

We need greater speed on the production floor... and we need it now

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The smart robotics revolution is underway to meet the rapid pace of change in the feminine, adult and baby care products markets. As E-commerce and other market trends demand an increased range of packaging and case sizes, JMP Automation discusses helping factories face this challenge. A TWM report.

The upstream area of a tissue plant sees very high speeds within an automated process. Where JMP come into action is when this is not the case for the downstream equipment, which in many plants still requires numerous people to not only keep up with the pace set by the machines but also to adapt to the requirements from the retailer. The JMP systems enable factories to achieve the latest in assembly, packaging, palletizing through to warehouse operations.

Within the tissue industry, there is a massive demand in implementing flexible manufacturing solutions to help them thrive in the arena-of-change to combat the rise in consumer brands and product/case formats.

In the primary and secondary packaging areas, the tissue industry is in a state of high demand for technology to help the operations handle the changes in production stock keeping unit (SKUs).

Looking at wet wipe, baby, adult through to femcare products, the demands for these products are on the rise globally which in turn is driving the need for packaging capacity and configurability to keep up with the pace.

Throw in the changes from E-commerce, speciality markets and club stores alike and this suddenly makes for a proliferation of customer choices that are propelling changes on the production floor in the factories as never seen before.

As an example, today there are hundreds of choices and pack sizes available for many of these products. This is where Smart Robotic Case Packaging technology has come to save the day.

These smart systems are designed to allow factories to keep up more than ever before with a wide variety of products given their ability to changeover, remain hyper flexible, fast and reliable, and packaging different sized cases with different stacking formations that all can be accomplished readily.

Robotic systems pick up items with speciality end of arm tools that are programmed to change to another style for a different size product within seconds.

At the end of the production lines, Smart Robotic palletising systems allow all the case SKUs and pallet

patterns to be preprogrammed to stack automatically and then feed to automatic stretch wrapping and pallet handling systems to be ready for shipping.

A recent tissue project undertaken by JMP Smart Robotics and Automation

In the picture is an example of JMP Smart Robotics' installed in a tissue factory as part of an improvement project to incorporate a flexible robotic case packer that is able to load up to 150 packages per minute on three shifts per day.

The system has automatic change-over features to accommodate different product sizes, case sizes. Each with different loading orientations, which can also be changed automatically.

Without the flexibility of JMP Smart robotics technology and automation, many of the production changes and variety packs could never have been accomplished as economically as they can today.

In the manufacturing world, the factory lines are quickly becoming obsolete and the operations must implement advanced flexible technology with quick change over technology at every stage of the production and packaging process.

From the factory floor through to the production lines and warehouses, production teams must adopt new smart robotics and automation technologies to improve how products are packaged and distributed.

The battle of manufacturing efficiency can now be fully realised more than any other time in history as North American chief executives cast a vision within their operations to embrace these new technologies to compete.

The tissue industry in North America is in the middle of substantial technological advancements and is experiencing an increase in demand for products and package configurations.

From the manufactures to the retail level, all of the supply chain, to all of the third parties in-between, no one is escaping the changes that are taking place. Previous methods of product and project development are being overturned.

“Innovation” once the buzz-word is now the new-norm, with team leaders looking to increase flexibility of equipment through the application in the very latest in smart robotics and automation tools.

JMP is helping Fortune 100 leading CPG Manufacturers with innovative packaging and production equipment to allow the company to compete and not be left behind.

Working with operations to implement these new programmes and improvements for their business, we hear of the reality and threats that manufacturers must face in an effort to not becoming a thing of the past if they do not engage in implementing the latest technologies. Fully automatic quick change-overs without human intervention along with reduced handling “by-hand” is all driving this new norm. Overall the consumer product ecosphere is being completely reshaped throughout the world.

JMP Smart Robotics technologies have been improving to keep up with the complexities being demanded by the tissue sector and other CPG industries. Over the next few years, the industry will continue to witness and experience this revolution in how things are made.

As these technologies enable processors to deal efficiently with the flexibility needed to cope with SKUs proliferation, and as the ROI is fast, many large players are increasingly looking to improve their packaging and palletising operations.

This article was written for TWM by Paul Hill, client manager, JMP Automation