Hot knife for Sabre

Sealed Air is offering a new side seal unit, the Shanklin® Sabre™, on selected Shanklin machines. It has minimal cleaning and maintenance requirements, as well as improved productivity and lifespan, it claims.

Another feature is that the unit requires almost no calibration or set up procedures.

The Sabre™ is equipped with an oval shaped hot knife incorporating four independent cutting and sealing surfaces mounted parallel to and over the edge of the film.

Running time can be extended as the blade unit rotates, when one corner of the hot knife becomes worn, to place a new blade in position.

The company has retrofitted two Sabre™ side sealers into production lines at Hasbro, makers of games and puzzles, enabling the equipment to run for 1,500 hours without any knife blade changes, according to Sealed Air.

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New bag format

The new KubiBag bag formats available on Ilapak's Vegatronic 1000 machines will create a strong visual impact on supermarket shelves through its multiple design options, hopes the company.

Ilapak claims the formats provide excellent stability while allowing for a large print area. The two block bottom formats available are suitable for a variety of products, including coffee, tea, sugar, rice and pasta as well as dairy and other fresh items.

Bags can be produced using a variety of films or laminates and the Vegatronic 1000 can be modified easily using simple mechanical components to produce the KubiBag styles, enabling existing users to retrofit their machines.

The Baseline version (pictured above) has a 'winged' design which, says the company, enhances product appeal as well as being easy to open. It also incorporates a recloseable label.

The Brickline version offers protection for fragile products as well as being sturdy and stackable. Speeds up to 50 bags/minute can be achieved creating pack sizes between 30 x 30mm and 75 x 75mm.

A further benefit, says Ilapak, is that bags can be produced using thinner, lightweight material with positive effects for both the environment and costs.

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Vision system for ePedigree

Optimal Industrial Automation has developed a 21 CFR Part II compliant print and inspection system designed to meet the impending serialisation and ePedigree legislation which will soon be coming into force in many countries and States within the US.

The legislation requires finished healthcare products to carry a unique identifier on single units of packaging to provide complete traceability.

The iPass system uses 2D Datamatrix codes as well as human readable texts.

It can be purchased as a complete in-line machine, as a hardware and software bundle, or as software.

The machine is powered by Optimal's synTI software which is also fully 21 CFR Part II compliant, integrates printing and inspection functions and is able to store a large number of product configurations.

This software can also be pre-installed onto an industrial PC and comes supplied with a printer and vision system.

www.optimal-ltd.co.uk

Automatic payback

Cermex has developed a regulated flow system to enable automated format changes on its range of SDI pin-gated shrink wrappers, used mainly in the beverage industry.

The SFR flow system can be retrofitted to all of its existing SDI enabled machines, according to Cermex. Payback on the investment is effective when three or more format changes on the same machine are undertaken for example 0.5, 1 and 1.5 litre bottles, it claims.

A single cassette, controlled by a servo motor, is sufficient for all formats, eliminating the need for a different pin-gating cassette for each product. The data management system on an industrial PC can be used to change the positions and adjust the dimensions.

The company has also modified its CCO® diagonal infeed system to accommodate standard and slim cartons in the 200ml to 1 litre range as well as PET and HDPE bottles and cans. Previously the infeed was specified for small cartons only.

Benefits include savings on the conveyor length as it eliminates the need for a lane dividing system. The modification also includes a continuous selection function which provides a spacing system, with lateral fingers, for product protection, says Cermex. The CCO® is able to handle any collation within its maximum dimension tolerance and is ideal for difficult shapes, it is claimed.

The component can reduce overall length on a system by more than 3 metres, while the single lane infeed eliminates mass accumulation upstream. A further benefit, states Cermex, is that change parts can be minimised or not required at all, facilitating quick and simple changeovers. Speeds up to 65,000 products/hour can be achieved.

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Sanitation is top priority

The latest vertical form fill seal machine from HayssenSandiacre, the ULTIMAX, has been designed with high levels of sanitation in mind in order to withstand harsh washdown and rinse regimes, states the company.

