

## health &amp; beauty

# Costs, counterfeiting and consolidation

The pharmaceutical sector is now viewing a different landscape from the one it was looking at only two or three years ago. The steady flow of new drugs has slowed to a trickle while many major 'blockbuster' products are reaching the end of their patent protection. Generics and low-cost drugs are also challenging the sector's ability to innovate, while the fight against increasing numbers of counterfeit drugs continues.

And as pharmaceutical companies continue to consolidate in search of cost savings and product rationalisation, it all adds up to challenging times for processing and packaging machinery suppliers.

However it is clear that machinery manufacturers continue to play a key role in pharmaceutical production and have the ability to help companies realise their financial goals, while at the same time fulfilling the ever tighter regulatory and security standards required in today's markets.

## Costs

If the last pharmaceutical feature in *MU* (November/December 2008) highlighted the arrival of low cost sourcing, the intervening period has not lessened this pressure. Instead the pharmaceutical majors are expecting even more from their equipment in order to come to grips with more flexible production (to accommodate smaller batch sizes), as well as counterfeiting and brand protection issues.

As Andrew Longworth of Koerber Medipak commented, "There is a relentless pursuit of increased OEE (overall equipment effectiveness) for processing and packaging lines. To meet this challenge every aspect of machine operation and performance must be examined and optimised.

"The challenge to the machine manufacturer is to provide the technologies which enable minimum downtimes, especially for changeovers, but also for the routine operations of the machine."

He continued, "A direct consequence of the pursuit of OEE is the examination of overall equipment lifecycle costs – basically, the costs of ownership".

Oystar representative, Derek Moore agrees,



"Companies are looking for tool-less changeovers and built in CIP (clean in place) as standard. Also machine footprints are becoming smaller due to tighter floor space requirements.

"Low cost sourcing of equipment from India and China is a worrying trend. Most of these lines are low or medium speed and used for simpler tasks. But whilst they seem to be good value at the outset the high running costs due to running efficiencies, service costs and parts/maintenance availability can make them expensive in the long run. They also have to be CE Marked and are unlikely to be 21CFR PT.11 compliant."

Longworth added: "Today the fashion for pharmaceutical equipment is that it is modular in construction, with mechanically simple, proprietary, digital servo drives. These have significant advantages in the cost of ownership studies."

Continued on page 30

## HEALTH & BEAUTY SPECIAL FEATURE INDEX

### Pharmaceutical

Cost saving equation 30 - 31

Round up 32 - 33

On show at Achema 34 - 37

### Cosmetics

round up 38



## Medicine identification

The PrintSpect inspection handling system introduced by Laetus meets all medicine identification standards such as EFPIA or the French CIP 13 regulation (GS1 Data Matrix), to be enforced by December 31, 2010.

PrintSpect is equipped with a conveyor and two vacuum belts that control each carton, leaving the entire superior surface and both sides accessible for marking.

It supports any kind of printing or marking device to guarantee an optimum data matrix quality, says the company.

The Laetus Inspect wt camera system performs the quality measurement, conforming to ANSI/ASCII standards and inspects the sell-by date, batch number and marketing authorisation number.

Only products of acceptable quality will be allowed to pass through to the rest of the packaging process, states Laetus.

The control camera is linked to the marking device and only one adjustment is necessary for printer and camera set-up. Invalid or wrongly printed material will be rejected by an integrated eject station.

There is a choice of three conveyor models in widths from 0.70m - 1m, handling from 150 to 400 cartons/minute.

PrintSpect is compliant with pharmaceutical requirements, made from stainless steel and easy to service, according to Laetus.

T: +44 (0) 1480 414242

E: joanne.leary@hapa.ch

# Cost saving equation

Continued from page 29

**W**hat about robots as part of the cost saving equation? Well, while the influx is not yet dramatic, the use of robots in clean room functions has been increasing while the robotic top loading of pharma products into cartons is replacing sideloaders. Top loading, in particular, has advantages for smaller batch sizes, as it offers more flexibility on pack types and patterns as well as much shorter changeover times between formats.

Sustainability also plays its part in overall costs of production. Longworth provides an example: "For some applications such as pre-filled syringes that are not terminally sterilised, cartonboard packaging can show clear advantages. The pack is mono-material, is readily recycled and offers a minimum pack volume for a product that requires cold chain logistics."

