companies carried out by ABB Robotics reveals a change in attitudes towards robotic automation in the UK, with 81.2% of companies saying that they are considering an investment in robots because of recent events including COVID-19.

Conducted as part of the launch of ABB's new GoFa and SWIFTI collaborative robots earlier this year (page 13, see March/April 2021 issue of *Machinery Update*), the survey shows how the impact of the pandemic has been widely felt by many businesses across the UK, with many affected by restrictions on workforce availability caused by lockdown and strict social distancing measures that have reduced their overall production capacity.

Asked whether the COVID-19 pandemic has been "game-changing" for their business and industry, 90.8% of the 250 respondents replied yes, with 45.6% stating that their business has had to make some adjustments and 45.2% stating their business and industry sector has been completely impacted.

A particular problem for many businesses has been a lack of contingency planning. Research by People Management magazine in conjunction with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development has revealed that two in five organisations had no contingency plans to manage the COVID-19 outbreak as organisations have previously adopted a mentality of "if it isn't broken, don't fix it".

This lack of preparation and planning for the future is now hurting organisations as they try to adjust their business operations to the new normal.

The results of the survey suggest that robots are increasingly being seen as a way of addressing this, with



Many firms have already improved safety, quality and consistency through their use of robot technology

Attitude shift is a C-19 effect

In a survey of UK manufacturers by **ABB Robotics**, a massive 81% said they were considering robot spend

48.8% of respondents stating that they were likely to invest in robotic automation within the next five years.

Regarding the potential of robotic automation to help alleviate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their businesses, 50.4% of the survey respondents reported that robots would enable them to comply with social

distancing requirements and avoid cross-contamination. There was also recognition of the value of using robots to help improve workplace safety, with 40.4% stating that robots could help them to meet health and safety rules, while 32.8% saw the potential for using robots to help compensate for staff shortages or staff illness.

"The huge impact that COVID-19 has had on the economy will be felt long after the virus has gone and will permanently influence the way businesses conduct themselves moving forward," says Nigel Platt, ABB's general manager – robotics and automation UK and Ireland. "The inherent flexibility and high performance of today's robots, coupled with the expanding range of options on offer, from small cobots through to heavy duty industrial robots, enables manufacturers to better prepare themselves against future uncertainties caused by impending pandemics

The results of this survey provide hope that robotics benefits will be realised by more UK firms

or economic instabilities.”

The survey results also underline the benefits that can be achieved by using robotic automation.

Asked “what have been the main benefits of robots or robotics to your business”, 57% of the 142 companies that are currently using robots in their operations responded by stating that robots reduced operating costs in their business. At the same time, 42.3% of organisations cited that robots improved product quality and consistency and 37.3% claimed that it improved the quality of work and job satisfaction for employees.

Meanwhile, 32.4% stated that robots increased production output closely followed by 31.7% who cited that they improved workplace health and safety. Finally, 23.9% experienced reduced staff turnover and 23.2% improved the use of space.

The contribution that robotic automation can make towards increased flexibility was also highlighted, with 32% of respondents stating that robots have helped them to increase their manufacturing flexibility and 25% using them to develop new business models and revenue streams.

“While the UK has lagged behind other countries when it comes to embracing robotic automation in manufacturing applications, those companies that have made the switch to robots have reported a range of benefits that underline their ability to transform productivity, efficiency

and competitiveness,” says Julian Ware, sales manager – robotics and automation at ABB. “The results of our survey provide hope that

these benefits will be realised by a growing number of companies in the next few years as robotic automation becomes recognised for its

ability to provide a greater degree of certainty in challenging times.”

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Human/robot collaboration will rise

Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

Robot fleet expands for reshoring

Manufacturer of components for office furniture and equipment Suscom Industries has expanded its fleet of Kawasaki robots as part of a successful reshoring programme

Located in Wigan, Suscom's recent addition of another Kawasaki RS20N robot takes the number of Kawasaki units in use at its plant to a total of eight. Seven of the units are Kawasaki's RS20N with a single, larger, RS50N robot making up the total.

Each robot works 24 hours a day, 5 days a week allowing Suscom to deal with customer demand successfully.

The robots are deployed during the moulding and post-moulding processes of many components and are engaged in a variety of tasks across the shop floor. One of these is removing completed seat bases from a moulding machine and positioning them onto an adjacent workstation, using vacuum grippers.

"Each of the many tasks we use robots for involves a combination of speed, agility and accurate, repeatable precision," says Suscom technical director Matthew Kennedy.

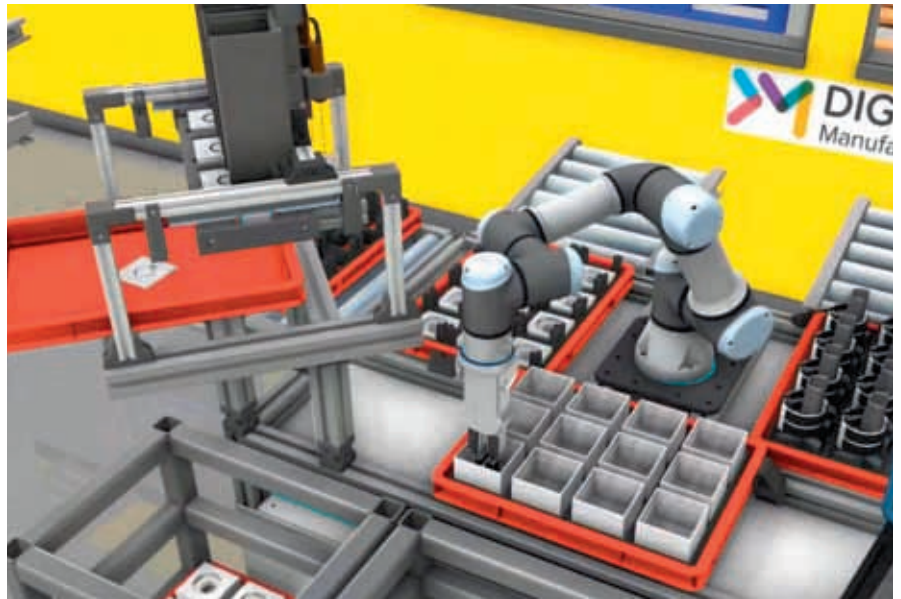
"In all the years we have operated our Kawasaki robots, we have never had a single problem, nor a moment of unscheduled stoppage time with them." The company says that its decision to use Kawasaki robots exclusively is based on a proven track record of trouble-free service combined with ease of use by Suscom staff.

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The site now operates eight Kawasaki robots



The simulation tool allows dynamic solutions to be presented to new and also existing clients

Simulation has benefitted DHL

DHL has chosen manufacturing simulation from Visual Components to accelerate digitalisation

DHL, the world's largest logistics company is, using manufacturing simulation from Visual Components to power the adoption of automation in this age of digitalisation.

Within DHL Supply Chain, Digital Manufacturing acts as an innovation and technology development hub for robotics and automation; sourcing, manufacturing, and integrating robotics solutions that ensures DHL builds a sustainable competitive advantage.

Visual Components was chosen as a simulation tool for DHL projects for the following reasons:

- Advanced Platform that can be used from model building and layout planning to equipment verification and process optimisation
- The ease of use and simple workflows for modelling packaging solutions and processes
- Extensive library of parametric and reusable models in the Visual Components' e-Catalog saves time in setting up the simulations
- Fast and easy modelling of custom

equipment that could be used in simulation with real behaviours

- High-quality graphics and the ability to export content makes it a visual communication tool.

