

## Clif Bar & Company ensure coding and packaging accuracy with AutoCoding Systems



For Clif Bar & Company brand integrity is everything. The private family and employee-owned company based in Emeryville, California produces organic foods and drinks, including their flagship product the CLIF BAR.

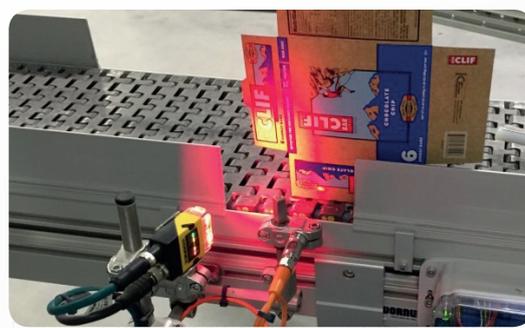
When the company wanted to ensure all products leaving their factory were correctly coded and packaged, they chose a coding and packaging verification solution from AutoCoding Systems. Clif Bar & Company are guided by “Five Aspirations”, namely sustaining their Business, Brands, People, Community and the Planet. With these aspirations in mind, all decisions are considered from multiple perspectives, recognising that the company can always do more in each of these defined areas.

The brand new 275,000 square foot bakery in Twin Falls began production in May 2016 with two production lines

with a third line scheduled to be commissioned early next year. All three lines will run a complete mix of 150 to 200 varieties of CLIF and CLIF Kid ZBar products.

Their motivation behind utilizing AutoCoding was due to a desire to sustain their Brands – creating brands with integrity, quality and authenticity. AutoCoding facilitates this by delivering a technical solution that helps Clif manage their complex mix of products on all lines while ensuring the accuracy of the packaging set-up.

**AutoCoding is utilized for date code deployment and package verification across the entire packaging operation which includes flow wrappers, cartoning, casing, and palletizing.**



The AutoCoding product has been integrated with the following:

- Apex Manufacturing Solutions Wonderware-based MES for Production Order launching and Line Control
- Markem-Imaje 9232/9450 Ink Jet Printers on Wrappers and Cartons
- Markem-Imaje 5200 Large Format Inkjet for Case Coding
- Markem-Imaje 2200P for Print & Apply for Pallet Labels
- Cognex 260Q barcode scanners for Package Verification

The application consists of touchscreen user interfaces on the packaging lines, barcode scanners for packaging verification, and a database held on a central server. Data relating to the products and work orders is retrieved from the ERP system through Wonderware MES and stored in the central database. All date coding rules, equipment parameters, label layouts, allergens, barcode formats, product images etc. are also stored in the database.

Setting up the packaging line to run a specific order is quick and easy with all the relevant information automatically deployed to the line devices at the start of the production run, with minimal human involvement. Not only can Clif be sure of error-free printer set-up, the changeover times are significantly reduced.

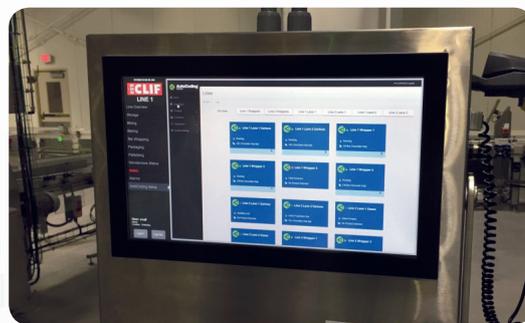
Continuous inline scanning of the packaging using 1D and 2D barcode scanners verify that the packaging is not only correct for the product, but that the right artwork version is being used, where applicable.

Staff can access the system from any web-enabled device, such as a laptop, smartphone or tablet, giving remote access to their production line activity. With comprehensive line reports and a 100% audit log, full traceability of all packaging line events is provided.

Clif Bar required a system that could be extended to cover other products which they planned to bring into their already extensive portfolio. The solution, therefore, had to be scalable to incorporate other packaging types and formats, as required. Jeb Sloan, Senior Project Engineer, explained, "We are a company that prides itself on innovation and creativity. We want to make sure our systems have the flexibility to accommodate our robust innovation pipeline."

Considering the overall project, Jeb commented, "The team from AutoCoding Systems are creative solution providers with an appreciation for shop floor dynamics. The solution works seamlessly with our existing systems and adds an additional layer of security to our already robust processes."

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