Other material/machine developments show increased use of single use syringes, glass vials being replaced by BFS (blow fill seal) installations for injectable or ophthalmic products and, as reported in *MU March/April 2009*, stickpacks are increasingly popular for some single dose medicines, particularly digestive treatments. With the ability to put more and more liquid products in sticks and the convenience of doses in this format, usage is likely to show growth well above the 30 per cent recorded in 2007.

## Security

The principles of tamper evidence and child resistant closures are well established. But the need for anti-counterfeiting features in pack design is becoming increasingly important.

To quote Pat Reynolds, editor of *Packaging World*, in a recent article on Brand Authentication, "Pharmaceutical manufacturers have a real battle on their hands as the World Health Organisation estimates that counterfeit drug sales could reach US\$75 bn by 2010."

Many companies see the first and most obvious line of defence in 2D datamatrix barcode track and trace systems, and several companies in the coding field have developed and installed these at major pharmaceutical production plants. These codes can be applied to every component in the package, for example, carton, tube and even the leaflet.

Next comes RFID tagging for cases and pallets, enabling wholesalers, distributors and retailers to

check the provenance of the unit quickly and easily. Sometimes RFID may be used on the individual products too, as a customer preference.

Finally, at least for the time being, e-Pedigree data management software links the whole chain together. So this 'chain of custody' will include manufacturer, contract packer (if used), wholesaler, distributor and retailer. At every stage the unique ID of the product is stored along with other vital information such as batch code, expiry date, invoicing details and any other data required for retrieval along any part of the chain.

This may sound simple but it is not and it comes at a cost. Better counterfeiters will come up with ways to circumvent even these complex safeguards. So both existing and new



technologies are being developed all the time to make it harder to copy.

One such security solution from Kodak in the USA uses a traceless tag which is embedded into a thermal transfer ribbon. As a label destined for the product passes through the print head it receives the traceless tag as well as a human readable graphic. The tag can be read only by a laser based reader.

The printer also generates a unique ID on the label in two formats: a 24 character readable code and a 2D datamatrix bar code. An encryption device generates a unique serial number with an algorithm which cannot repeat it.

As Elliott Grant of Yottamark, which makes the encrypter, explains, "Counterfeiters have no incentive to make one fake, they need to make an abundance of fakes to make money. With our technology we catch you if you try to make up a

## health & beauty - pharmaceutical



number, we catch you if you copy a bunch of numbers and we catch you if you try to re-use a set of numbers that have already been used.”

Of course quality of packaging, holograms and other traditional counterfeiting measures still have an important part to play. But in this increasingly sophisticated ‘war’ the weaponry is also becoming more complex and is being led by machine technologies.

### Consolidation

Since the beginning of 2009 Pfizer has announced its merger with Wyeth, Merck with Schering-Plough and GlaxoSmithKline has bought Stiefel. So the pace of consolidation has increased rapidly as the world economic outlook has deteriorated.

But in times of economic hardship the pharmaceutical sector has historically more than held its own globally, showing growth of 5 per cent year on year in recent times. The BRIC economies provide not only low cost manufacturing platforms but also huge, expanding markets. So we must look elsewhere for explanations for this sudden increase in activity and what the implications are for machinery suppliers.

Regulatory issues have slowed down the approval of many new drugs considerably. And there is an opinion that much of the ‘low hanging fruit’ has already been picked. With many blockbuster products out, or soon to be out, of patent protection the search for growth has

returned to acquisitions. The GSK purchase of Stiefel, for example, opens it up to a range of proven dermatological products, as well as giving it access to Stiefel’s expertise in this area for own brands.

Rationalisation of resources is always going to follow. As Derek Moore comments, “Takeovers and closures mean there is much surplus plant available. This might be good for upgrades, spares and re-deployment, but it will dampen new machinery sales.”

Of course the advance of biopharmaceuticals and nanotechnology will provide opportunities for new machinery developments. In addition differing delivery devices, such as transdermals and inhalations as well as self-administered injectables will need different packaging solutions. While 50 per cent of drugs are still taken orally and packed in bottles and/or blisters, this means that 50 per cent are not!