In operation, the tool has been used by Digital Manufacturing to improve the processing efficiency for a health industry packaging system by 35% and also for electronic goods packaging, where productivity increased by 35% while maintaining costs.

Using Visual Components, DHL was able to realise significant operational improvements and cost savings for the benefit of their outsourced customers. This provided a competitive edge for the logistics giant to win more customers.

DHL says that using Visual Components helped it to achieve increased efficiency gains and reduced packaging and processing costs while helping its customers to visualise how automation could improve overall production efficiency gains.

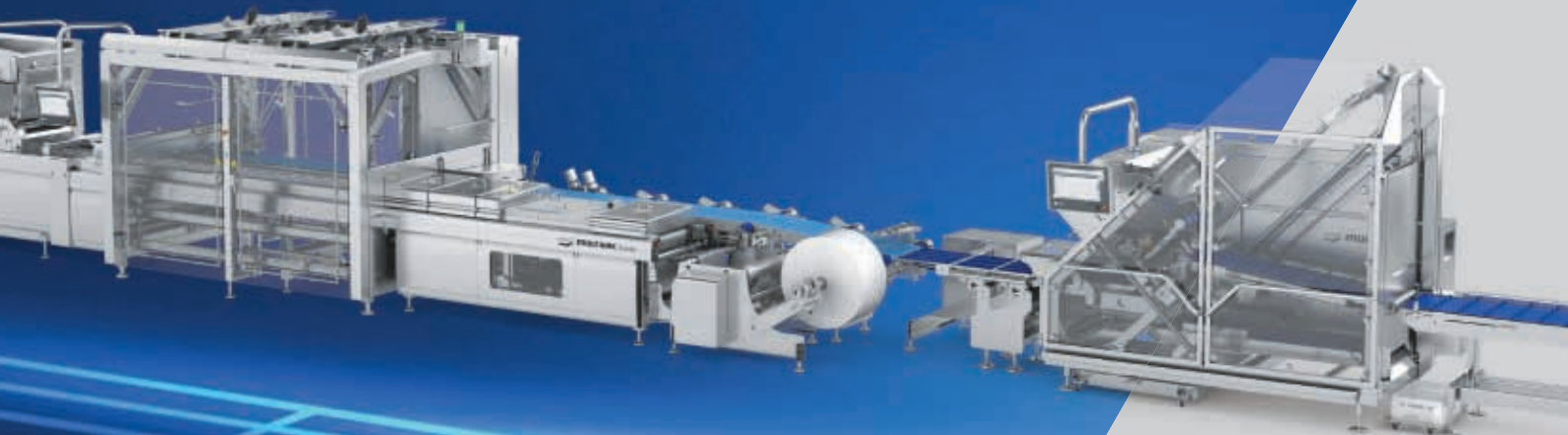
It is described as a game changer.

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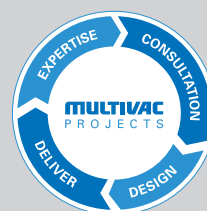
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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

Bespoke system enhances quality

Acrovision has developed a Deep Learning solution to help automate the inspection process at Toyota's plant

Acrovision was asked by Toyota's manufacturing plant in the UK to provide an automated inspection system to replace, automate and enhance the manual inspection process to improve the quality, reliability and efficiency.

After vehicle assembly, the quality and specification of the vehicle is assured by team members before passing vehicles onto the dealership. The requirements were for Acrovision to enhance this inspection process to include the following:

- An automated inspection system to replace current

- manual inspection
- For the data to communicate directly with Toyota's tracking system
- The system to hold up to 50 vehicle body numbers in advance of inspections
- That the use of AI/Deep Learning technology would benefit these inspections
- The ability to install the system during limited line-availability.

Acrovision recognised that replacing a human decision-making process could not be achieved using traditional 'rule-based' camera technology. The company therefore designed a solution using a combination of Cognex's

VisionPro PC Vision platform and ViDi Deep Learning tools, to create a bespoke offering with a customised front-end. This would communicate directly with Toyota's host tracking system via broadcast messaging to provide the required individual vehicle information, which in turn determines what inspections are required for that particular vehicle.

This solution consisted of 17 x GiGi PC cameras with external lights, which are fitted onto the inspection line. As the vehicle moves along the track, the cameras are triggered multiple times to acquire images of the various inspection areas.



No need for manual inspections

These images are communicated back to the central PC for processing and decision making using a combination of the VPro and Deep Learning ViDi tools.

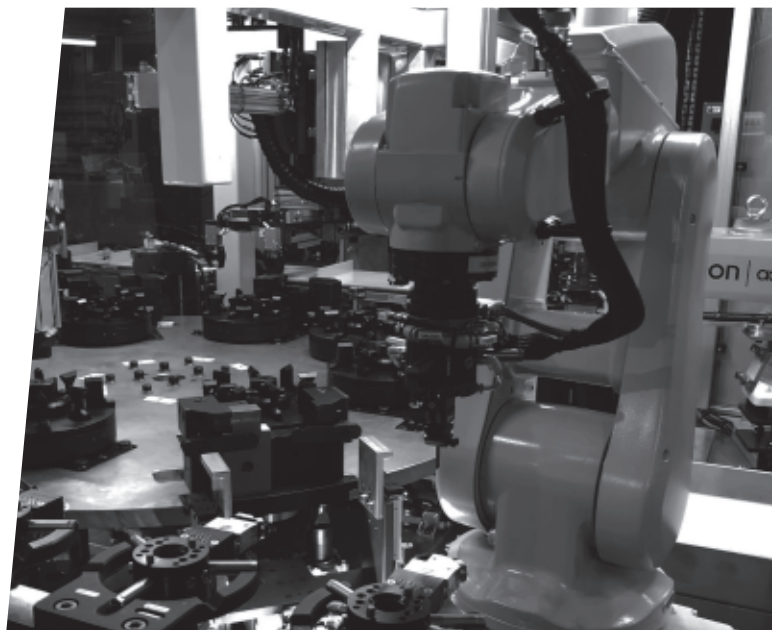
All relevant data is fed back to Toyota's tracking system for logging of results/defects. This triggers any faulty vehicles to be removed at



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Souzou, engineer at Toyota Manufacturing UK. “We have now increased our quality and productivity while decreasing cost and I am more certain

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the next checkpoint for corrections to be made.

The resulting solution has now automated the vehicle inspection checks and there is now no requirement for a team to be moving around the vehicle to carry out these tasks. This solution was designed to enable Toyota to add new or edit existing inspections with in-depth training provided to facilitate this.

The installation has proved its worth in just a few months, with the company already purchasing a second system while also looking to implement similar Deep Learning technology for various other project ideas.

This bespoke project implementation has further enhanced the strong relationship that has developed between Acrovision and Toyota over the past few years.

Toyota has benefited from the new system

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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

It's a wrap for the latest robotic line

A UK sandwich and wrap producer has partnered with Grote Company to automate its assembly lines using robotics. This solution was recently installed to automate wrap handling, aligning and also the cutting.