The model is aimed particularly at fresh meat and poultry, pre-cooked proteins and similar sectors. The continuous motion bag maker is made entirely from stainless steel which includes solid, rounded frameworks and sloping surfaces. Servo motors are also made from stainless steel and all electric components are sealed.

A further advantage, says HayssenSandiacre, is that the narrow width and low height of the machine make it suitable for restricted areas.

Machine operations are controlled via an Allen-Bradley ControlLogix platform while other features include tool-less changeover and multi-language operator interface as well as on screen manuals.

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What a sauce!

Air Products has teamed up with Pursuit Dynamics to create a combined cooking and chilling unit for sauces as an integrated single production line.

The PDX® Sonic and Freshline® Continuous Sauce Chiller can reduce processing times and increase throughput capacities, say the partners.

The combined unit can be retrofitted into existing process plant layouts and may reduce the overall installation footprint. Several environmental features are claimed, including reduced product waste, repeatable automatic processes, less CIP effluent and better energy efficiencies.

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Going soft on biscuits

Baker Perkins has extended its range of EM390 rotary biscuit moulders with an over-band machine designed for multi-purpose and multi-product lines.

An EM390 located above the band of a sheet and cut line for hard and semi-sweet biscuits can be brought on-line as required to add soft biscuits or cookies to the product mix.

Changeover between sheet and cut and rotary moulded production is simple and rapid, according to the company.

When an assortment of products needs to be made simultaneously, the EM390 moulding roll can be engraved with a variety of designs across its width.

It can also be engraved with half the usual number of rows: the 'blank' spaces being filled by output from a wirecut machine or depositor. The only criterion on multiple product operation is the need for similarity in weight and thickness to ensure even baking, says the company.

A new sandwiching option involves two synchronised EM390 units depositing alternate rows of different coloured dough. This avoids the complicated product handling systems needed when both colours are produced on the same moulder.

Productivity from a standard EM390 widely used for moulded biscuits, bars, mini cookies and pet food is raised by the new option of a 60-inch wide machine for high output lines.

Recent upgrading, says Baker Perkins, has also enhanced end product quality by optimum filling of the mould cavities, achieved by larger diameter rolls, and separate drives for feed and die rolls release, feed roll heating or cooling, and dough level probes. For heavy sanitation requirements, corrosion proof stainless steel models are available.

The standard unit is portable, but can be integrated with a fully automatic dough feed system to reduce labour costs.

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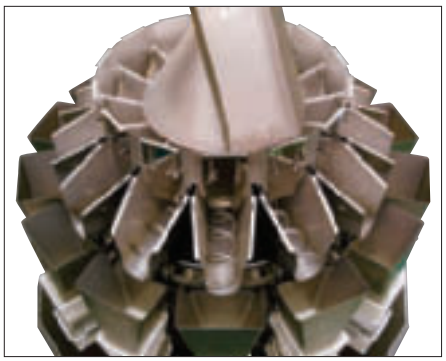
Weigh in for sticky products

Its new range of 'Screw Feed' multihead weighers extends the range of options for packers of fresh and/or sticky products, says Ishida Europe.



The models are aimed at processors and packers of meat, poultry, fish and other seafoods, where manual product feeding and handling is not viable, says the company.

Currently most systems for these products use manual operations or linear designs which rely on operators to control the product flow. The 'Screw Feed' utilises the established multihead weigher circular layout, but incorporates rotating corkscrews in place of the standard radial feed troughs, to supply the weigh hoppers.

Two 'Screw Feed' models are available. The first features 3 litre stepper motor driven, anti-stick metal hoppers and is suited to larger target weights and larger piece size applications, including 'on-the-bone' products, according to Ishida. It has speeds up to 80 weighings/minute. The second version incorporates 1.5 litre pneumatic driven, plastic scraper hoppers with a maximum speed of 60 weighings/minute.

Both models feature the calculation process software used in Ishida's R-Series machines and, it claims, can double packing speeds for some highly sticky products as well as reducing giveaway.