### The future

With the latest round of mergers comes the strong belief in some quarters that pharmaceutical companies want to divest themselves of ‘non core’ activities, which in this case can mean the production and packaging of their products. Certainly some people think this will lead to a rise in the size, numbers and importance of contract manufacturers and packers.

This can present its own set of opportunities and challenges. As Alan Green of US contract manufacturer/packer DPT Laboratories said to Packaging World recently, “We have to be all things to all people. Our customers are all over the map when it comes to what they think they need in the way of anti-counterfeiting measures... We have to listen to all of them”.

*\* Some items used in this article first appeared in the January 2009 issue of Packaging World under ‘Brand Authentication’. For a full copy of that article visit [www.packworld.com](http://www.packworld.com)*

## Help with legislation

Sauven Marking now offers the 2D Data Matrix barcode application in the Sauven 6000Plus, Sauven 1000 and Sauven 7000 series, to help facilitate new barcode legislation.

The machines can offer dynamic digital art working systems used in late stage customisation allowing varied text and coding systems as well as dynamic sequential numbering of packs. This can lead to improved track and trace and product authentication capabilities.

Pharmacies across the European Union will be required to read 2D Data Matrix codes on all pharmaceutical and drug packaging from January 2011.

Traditional 1D barcodes can only hold a limited amount of information and can now be replaced by 2D barcodes which can hold much more data, such as best before dates, batch/traceability numbers and serial codes.

T: +44 (0) 1932 355191

E: [sales@sauven-marking.co.uk](mailto:sales@sauven-marking.co.uk)

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Koerber Medipak

T: +44 (0) 1753 754865

E: [info@](mailto:info@uk.koerber-medipak.com)

[uk.koerber-medipak.com](http://uk.koerber-medipak.com)

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[www.oystar.de](http://www.oystar.de)

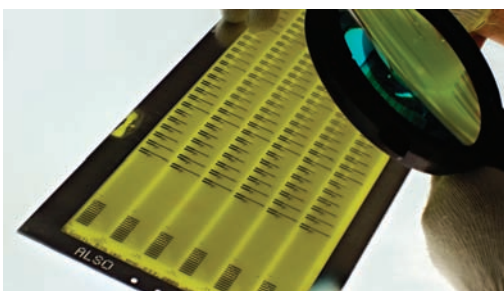
Kodak -

Graphic Communications

<http://graphics.kodak.com>

Yottamark

[www.yottamark.com](http://www.yottamark.com)



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## Enhanced cartoning

Modifications have been made to UET's compact cartoning machine specifically for the pharmaceutical market. An enhanced version has been installed recently within the UK at a leading global pharmaceutical manufacturer, says UK representative Springvale Equipment.

As many pharmaceutical products contain hazardous material UET has changed the machine plate style to ensure that there is no chance of particles/droplets being left in difficult to clean areas or dropping to the floor. Other features include coding systems, synchronisation with vision inspection systems, checking leaflets, cartons and pharma codes.

In cases where products have more than one component additional product sensors have been built into the machine, enabling the operator to be alerted if there are any missing parts. The operation is then halted until



the carton is filled correctly or removed.

Health & Safety has been enhanced by fitting security switches onto access doors allowing them only to be opened when the machine is in the stop position and not during cycling.

T: +44 (0) 1420 542505

E: springvale@

springequip.co.uk

# Quick release feeder

RNA Automation has introduced a Quick Release Bowl Feeder to meet requirements in the pharmaceutical sector to handle individual portion packs and single-dose packaging.

The feed system allows rapid and tool-less changeover of bowl top in a matter of seconds, through a specially designed pneumatic clamping mechanism, states RNA. In cases where there are different batches or sizes of component a traditional bowl feeder has sometimes proved impractical, particularly in a clean room environment, the company added.

Ease of cleaning and quick change over of components are said to be key features, while cross contamination of batches is greatly reduced



and new products can be added to the production line at a later date. Another benefit, claims RNA, is the ability to switch to a spare bowl during the autoclaving process; again with very little impact on production downtime.

T: + 44 (0)121 749 2566

E: rna@rna-uk.com

## Stringent verification for OTCs

For Thornton & Ross, the largest independent OTC pharmaceutical manufacturer in the UK and owner of brands such as J Collis Browne's and Hedrin, the number of possible combinations of label, carton and Patient Information Leaflets runs into thousands.