Thanks to this new robotic twin lane solution, the food processor has been able to take out six operators per shift, increased production capacity to 100 wraps per minute, improved quality by 95% and has also increased overall food and plant safety.

"We have been extremely happy to partner with a long-time customer to help them reach their production and safety goals with robotics," says John Truscott of Grote Company.

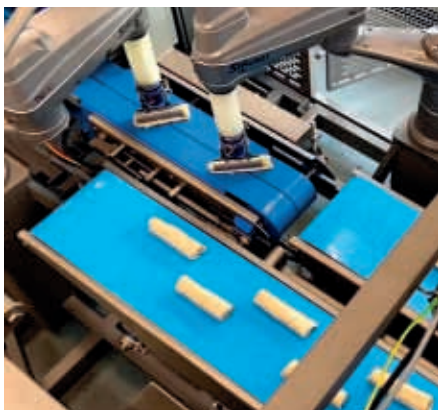
"Automating high care sandwich assembly applications has been our goal since the inception of the robotics unit in 2018, and to see another successful installation across two lines is very rewarding for us."

The solution includes two 3D vision systems, two Stäubli HE 4-axis robots, custom end effectors and a Grote ultrasonic cutter, all of which had to be designed to fit into the existing footprint in the factory. It also had to be interfaced with the existing packaging conveyor at the food processing plant.

The equipment is surrounded by dedicated guarding and is operated by a single display.

T 01978 362243

W www.grotecompany.com



Six operators per shift have been taken out

Inspection will prevent recalls

Vision plays a key role in inspection systems as **Jenton Dimaco** and **Mettler-Toledo** demonstrate

"Jenton Dimaco is not a vision company, we just happen to use cameras to help food producers to minimise waste and create key business data," says Russ Sion, md at the company.

"By using industrial vision cameras coupled with our own optical character recognition algorithms, developed over nearly 20 years, we are capable of reading just about any text on any label," he says. "And while smart

cameras have their place and are both affordable and easy to use, the harsh and demanding requirements of the food processing industry render them almost useless in that application," he says.

"By using a combination of our Veri-PACK software coupled with our Veri-CENTRAL SQL server application, we know what your labels should look like and we check that they do," he continues. "And not only do we check the label, but our system allows you to prove you have – in fact it allows you to prove that you have checked every important facet of every label.

"Furthermore, if a single label is badly printed, we will reject the pack, but if the data is incorrect, we'll stop the line," he tells *Machinery Update*.

Not only does Jenton Dimaco's label verification system prevent incorrect packs leaving the factory, but it also facilitates end of line packing automation for its customers.

Meanwhile, Mettler-Toledo has recently

supplied three systems to perform a visual inspection, check for metal and then make sure the weight is correct for a European pizza company. Initially, a combination of five digital cameras check prebaked unpackaged pizza for shape, unburnt edges and evenly spread toppings.

The CI-Vision system uses special software to simultaneously perform the multiple visual inspections of the product.

In step two, the products are checked by the Mettler-Toledo Safeline metal detector and in step three, up to 210 products are weighed a minute on the Mettler-

Toledo Garvens checkweigher.



Jenton Dimaco is preventing recalls



Mettler's 3 in 1 inspection for a pizza producer

This 3 in 1 product inspection solution is mounted onto an hygienic frame design with an IP65 wash-down rating to prevent dirt accumulation and facilitate cleaning regimes.

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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, 53% of manufacturers expect a change in the way they operate and Nigel Smith, managing director of industrial robot supplier TM Robotics believes manufacturers should consider investing in machine vision to achieve this.

“Robots without a machine vision system can complete simple, repeatable tasks, however they cannot compete with robots that are able to react to their surroundings intuitively, in other words, robots that include machine vision,” he says.

For even more benefits, manufacturers should invest in 3D vision, he says. Shibaura Machine’s TSVision3D system enables automated bin-picking, even for non-uniform products – like bananas or mangos, for example. It also works for layered bin-picking, able to distinguish between different components in a tray and pick up the ones closest to the top.

“To futureproof your business, consider upgrading existing industrial robots with a machine vision system,” he says. “Or, if contemplating investing in your first robot, look out for models that can easily be integrated with machine vision – like Shibaura Machine’s SCARA and 6-axis ranges – either now or in the future.”

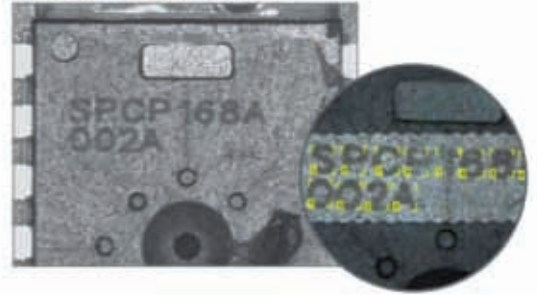
Other new options include the new Cognex In-Sight D900 and integrator Bytronic Vision Automation has been deeply impressed with the true power of this new camera as it has rolled out the first trials and customer projects.

“The sheer range of inspections that it is capable of within the standalone camera is incredible – all thanks to the built-in ViDi deep learning software that takes machine vision beyond human and rules-based image inspection,” explains Stewart Jackson solutions development

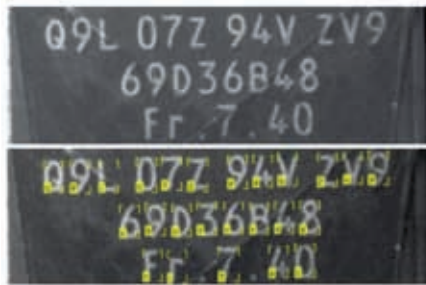
Reads embossed characters on injection molded product



Deciphers laser-etched codes on electronic components



Reads label-based codes on packaging



Verifies characters printed on reflective materials



Bytronic Vision Automation has been solving difficult OCR challenges by using the new Cognex In-Sight D900

Using vision with vision...

Machine vision is the enabling technology that offers users operational gains, and here’s some new ones...

manager at the company.

“We’re talking about carrying out assembly verification, defect detection and optical character recognition; learning and making decisions with ‘human-like’ ability in a way that’s never before been so commercially and financially available,” he continues.

Unlike current standard OCR technology on the market, the In-Sight D900 works on low/changing contrast backgrounds like metal and plastics films. It can also cope with reading deformed or warped characters such as those

found on plastic bags.

Powered by In-Sight ViDi deep learning software, the D900 is a vision system designed to run state-of-the-art algorithms for industrial image analysis. There are two versions of the D900 available, a lower-cost OCR version for reading without any recognition challenges and a second advanced model with additional tools.

There is an increased demand in the automotive industry for advanced vision system technology. The deep learning capabilities of the D900 allows it to easily and quickly recognise and read

car part codes from pre-taught font examples – even with the most difficult fonts.

Deep learning and vision automation are also highly beneficial to production processes and materials handling. Particularly popular on bottling lines, the D900 can reach processing speeds of 35,000 units per hour.

Meanwhile, the Matrox Iris GTX is a compact all-in-one vision system offering dramatically increased performance and higher-resolution image sensors. These latest releases are the fourth iteration in an established series of Matrox

Imaging smart cameras that are billed as heralding a new generation of IoT edge devices.