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Inbuilt intelligence helps speed up developments

Intelligent automation technology is far from new but just how much cognisance is given to its role in speeding up new packaging machinery developments.

Recently ELAU's iSH Intelligent Servo Modules were used by German packaging systems specialist meurer to integrate tray packing and film wrapping on its new model CM/TFS 60, reducing the time to market for this all new system to just three months, said Linus Wöhle, meurer's head of construction.

The small footprint continuous motion machine collates and packs PET bottles, glass bottles, jars, cans and other cylindrical products into trays, with or without film wrapping, or in film alone. It operates at speeds of up to 60 packs/minute in a single lane and up to 120 packs/minute in a two lane configuration.

The machine also features an optional patented counter-support bar for unstable products, making "it one of a kind," according to Wöhle.

The complete automation concept is based on ELAU technology. Motion and logic are integrated in the ELAU C400 automation controller, using modular software structures in an IEC 61131-3 compliant programming environment. Servos are networked via the SERCOS standard while inverters and gear motor drives are connected via Profibus.

Linked via the Ethernet interface on the ELAU controller, the HMI can communicate with management systems for data acquisition and remote service as well as allowing for future requirements.

The machine-mounted modules combine servo motor and drive electronics in a compact unit, reducing electrical cabinet space requirements and each servo module is connected by a single cable with snap-fit quick connects to provide all necessary communications and power supply via distribution modules to a shared power supply, says Elau.

By moving the 14 servo drives on to the machine, the electrical cabinet is small enough to mount on the side of the machine instead of in a freestanding cabinet. "The relocation of the servo drives out of the cabinet significantly lowers power loss, so that we can do without climate control, which in turn has a positive impact on energy consumption," said Wöhle.

"The hybrid cables reduced the overall cable runs required for the installation of the servos by 70%. This makes the machine very clean," he added.

"The reduction in cabling, combined with the plug & play, snap-fit connectors yielded a significant reduction in installation times making it possible to build and ship a completely new machine in just three months."

The intelligent servo modules ensure that the modular CM/TFS 60 tray packing and film wrapping machine operates at high speed, with maximum flexibility, and low energy consumption, says ELAU.

More about the machine

The CM/TFS 60 has a balcony construction and is based on a modular concept that integrates collating, tray packing, film wrapping and shrink tunnel in an inline process. Products are fed into the collating station and lane divider, before being transported to tray blanks drawn from the magazine by suction grippers. Once the blank is erected, the edges are hot melt sealed.

The tray continues into the film wrapping station where a revolving carrier system completes wrapping and lap sealing. A print mark control enables accurate placement of preprinted films. The sealed tray then continues on a plastic chain conveyor through a shrink tunnel designed to optimise energy consumption through an easily adjustable air flow control.

A wide pack size range contributes to the CM/TFS 60's flexibility, says meurer. It can handle formats from 200mm x 50mm x 50mm to 450mm x 300mm x 350mm.

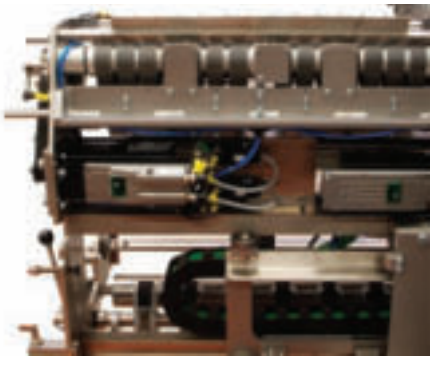
Tray length and width adjustment is centralised for all stations and by using servo technology to drive the push-button changeover the company claims that the number of adjustment drives are reduced.

www.elau.co.uk
www.meurer-gruppe.de

"Despite decentralised drive electronics, DC BUS coupling is ensured for all the servo modules. "

Linus Wöhle, Head of Construction at meurer, Fürstenau

The compact, integrated tray packing and film wrapping machine.



Close up of two iSH servo modules.

A single ELAU controller (top) and two power suppliers are all that's ineeded to control 14 servo modules.