To address the issue of printed component verification, the company has traditionally used a system of stringent, but time consuming, manual checking, complemented by reconciliation counts. Due to increased demand for its products and new machinery investment it decided to look for a better system and approached Omron.

There were two particular system requirements. First, any changes to the printed items should not noticeably degrade their appearance – this was particularly important for labels and cartons displayed at point of sale. Second, updating the system to cater for new products and changes in existing products should be a fast, easy and reliable process.

The most obvious solution was to provide each item with an optically readable code. Unfortunately,

the normal barcodes for this process would have occupied a considerable amount of space, putting pressure on the area available for essential information.

To avoid this, DataMatrix two-dimensional codes were adopted and providing reading facilities for the codes was straightforward, as the Omron optical sensor range includes units specifically designed for this application.

The printed component verification systems on all of the Thornton & Ross production lines are networked via the Ethernet to a single PC running Omron's Excel based data management software, PLC REPORTER.

The final key item in the project was the provision of an intuitive operator interface at each packaging machine. The Omron NS8 colour touch-screen operator terminals were chosen, with each terminal being linked to the programmable controller that handles the printed item verification on its machine.

T: +44 (0) 1908 258258

E: uk@eu.omron.com

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# Thermforming duo

Doyen Medipharm has introduced a new generation of thermoforming machines, dedicated to the packaging of sterile medical products.

The two versatile machines, MT150 and MT250, allow for the efficient processing of flexible, semi-rigid and rigid films, says the company.

There are a variety of possibilities for forming and sealing top and bottom web, as well as multiple cutting options. This facilitates customisation for individual requirements. Improved access to the tooling increases convenience and saves time at

product changeover. As Martin Beriswill, Doyen's vice president of engineering and product development, explained: "The new thermoformers enable us to offer customers a broader range of options for packaging medical devices. Many medical devices are not suited for effective 4-sided seal packaging. With the MT, Doyen now provides packaging machines for flat as well as three-dimensional products."

The new thermoformer models are delivered fully validated.

T: +44 (0) 1953 600078

E: sales@doyenmedipharm.co.uk

## Labeller meets market needs

Newman Labelling Systems has launched its cost-effective S100 fully automatic, self-adhesive labelling system.

The S100 features the same cGMP design and stainless steel construction but features are kept to a

minimum to meet the current demand for low cost, quality machines in the pharmaceutical, health and nutraceutical markets.

Operating at speeds up to 100



containers/minute, the S100 is suited for use on cylindrical, flat and square containers from 10mm to 150mm, with minimal change parts.

All purpose built systems are fully compliant with FDA, cGMP requirements

and can be supplied with validation completed up to Performance Qualification.

T: +44 (0) 20 8440 0044

E: sales@newman.co.uk

## Perfima pan cleans up

Perfima, a perforated pan for complex film and functional coating processes, from IMA, incorporates a special Shark Fin baffle. The pan has the ability to maintain content uniformity from 25 to 100 per cent of the pan capacity with no need to change the drum.

Additionally position and dimensions of the outlet air duct allow uniform product drying saving energy, claims the company. Spray guns are mounted on a support arm and can be positioned and adjusted from the external part of the machine, by using the relevant device. The arm slides out from the coater; easing gun changes and calibration. Special

seals mean the machine is completely isolated and suitable for full containment installations and able to perform a completely automatic Clean In Place cycle, claims the company. Nozzles and spray balls cover all areas of the machine and are always in position.

Front and side doors fitted on the machine allow good accessibility, says IMA, while a 'through the wall' installation is also possible. Perfima capacity ranges from 3 litres to 900 litres across four machine models.

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E: hotdesk@imauk.co.uk



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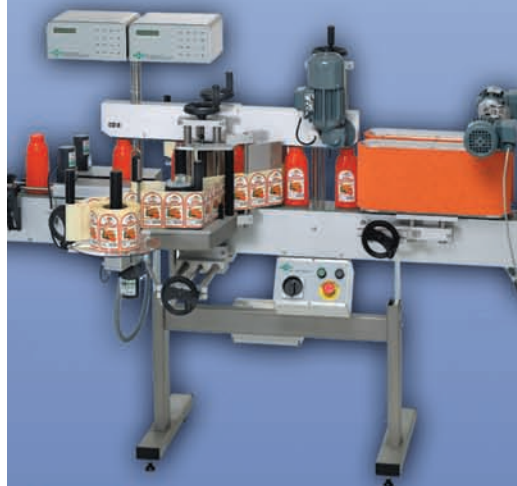
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Fax: +44 (0) 1444 246609

E-Mail: sales@atwell-labellers.co.uk

www.atwell-labellers.co.uk

## pharmaceutical - Achema 09

### ACHEMA 09 SIDELINES

PIAB launched its Unibody conveyor for the pharmaceutical industry. It is specifically designed to facilitate cleaning and meet traceability requirements faced by pharmaceutical companies.