Built on an embedded processor expressly designed for next-generation IoT edge devices, an Intel Atom x6000 series dual-core processor delivers new levels of CPU and graphics performance. The camera also features substantially higher-resolution CMOS sensors, ranging in resolution from two to 16 Megapixels. This range allows developers to select the optimal resolution for any given application. The new sensor lineup supports more detailed inspections and a wider field of view.

THREE TIMES FASTER

With the enhanced Intel processor, Matrox Iris GTX can handle typical machine vision workloads at up to three times the speed of the previous generation smart camera. They come bundled with Matrox Design Assistant X vision software, which is a flowchart-based development environment offering drag-and-drop steps and easy-to-use templates to simplify building machine-vision applications.

At the same time, Tamron has expanded its range of fixed focal lenses for the machine vision market with two new series featuring three models respectively. The MA23 series focuses on typical industrial inspection requirements with its small size and image quality



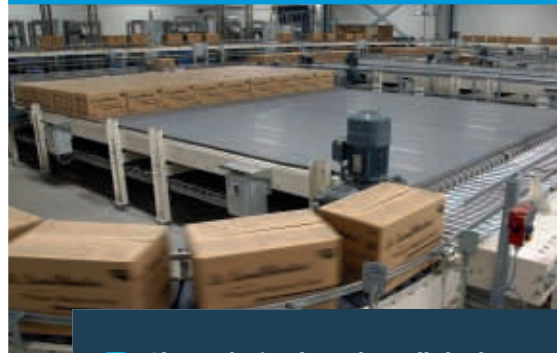
The new Iris GTX from Matrox

optimised for short distances. It is designed for 2/3in imagers with up to 8 Megapixels. The MA111-VIR series is optimised for larger sensor

sizes and resolutions, with 1.1in sensor format and up to 24 Megapixel, addressing a large field of industrial and non-industrial

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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

Cama's decision to go 'as digital as possible' pays off

Cama says advances in digitalisation, coupled with its in-house-developed robotic pick and place technology and advanced vision systems, means that end users can maximise the total cost of ownership of its equipment. The top loading range with its wide-ranging flexibility and adaptability, for instance, is capable of fulfilling packaging routines and processes that would, in the past, have required multiple separate installations.

"The machines have been designed from the ground up with agility and flexibility in mind," explains Alessandro Rocca, sales engineering director at Cama Group. "As technology has evolved, so have our machine designs, as we leverage contemporary automation technology and advanced mechanical designs.

"Our early decision to go as 'digital as possible' has certainly paid off for both us and our customers as we both realise the benefits of a fully interconnected and easily reprogrammable automation infrastructure," he says.

"Clearer data pathways and data exchange have also bolstered our in-house developed robotic solution, which is a unique offering on the market." Rocca adds. "This technology has been developed over a number of years, and specifically for the packaging industry."

In operation, the robot-equipped top loading packaging



Embracing digital gain

Technology has evolved at Cama so its machines now leverage contemporary automation technology and advanced mechanical designs

lines can accept a wide array of in-feed formats, while delivering multiple out-feed options, either in parallel, concurrently or batch-specific. The modular design of the Breakthrough Generation solutions means that additional modules can be added easily, to increase the robot count, to boost throughput.

This flexibility is compounded by changeover routines that often take a fraction of the time compared to industry norms. "By using HMI re-programmable servo systems, digital twins/virtualisation and RFID technology, we have significantly reduced changeovers in terms of both time and effort," explains Rocca. "Users get it right first time, every time, and in no time at all," he tells *Machinery Update*.

Vision systems also play a

critical role in the efficiency and flexibility of the packaging cycle at Cama. According to Massimo Monguzzi, Cama's R&D manager, the company's inhouse robotic solution has been fine-tuned over the years to work in perfect harmony with vision systems; and this tight integration is illustrated by the pick speeds and accuracies that are now achieved. "In addition to robotic guidance, quality control is another major beneficiary of the contemporary vision solutions we deploy," he says.

Tightly integrated vision systems are also an essential facet of any traceability system, such as those deployed in the pharmaceutical and healthcare sector.

"We can also scale vision system solutions, from simple cameras up to complex multi-faceted PC-based approach," Monguzzi adds.

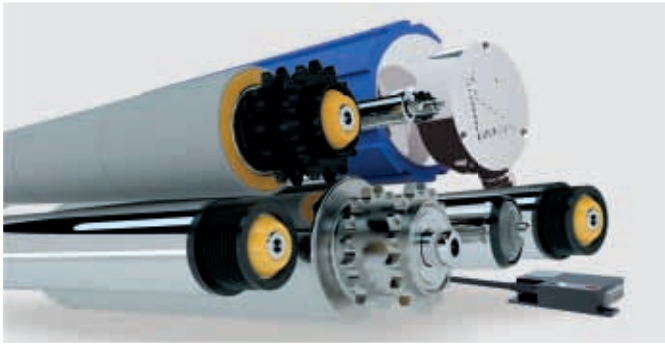
"Our experience of vision technology is very wide in terms of sectors and it is a vital part of our contemporary-technology offering," Rocca says, "which also includes easy & toolless changeovers, RFID coded components and immersive digital capabilities all underpinned by an Industry 4.0 framework".

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Univision's vision guided system is a robust option that is delivering gains for customers of Cama



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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

New starter kit for IIoT benefit

The **moneo** starter kit from ifm electronic gives a helping hand in starting an Industry 4.0 journey

ifm electronic says its new moneo starter kit provides everything needed for users to start exploring and also enjoying the benefits of Industry 4.0 and the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT). Developed to be easy to use, the kit includes all the hardware and software required to implement condition monitoring for motors, fans, pumps and other simple machines. Not only is the solution provided by the kit comprehensive and fully functional, it also offers almost unlimited scalability and easy integration with existing IT infrastructure, explains the company.

“Most manufacturing companies now see that Industry 4.0 is the best route to a secure and profitable future,” says Paul Stansfield of ifm electronic, “but many are daunted by the apparent cost and complexity of starting out on this route. Our moneo system addresses these issues and the new moneo starter kit is



This standalone system can be extended to cover additional machinery

the perfect way for companies to ‘dip their toes in the water’. But it’s much more than just a trial package or a training aid – it’s a very useful standalone system that

can easily be extended to cover additional machines and plant.”

Included in the moneo starter kit hardware package are two vibration sensors, a speed sensor, a temperature sensor and a four-way IO-Link master, together with a moneo processing unit with the moneo IIoT platform pre-installed, and a Wi-Fi access point. Also included are a power supply and all necessary interconnecting cables to ensure that the kit offers a ready-to-use plug-and-play solution.

This new option from ifm is sold only in conjunction with the moneo starter kit software licence.

The kit can be used to monitor motor

speed and winding temperature, effective value of vibration velocity, effective value of acceleration, acceleration crest factor and maximum value of acceleration. Values for all parameters can be inspected using a customisable dashboard-style interface and alarm limits can be easily set as

required. Data can also be logged for subsequent reporting and analysis.

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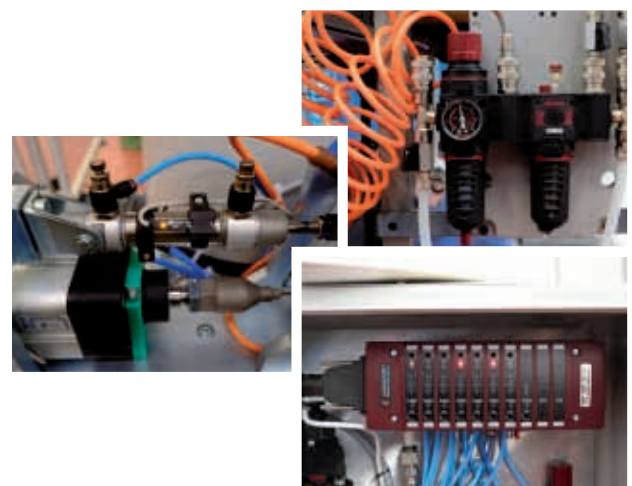
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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

3D printing offers freedom of design and a fast response

Around the world, the use of 3D printing in manufacturing is playing an increasingly important role, says top leading packaging machine manufacturer Schubert. In packaging technology in particular, development is now focusing on integrated additive process chains as well as the highest possible degree of automation and flexibility in production.

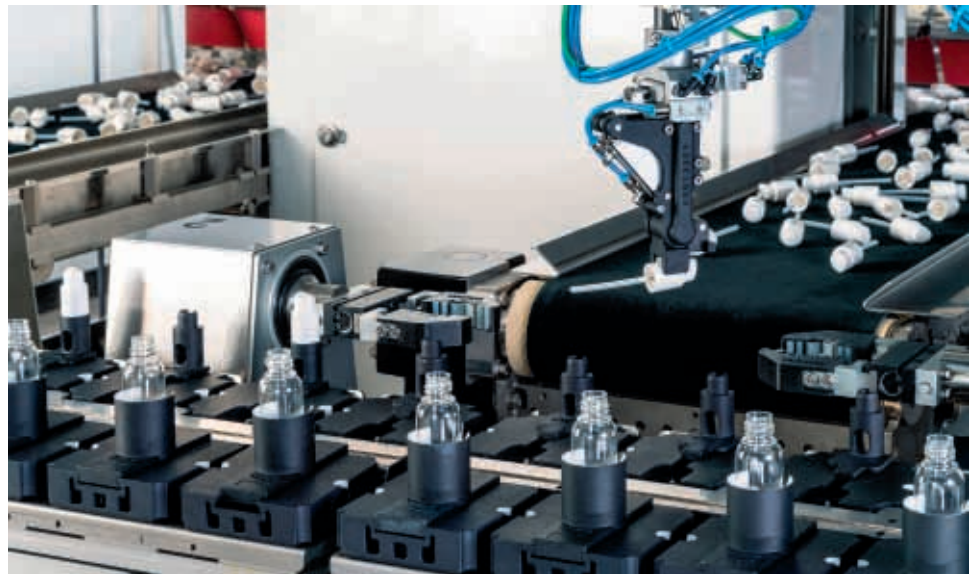
In the packaging process, 3D printing offers design freedom that was previously inconceivable, says Schubert.

Today, precision-fit robotic tools for fragile and complex product shapes can be manufactured in one piece. Form-fitting and more lightweight, but just as robust. Schubert has been working extensively with 3D printing technology since 2012 and has now firmly established it as a manufacturing process for tool components or entire tools made of plastics and metal.

A very important part of this is the PARTBOX part streaming platform, on which customers can print 3D parts themselves on demand at any time using certified print jobs. This saves an enormous amount of time, as it allows the company to respond flexibly and at



PARTBOX is delivering user benefits



3D printing offers gains

Apart from the magazine plate and the filling needles, all of the format change parts and also the pick & place robot gripping tools in this Laverana machine are 3D-printed parts

very short notice to new products and any change in customer packaging requirements.

The new 3D tools are available in a fraction of the previous delivery time due to worldwide access to tested and certified print data with the PARTBOX platform.

The fact that the packaging industry can also be considered a forerunner in 3D printing in other respects is demonstrated by the latest developments in the field of industrial 3D metal printing by selective laser melting (SLM). The SLM process is extremely versatile and for the first time allows almost complete freedom in the design of metallic components. Schubert successfully commissioned its first SLM system last year and is now producing metallic components virtually without tools and which cannot be manufactured by the previous conventional means.

Moreover, the new process makes the manufacturer much more competitive in the production of complex small parts with low volumes, as these can be produced much faster and more

inexpensively. However, the greatest potential may well lie in the development of new products with functional integration, for example cooling components. Such functional metallic 3D parts have already been used to successfully eliminate quality fluctuations in the filling of a customer's products in the food sector – quickly and independently of third-party suppliers.

A good project example, in which packaging processes are implemented significantly faster, is the so-called Laverana vision system. Schubert-Cosmetics engineered and built this new fully automatic filling and packaging machine for Laverana, a natural cosmetics company in Germany. This manufacturer now packs a wide variety of products and batch sizes from its Lavera brand in a cost-effective and flexible manner – even in small quantities – on the same production line – including fast format changeovers and 3D-printed format parts available at short notice.

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Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

Adaptive solutions

B&R says adaptivity is the answer to many manufacturing challenges

Consumer expectations in terms of convenience and delivery speed have shifted during the pandemic and B&R Automation believes adaptive technology can be a key enabler for FMCG companies moving forward.

Although adaptive manufacturing specialist at B&R Automation Wlady Martino makes a compelling case that adaptivity is the answer to today's biggest manufacturing challenges, he does admit that an adaptive



An adaptive solution is perfect for personalisation, says Wlady Martino

manufacturing solution is not always the right choice.

“If you're optimised for pumping out large quantities

of identical items day after day, then you've got little to gain from adaptability,” he says. “But, as you start producing more and more batches on the same line, you reach a threshold where the investment in an adaptive solution starts to really pay off in terms of time saved on changeovers and cleaning, and in terms of personnel and training.”

And, he explains, an adaptive solution becomes not just beneficial, but essential for personalisation. “Especially if you've got

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customers personalising their items on eCommerce platforms,” he says.

“If you want to catch the wave of new trends and get new products to market while demand is hot; if you want to do more than just switch from batch to batch, and actually run mixed batches simultaneously on the same line, then there’s no question that adaptive manufacturing is always the right choice,” he tells *Machinery Update*.

One of the keys to adaptivity has been to equip the line with a track system like SuperTrak or ACOPOStrak but with the recent launch of the new ACOPOS 6D, B&R believes it is offering even more flexibility.

“First, it complements the track systems by opening up new ways to achieve adaptive product transport in specific environments,” says Martino.

“The other big contribution from ACOPOS 6D is that the shuttles can move each product with six degrees of freedom,” he explains. This allows them to take on a variety of roles at processing stations that would otherwise require much more complex hardware.

At a bottle filling station, for example, instead of a SCARA robot you can use a Cartesian. “You save on hardware and maintenance and have a more flexible station that takes up less space on the line,” he says. And the shuttles’ innate ability to rotate or weigh products means those tasks can be done on-the-fly while in transit – completely eliminating the need for dedicated stations.

“More than that though, ACOPOS 6D inspires a whole

new way of thinking about the manufacturing line itself,” he continues. “Where track technology makes individual processing

steps adaptive, ACOPOS 6D makes the sequence of steps itself adaptive.