This latest addition to PIAB's vacuum handling range features a tube-like shape and smooth surface to reduce the amount of residual material left in the system, improving cleaning and enhancing productivity, it says.

Customers receive a detailed documentation package that demonstrates the traceability of the ingoing material and the conveyor's compatibility with handled products to facilitate quality assurance compliance.

Additional vacuum technologies on display included the VGS™ (Vacuum Gripper System) series for downstream pharmaceutical applications such as pick-and-place, carton erecting and palletizing. The VGS™ series comprises three gripper sizes.  
T: +44 (0) 1589 857010  
E: info@piab.co.uk

The **Oystar** stand included the new design of Manesty's Value range of tablet presses which, it says, improves the ergonomics and aesthetics of the machine.

The press can operate at outputs between 10,000 and 234,000 tablets/hour and comes with a choice of control systems, including the mpower® which meets cGMP, GAMP and FDA requirements and has both bi-layer and effervescent production capability.

T: +44 (0) 151 547 8000  
E: info@oystar.manesty.com

Here Machinery Update provides a round-up of what was on show at the recent specialist pharmaceutical show - Achema

# Small but speedy tablet counter

Cremer showcased its new counting system - CF425. A versatile modular design with up to 10 counting heads, this advanced linear tablet counter maximises production speeds within a space-saving footprint, says the company.

It will handle a wide range of tablets, caplets, hard and soft gel capsules as well as a wide variety of container shapes and sizes. It features simple and speedy changeovers and cleaning.

The number of counting-head modules can vary from 3 - 10 to match the customer's required output. Typical output ranges from 90 - 300 containers/minute, says Cremer. Actual output depends on the combination of product shape, size and count.

Compared with conventional linear tablet counters with four counting heads, the CF425 is claimed to achieve high throughput in 40 per cent less floor space. The machine's features include full control of all motions, easier operation with fewer parameters, an electrically controlled enclosure over the counting modules and improved system efficiency.



The counter handles tablets and capsules ranging in size from 2 - 30mm in length and from 2 - 20mm in width. It accommodates a wide assortment of containers, including round, oval, square and rectangular up to 200mm high and 125mm wide.

Exceeding cGMP specifications, the CF425 is fabricated in stainless steel, hard coated aluminium and various synthetic materials. It uses CFR21 part 11-compliant software.

T: +44 (0) 1276 35053  
E: sales.uk@cremer.com

## Premier for vacuum sequencing

K-Tron Premier, part of the K-Tron Process Group demonstrated its P-Series vacuum sequencing receivers, which provide a custom solution for difficult conveying applications.

The P-Series receivers have been redesigned to meet the same high quality finish standards as K-Tron's range of weigh feeders, says the company. The 2415 vacuum



sequencing receiver, designed to handle powder and pellet, regrind or granular materials in the pharmaceutical, chemical, food and plastics industries has been fitted with a new Series 4 controller.

The 2415 is available in either aluminum or stainless steel construction.

T: +44 (0) 161 209 4810  
E: kb@ktron.com

pharmaceutical - Achema 09

# Transfer system for sterile bags

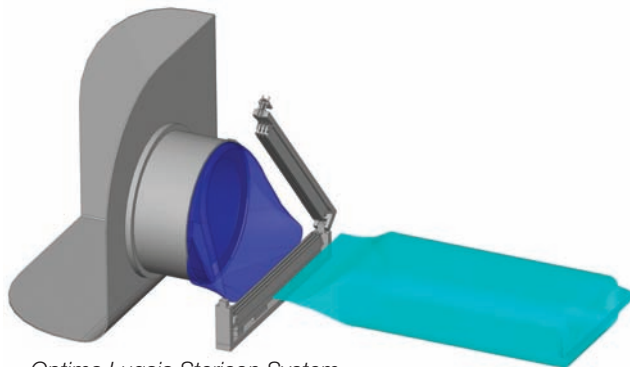
Lugaia STS AG has become an official premium partner of Optima Group Pharma with the integration of its Stericon system with Optima's filling and packaging machinery.