“The production line becomes an open processing

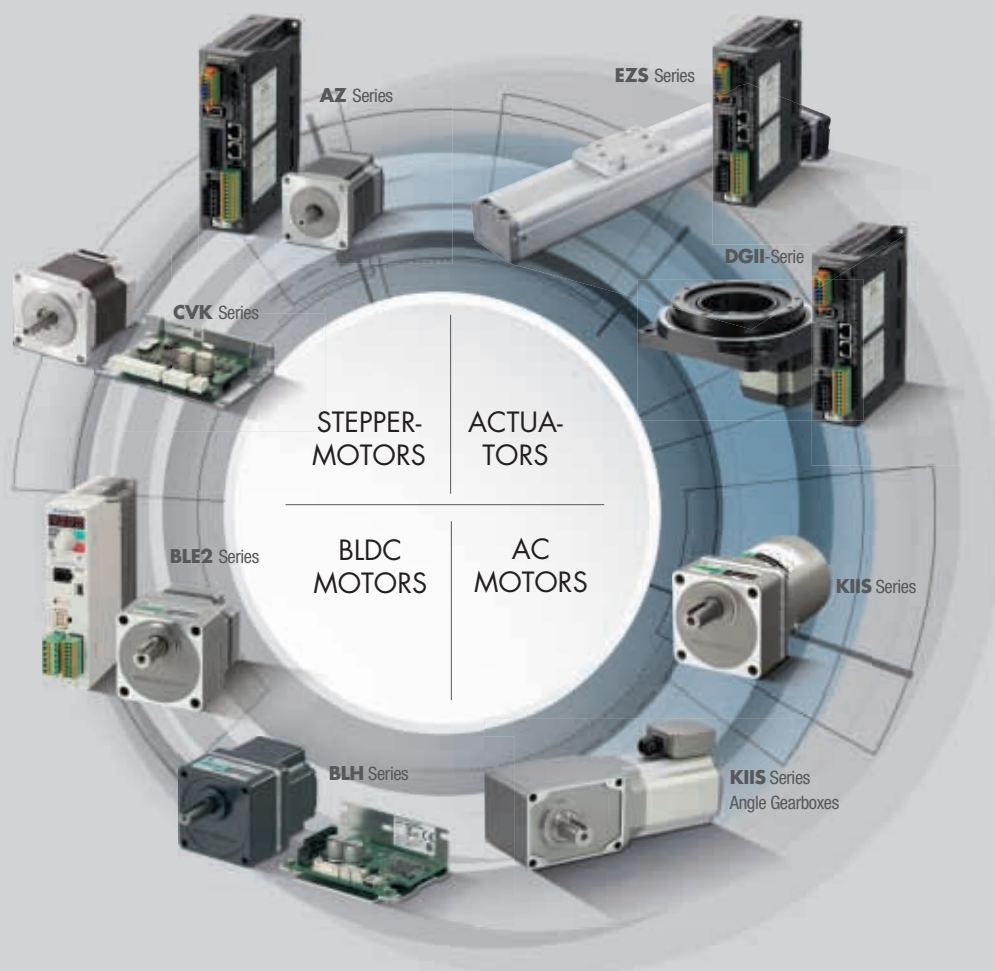
space, where shuttles move around to points in a matrix like a swarm of AGVs.”

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ACOPOS 6D brings further gain

Feature: Automation, robotics & vision systems

Technology provides for speedy orders

Hinges and ironmongery manufacturer A. Perry is now able to process orders more than four times quicker after investing seven figures in new automation technology.

The £1.2 m investment in picking robots has been implemented to cope with the significant rise in demand seen by the company in the first quarter of 2021; and enables the company to vastly reduce day-to-day operational costs and make more efficient use of floor space, allowing for future expansion of stock volume held on site and the variety of products on offer, without the need to relocate.

OW Robotics installed 15 fully automated robots and 330 moveable pods in the Cradley Heath-based firm's 5,000 sq ft warehouse. The installation took just six weeks to install, calibrate and set into action. The Q7 Hikrobots have a weight capacity of 1000 kg and provide rapid access to 4,000 picking locations containing 15,000 product lines while only requiring two packing stations to complete customer orders.

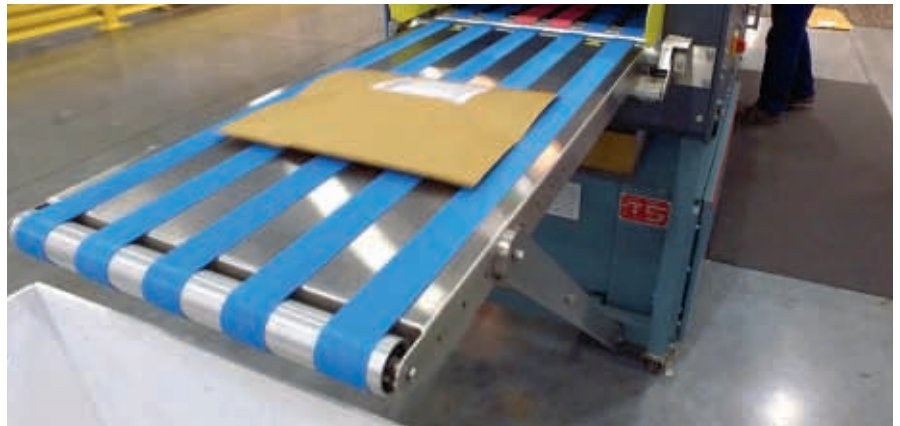
"In the first quarter of 2021 we have seen a 60% increase in orders and to be able to efficiently facilitate these, this investment in automation has been essential to be able to keep on top of our customers' expectations," explains Chris Perry, operations director at A. Perry.

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The Q7 Hikrobots have brought user benefits



The PriorityPak unit produces ready to ship packaging and can be supplied by Sealed Air

Working out the automated gains

Steve Dougan of **Sealed Air** pinpoints five signs that show the need for packing line automation

Operators are not always aware when it's the best time to automate their packing lines, says Steve Dougan, EMEA fulfilment platform director at Sealed Air, so here, he lists five signs operators should look for which demonstrate that they could be reaping the returns of packing line automation.

1. Your delivery slots are dictated by your packing speed – not your production speed

Packing shouldn't be influencing the speed and scheduling of the outputs that generate revenue. There should be systems in place that enable operators to easily synchronise their production and packaging to deliver a continuous and cost-effective throughput.

2. The packing area is growing out of control

A quick and effective way of seeing if it's time to automate packing is to consider the size of your packing area and how its floorspace has changed. Think back six or 12 months. Has your packing area grown? Does the packing area take up as much or more space than core-revenue generating production areas?

This often means efficiencies, which should come with economies of scale, are being missed and can also compromise quality standards.

3. Damaged products are on the rise

Product damage is a classic sign of a poorly packaged item. Although

high quality packaging helps to avoid this, damage can also occur because of inconsistencies within the manual packing process.

4. The packing 'tail' is wagging the production 'dog'

Bottlenecks in the packing area, increasing lead times and growing Work In Progress (WIP) are all typical problems of packing areas that need upgrading. We often see cases where companies will attempt to solve these challenges with significant capital expenditure such as moving to larger premises or expanding the packing line to accommodate a growing workforce of packers.

In such scenarios, the packing part of their operation is starting to influence core decision-making and investment. Instead, capital could be invested in core value-adding operations, by automating your existing packing set-up with a system which is right for you now and can grow with you in the future.