Stericon is a certified and patented procedure that uses sterile foil products and applies precision welding technology to transfer pharmaceutical substances, vials or plugs to an isolator-protected zone. An RTP port is not required.

The transfer system for sterile APIs and materials is a safe and extremely inexpensive solution, say the companies. The system uses laminated and pre-sterilizable foil products that are manufactured in an ISO class 5 clean room.

It comprises a bag which is filled with sterile pharmaceuticals; plus containers or closing materials, which are fed in or fed out of the isolator; and an endless foil tube as the transfer connection.

For transfer, the two components; the bag, and the endless tube, are interleaved into each other in layers. A specific welding and



Optima Lugaia Stericon System

separating procedure bonds the bags to the endless tube to ensure that the material inside does not have contact with exterior foil layers. This makes an RTP port redundant.

Stericon bags can be pre-sterilized by gamma rays, ETO (ethylene-oxide) or steam in the autoclave. The endless tube has been designed to transfer 500 containers in one batch. The procedure also supports discharge of the sterile products from the isolator. Sterility of the system has been proven and the entire procedure is GMP certified. It will be marketed jointly by Optima and Lugaia STS.

T: +44 (0) 5602 588242  
E: info@optima-gb.com

## Easy access for tube filler

At Achema Norden Machinery showed a NM902L-C tube filling machine linked to a NP 1702 cartoner. The filler is equipped with hinged cassette, and servo lift, as well as a tiltable combination beam and the new 90 degree pick and place unit for straight-line configurations.

This was the first time, due to the 'clockwise' direction of the tube transport in the filling machine, that the company was able to exhibit a 100 tube/minute line with all the control panels located on the same side of the equipment, providing greater

accessibility for operators and maintenance, it claims.

The NP 1702 cartoner offers very easy accessibility, says Norden. Above the machine table are doors manufactured in Plexiglas providing clear visibility of all the machine operations. The machine table has an ergonomic working height and is covered with stainless steel sheets, providing a user-friendly environment as well as facilitating cleaning and maintenance.

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pharmaceutical - Achema 09

**PHARMA  
SIDELINES**

**GEA Pharma Systems** demonstrated its PharmaConnect® system at Achema 2009.

The system allows pharmaceutical formulation scientists to plug in to a range of processing technologies to evaluate the processes and optimise product quality.

PharmaConnect® has a single control system that allows multiple process modules to be attached. Typically this could be a range of PMA or Gral high shear granulation bowls, but the system also accepts GEA extrusion, spheronization and blending systems.

The system is available in 'through the wall' or mobile formats and has the ability to process batches from 100g up to 25kg or more.

T: +44 (0) 2380 267131

E: info@

geapharmasystems.com

**METTLER TOLEDO** in the UK has introduced a new version of its FreeWeigh.Net software for pharmaceutical manufacturers.

Version 5.2 offers a wide range of functions to ensure



compliance with the complex specifications of FDA 21 CFR Part 11, while an optional Audit Trail module provides complete traceability of all changes in the system with programmable logs, says the company.

T: + 44 (0)116 235 7070

E: enquire.mtuk@mt.com

# New blister line and filler from Romaco

Romaco presented its new Noack T 4 blister packaging line. Its QuickFeed, QuickAdjust and QuickTransfer systems, provide high levels of flexibility, particularly for small and medium batch sizes at up to 400 blisters/minute, says the company. Short conversion times, increased productivity and minimal life-cycle costs are other features of the line.

The company also showcased its new aseptic liquid filler Macofar VF 24 for pharmaceutical parenterals and lyophilized products. With a maximum output of 24,000 vials/hour the slim designed and GMP-standardised plant it is claimed to achieve high product safety.

The patented QuickFeed unit has an air cushion adjustment system which allows product changeover in seconds. To do this, the product feed is completely detached and cleaned separately while production can be continued using a second ready-tooled feed unit.

The servo-controlled QuickAdjust station control system automatically adjusts production to the sealing, coding, perforating and punching stations. A laser light barrier determines the exact position of the blister and automatically moves the complete station to the optimal position.

Use of the four-track QuickTransfer blister transfer station allows blister layouts in

longitudinal- and cross-positions. Using a pick-and-place system, the blisters can be turned through 90° before being fed to the stacking system prior to cartoning.

The Noack T 4 comprises the compact Noack N 930 blister packaging machine and a Promatic PC 4000 series cartoner. According to customer preference, the installation can be equipped with plate or roller sealing.

The aseptic liquid filler Macofar VF 24 is designed for filling liquid or lyophilized pharmaceutical products. One of its key features is the slim design. The horizontal distance between the feeding hoses and the machine front is less than 600mm, and space in the 'white area' is reduced to a minimum. The vertical distance between the machine base and the filling area is big enough to avoid any turbulence or particles around the open bottles. The unit fulfils the requirements of GMP for aseptic production processes in the cleanroom class "Grade A".

This medium speed machine offers an output of 24,000 vials/hour. All drives utilise servo motors to allow accurate and reproducible processes. The integrated weighing stations check the weight of the vials before and after filling. The control unit automatically adjusts filling volume if necessary  
www.romaco.com

## Unique ID on more materials

Domino Printing Sciences says the recent technology innovations it showcased respond to the widespread migration from linear barcodes to 2D codes for unique identification within the pharmaceutical and chemical sectors.

Importantly the latest systems support different kinds of application needs, including unique EPC serial numbers, 2D datamatrix codes and RFID technology.

As Domino can offer a multi-substrate, fast-drying ink, the G-Series thermal inkjet printer (TIJ), launched in late 2008, now has an expanded range of compatible print materials, opening up new application possibilities for manufacturers, says the company.

The capability to switch between water- and

ethanol-based inks enables printing onto porous and non-porous materials, unlike other TIJ solutions, which are typically restricted to slower-drying, water-based options.

Domino's coding solutions ensure compliance with IFAH (International Federation of Animal Health) batch labelling and with the EFPIA (European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations) serial labelling regulations.

The company also offers a track & trace software solution with its Control Pharma software package, implemented by its partner, Bosch Packaging, for its CPS pharmaceutical product.

T: +44 (0) 1954 782551

E: enquiries@domino-uk.com

## pharmaceutical - Achema 09



# Revolution for leaflet feeding

A CP600 blister packing machine with a new high-GM product feeding zone was a major feature of the Koerber Medipak stand.

The machine, which is capable of producing 600 blisters/minute, was linked to the new Mediseal 3200 cartoner with an output of up to 300 cartons/minute. This machine incorporates a number of enhancements, including what the company describes as a 'revolutionary' leaflet feed.

Also shown was the P1600 cartoner with in-line blister printing via the BIB-BOB infeed allowing Late Stage Customisation and a

LA600SP stickpack machine for high speed pharmaceutical applications, with rapid format changeovers.

Dividella showed a NeoTop NT304 top loading cartoning machine for injector pens. This format is proving particularly popular for pre-filled syringes where a number of products must be packed into a carton for use one by one, says the company. The modular machine can produce up to 30 NeoTop cartons/minute.

T: +44 (0) 1753 754865

E: info@uk.koerber-medipak.com

## Marchesini in combination

The Marchesini Group exhibited complete line technologies plus new machines and machine combinations.

For liquid pharmaceuticals the company introduced a new ampoule line made up of the continuous rotary washing machine WRA24-8, a new sterilisation tunnel with cold chamber NLT60S-C and an ampoule filling-sealing machine RSF24 with 8 dispensing pumps.

For the syringe market, the group showed its machine model FSP10, for filling and closing disposable sterile syringes pre-arranged in BD Hypack or equivalent systems, in an aseptic environment.

There was also the preview of its robotic line, the Unica that is able to integrate the two deep-forming and carton packaging

functions in one monobloc unit. It features a 100 per cent robotic feeding systems.

For solids products, the company demonstrated Integra 300, an integrated robotic blister line which incorporates the two thermoforming (blistering) and carton packaging processes in one monobloc unit, for a production rate of 300 blisters/minute.