5. Operations and outputs are changing

Many companies, especially during these unpredictable times, will be looking at how they can make savings, grow revenue and maximise margins. Any strategic review of operations, growth plans or cost-saving exercises are a sign that packing automation should be considered.

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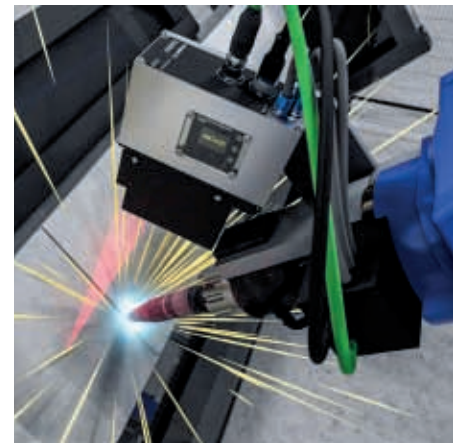
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A 2D/3D Profile Sensor with IP69K protection detects the entire width of the ice cream production line and measures the height and angle of the cardboard lids.



Visual Quality Checks

In the food industry, quality checks such as counting, presence or pattern match can be operated via weQube Smart Camera and the intelligent image processing software uniVision.



Welding Seam Guidance

With micrometer precision, the 2D/3D Profile Sensors weCat3D enable the tracking of weld seams in robot cells. Edges, angles or steps are detected automatically.



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Labelling, Coding and Marking



A larger printing size is offered

Handheld printers are a big offer

Timbermark ID Systems is offering a new range of hand-held thermal inkjet (TIJ) printers from Chinese manufacturer Zhuhai Bentsai Printing Technology.

The B3, B30 and B80 printers each offer new features that include larger printing size, a refillable ink cartridge system, and a highly competitive price.

NEW PRINT FEATURES

Print head size is one of these new features. The standard cartridge in the B30 and B80 printers is 2.54 cm (1 in) high, which is twice the height of the classic HP half inch product. And with the new larger print capability, designs can have far greater impact.

Additionally, the 1 in cartridges are available in aqueous and solvent variants, so the printer can work on porous substrates such as paper and timber, and non-porous substrates such as metal, plastics or glass.

Managing director Colin Stewart believes this handheld printer is just what many of his pallet manufacturing customers have been waiting for: "Customers like the precision and quality of mark offered by the TIJ printers, but until now the height of the mark at just half an inch has been a big drawback," he says. "The B30 can double this print size and print a high-resolution mark onto timber or even composite blocks."

T 0870 803 1877

W www.t-mark.co.uk

A weigh-price labeller is new option for food

Minebea Intec is launching the WPL-A, its first automatic weigh-price labelling system.

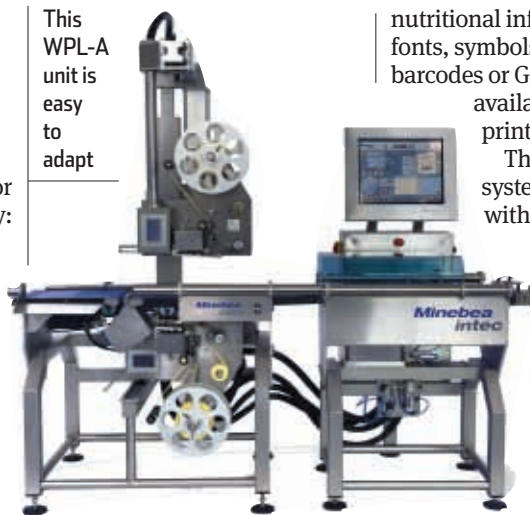
The company believes this labelling solution offers the ideal and complete package for customers in the food industry: weighing, pricing, labelling and product traceability in one package. This WPL-A automatic weigh-price labelling system is reliable, adaptable and an easy-to-use solution for high speed labelling applications with a very compact footprint and intuitive software. It has also been designed in stainless steel, in accordance with hygienic design guidelines, and is quick and easy to clean.

A modular design allows easy adaptation to customers'



Up to four printers can be used

This WPL-A unit is easy to adapt



needs, who only pay for elements that they require, and open interfaces allow quick and easy integration into production lines and seamless communication with other devices.

Intuitive user guidance is also offered to users.

Labels can be customised via Nexus Label Design software with numerous options to ensure compliance with global guidelines:

nutritional information, BIS, fonts, symbols or even 2D barcodes or GS1 symbols are available for label printing.

The price labelling system also complies with all current legal regulations that are important for operation in the food industry: The WPL-A is approved according to NWCN NTEP (National Type Evaluation

Program) and MID (Measuring Instruments Directive). Also, there is an E-Mark software module that guarantees the printing of statistical data.

To ensure traceability, each label is identified by a unique pack number, batch, user and machine ID, which can be transmitted to ERP systems via open protocols.

T 0121 779 3131

W www.minebea-intec.com

Installation has freed up three staff members while saving money for a UK plant business

In an effort to improve overall efficiency and speed up its coding process, Florna Plants turned to Rotech for an automated solution that would free up labour, save time and improve the printing quality.

Designed specifically for businesses looking to apply codes to packaging for the first time, Rotech's RF Lite is billed as the smallest and fastest sleeve and carton feeder on the market; the compact and portable system is only 800 x 495 x 520 mm, making



Savings in labour and costs are delivered

it ideal for packing areas where space is limited.

The adjustable feeder is robust and user-friendly, allowing staff to simply stack their flower tags in the hopper, and then set the required data via the easy-to-use iDesign software.

As well as being easy to maintain, the integrated Integra thermal inkjet printer produces high quality prints in a variety of different formats.

T 01707 393700

W www.rotechmachines.com

New wraparound labelling unit delivers full visibility to pizzas

Multivac is offering an automatic wraparound labelling option that allows pizzas and other flat food products an alternative to traditional box packs to meet the increasing market demands for greater packaging sustainability.

Generally fresh or frozen pizzas, tortillas, pitta breads, quiches, tart bases and other flat products are packed in hinged trays, thermoformed packs, standard trays or simply in film. They are often packed using a pre-printed film with top and bottom labels or a cardboard sleeve. In the case of pizzas in particular, they are generally packed in a complete box.



Labelling is new sustainable option

The L 310 full wrap conveyor belt labeller is Multivac's solution to using less packaging. This highly flexible model with its driven, extra-narrow transport conveyors delivers C labelling and D labelling of packs at speeds up to 120 packs per minute. The label width is up to a maximum of 500 mm. The labeller can also be equipped with an integrated printer, as well as a zero downtime function and label/print monitoring for maximum output, efficiency and process reliability.

A range of label materials and adhesives are offered, including PP and PET as well as paper options.

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Components

Clever capping is now patented

SMAC Moving Coil Actuators has patented its approach to automatic capping applications with its linear rotary electric actuators.

The patented automatic capping method with real time quality feedback utilises SMAC's Soft-land capability which allows on-the-fly detection of contact to the top of bottle, vial, or container. SMAC's patented ability to monitor positions, torques, lead in threads, and turns and then reports back in real time eliminates the need for other sensors or vision systems.

SMAC says its programmable force/torque and low moving mass is ideal for precise torquing of caps.

The company believes its patented smart capping actuators are the most advanced capping devices on the market. Linear and



The capping method eliminates the need for other sensors

rotary axes are independently programmable on SMAC actuators and SMAC's linear direct drive motor is, it says, the fastest on the market. The brushless DC servo motors, using a Halbach magnet array and printed coils, have much higher torques than conventional servo motors.