To demonstrate its technology for serialisation of pharmaceutical products, the group presented two versions of the new labelling machine BL40. These machines apply and check tracking codes of pharmaceutical products and also labels with different code combinations.

T: +44 (0) 1525 216201

E: sales@marchesini.co.uk

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T +44.1993.701-970  
info.uk@ocs-cw.com  
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health & beauty - cosmetics round-up

**COSMETICS  
SIDELINES**

Pre-moistened wipes for babies, personal care and general disinfecting, which are usually packed in individual sachets or plastic containers with a snap cap, could benefit from a new hermetic induction seal system.

Developed by **Enercon Industries Corporation** in co-operation with **IMS – Integrity Machine Services** – to extend shelf life, the special sealing head seals the wipes prior to capping the containers. The sealing system is fully customisable to meet specific requirements, say the companies.

T: + 44 (0)1296 330542  
E: richard.bull@enerconind.co.uk

A new, pneumatic motion, machine is successfully filling wet, 100 per cent cotton, towelettes into stickpacks at up to 70 packs/minute, according to manufacturer **Inever**, of Spain.

The patented system loads the towlettes using a vibratory bowl which orients them to the filling carousel. Next a dosing device wets the cotton via a peristaltic pump. The liquid, which can be a cream, perfume or insect repellent, is then absorbed and the towelette expands. In its compressed form the product is 20mm diameter and 10mm thickness, but can fold out as large as 320 x 250mm.

Configured for two lane operation for a pack dimension of 45 x 115mm, the standard machine accepts a reel width up to 300mm diameter with a 70mm core and 200mm width. Other sizes and shapes can be accommodated, says the company.

www.inever.es

# No close shaves with OCS weighers

Five existing production lines at Rudolf Dankwardt, of Germany, have been equipped with OCS checkweighers, to ensure product stability and accurate weighing of aerosol cans is maintained at rates of 150 pieces/minute, says the company.

In order to meet expanding demand for its contract packing services for the production filling and packaging of aerosols an additional site at Jessenitz-Werk/Lübtheen will extend the production capacity further, again using OCS equipment.

A continuous flow of touching, shaving foam cans are fed from the filler. Each individual can is checked for its correct weight before packing.

Typically aerosol cans are difficult to handle and will easily fall over. OCS engineers have developed a solution that ensures optimal product handling using the bypass transfer system. Aerosol cans are smoothly brought to the infeed conveyor where a screw conveyor accelerates them and provides the necessary distance between them for the weighing process, explains OCS.

Over/underweight cans are removed using the customer's flipper reject system. Cans with the correct weight are gently passed onto the outfeed



conveyor for final packaging and shipping to the customer. In this case 16 cans are packed into one carton which is finally checked by a heavy duty EC-M-SL checkweigher.

The bypass system provides excellent product handling in combination with reliable and precise weighing for aerosol cans, claims OCS.

It is targeted at cosmetics manufacturers with product ranges including deodorants, hairspray, shaving foam and similar products.

T: +44 (0) 1993 701970  
E: info.uk@ocs-cw.com

## Cooler cosmetics from Barcelona

Antonio Mengibar of Barcelona, represented in the UK by Holmach, has introduced a mix and fill technology to allow a cosmetic base product to be mixed in the filling manifold with a colour or fragrance immediately prior to filling into the container.

This allows temperature sensitive ingredients to have minimum exposure to gelling and other agents, which is especially useful if the product becomes more viscous as it cools, explains Holmach.

Mengibar has recently patented both rotary and inline filling technology that eliminates the need for bottom-up filling (where the nozzle is inserted into the container) on foaming products. The 'Low Reynolds' laminar flow nozzle eliminates air from

the product, and as a result there is no turbulence on filling. Ideal for hair care and nail polishes, the technology lends itself to ATEX applications where flammability is an issue, says Holmach. Coupled with flow meter filling, changeover is simplified and mechanical maintenance minimised.

Mengibar also designs fitment and pump applicators and trigger pump cappers. Recent liquid candle and other 'aircare' products have seen the use of dual compartment containers for fragrance and oil with automatic wick insertion.

Trigger pump cappers with automatic sorting of pumps and automatic rotary capping can achieve speeds of 60 - 400 containers/minute.

T: +44 (0) 1780 749097  
E: sales@holmach.co.uk