SMAC's integrated vacuum/pressure ported through the rod is designed to simplify cap pick and place.

Additionally, SMAC's continuous cost down philosophy has resulted in price reductions of 40% compared to even three years ago.

T 01293 520147

W www.smac-mca.com

New mounting bracket will save conveyor makers cash

Leuze is launching a mounting bracket for its 25C sensors that saves conveyor system manufacturers both time and money. Designed for reliable pallet detection, the sensor and bracket are supplied as a pre-assembled set to enable the conveyor system manufacturer to pre-mount to the conveyor in the factory, which is traditionally done onsite during the installation and commissioning phase of the system.

The conveyor, system



Mounting bracket offers user gains

manufacturer can install the sensor and bracket set inside the conveyor thus protecting it from potential damage.

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New linear rail and shaft clamping element launch

Matara UK, specialist in automation, pneumatics and linear motion products, has launched a new range of linear rail and shaft clamping elements designed and produced in-house and exclusive to Matara.

Designed to complement its linear rail and linear shafting products, the new Matara clamping elements are aimed at machine builders who require their machinery to perform key positioning, braking and holding tasks. The shafting type suits

diameters from Ø12 to Ø60, with the linear rail units suitable for linear rails from 9 to 65.

The Matara linear rail and shaft clamping elements range features both manual and pneumatic clamps.

The manual clamps - the FRCMAN series of Linear Manual Rail Clamping Elements and the FRCCMAN LT Manual Clamping Element for Round Bars Light Line - provide simple yet reliable manually controlled clamping. They feature an adjustable locking lever where the contact sections press

with sync on the surfaces of the rail. For maximum effect, the floating profiles of contact ensure a symmetrical distribution of the force on the linear guide.

The pneumatic clamping elements – the FRC series of Linear Rail Clamping and the FRCC Pneumatic Clamping Element for Round Bars – use the air from the machine's pneumatic system in place. The FRC series is available as single or double acting to allow customers to choose how they want the clamps to operate, making them suitable for a very wide range of applications, including materials handling, and printing and packaging applications. Furthermore, they can also be used as a failsafe on vertical applications; if there is a failure in the pneumatic system and the air is shut off, the clamp automatically locks the load in position for added safety in operation.

T 01684 850000

W www.matara.com



Applications for the range include materials handling, printing & packaging



A range extension offers more powerful power supply to users

The Quint Power family from Phoenix Contact has been extended to include a new powerful power supply with 110 V DC. It is suitable for applications from 110 V DC to 135 V DC. This means that just one device can now be used to supply applications that previously required several devices to be connected in series. This saves space in the control cabinet while also reducing wiring effort.

Furthermore, the power supply has received safety approval in accordance with EN, IEC, UL 61010-1, and 61010-2-201. It is also certified in accordance with UL HazLoc Class 1, Division 2 for potentially explosive areas. Thanks to the wide temperature range from -40deg C to +70deg C, the devices support flexible use.

T 0845 881 2222

W www.phoenixcontact.co.uk



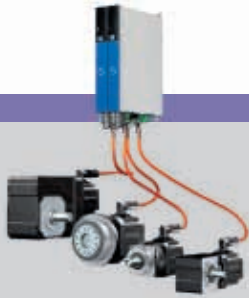
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Components



One cable solution has longer range

Motion control equipment manufacturer Stober has further developed its one cable solution (OCS) so that users can now connect motors and drive controllers at distances of up to 100 metres.

Designed in collaboration with encoder experts Heidenhain, this new single cable connection means that machine builders no longer need to use two cables to power the motor and transmit encoder data. It can all be done with this one new hybrid cable now available from Stober.

Countless lab tests over continuous operation have revealed that the quality of the data transmission enabled all signals to be read and evaluated flawlessly without errors in the encoder communication, even after five million cycles. The new OCS also eliminates data transmission weakness and removes the need to use an output choke up to 50 metres.

The new OCS is compatible with the Stober SC6 and SI6 drive controllers, which are suitable for powerful drive systems and highly efficient multi-axis applications. Stober has also enhanced these two drive controllers with a new series transceiver chip, as used in Heidenhain's EnDat 3 encoder, which makes the company the first drive specialist on the market to use the OCS in combination with this encoder solution.

The OCS is designed for use with Stober's EZ and EZS series synchronous servo motors, which can also be combined with all Stober gear units in direct attachment, enabling engineers to design much more compact solutions for customers.

T 01543 458858

W www.stober.co.uk

Laser line-scan profilers are cost-effective and an easy to use solution

The new PMD laser line-scan profilers from ifm electronic offer a convenient, cost-effective and easy to use solution to the challenge of inline inspection of components and assemblies to detect manufacturing faults. Much more reliable than manual inspection – yet capable of detecting even small and subtle faults – PMD profilers are a fraction of the price of conventional vision systems and can be configured in minutes using just three integrated pushbuttons, says the company. And furthermore, no software is required.

The profilers work by scanning a line across a good sample of the object to be inspected and, using laser time-of-flight technology,

storing a profile for this line. Subsequent objects are scanned in the same way and the results are compared with the stored version. If the deviation is greater than a user-definable limit, the profiler's good/bad output changes state. The evaluation of the profile covers a specific 'region of interest' which again is user definable.

T 020 8213 0000

W www.ifm.com/uk



ifm's laser line-scan profiler offers reliable inspection



Various pin patterns are offered

Circular connectors are named product of the year for 2021

For the second time in three years, the waterproof T-Series of Y-Circ P push-pull circular connectors from Yamaichi Electronics has won the title of 'Product of the Year' in a reader's poll conducted by the electronics trade press. This award by the trade public is said to underline the acceptance of the T-Series in the market for its reliable waterproofness (protection rating IP68) at 5,000 mating cycles and the simple assembly. With the T-Series, Yamaichi Electronics has developed a connector with a robust locking system that meets complex requirements and still offers all the advantages of a push-pull connector, such as 5,000 mating cycles with reliable waterproofness.

T 00 49 89 451 090

W www.yamaichi.eu

Connector offers optimal use of installation space for users

The new Han L32 B size from Harting offers more flexibility when selecting the right rectangular connector for industrial applications.

Using an L32 B connector allows users to replace two size 16 B interfaces, saving over 40% of installation space. This makes it possible to transmit power, signals and data with fewer interfaces and fewer components. It also cuts the time required to assemble interfaces.

The resulting reduced

weight and space savings contribute to lower consumption and therefore delivers sustainable product design, says Harting.

The Han L32 B housing can be filled with a Han E insulator for 32 contacts (16 A/500 V) or with a Han-Modular articulated frame that can accommodate up to eight modules. As a result, the new size not only offers space for the articulated frame with the most module slots, it also results in the highest



New connector offers more flexibility

module density in a connector, says the company.

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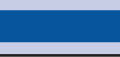


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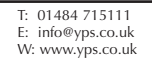


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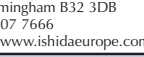
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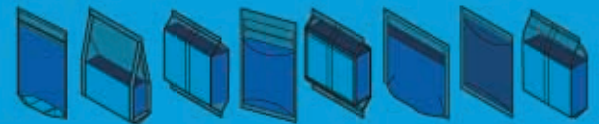


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