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Sharp: Employing Systech's Productized Packaging Execution System to Overcome Packaging Challenges

Today's pharmaceutical packaging landscape is complex, with new requirements, products, and market demands surfacing continuously. Although manufacturers are meeting these challenges every day, they regularly turn to contract packagers to handle particular situations, such as specialized packaging, overflow, and volume. As they look to contract packagers, some manufacturers' products also require serialization to address regulations or to protect high value products. Because contract packagers manage these responsibilities for numerous products per line, they confront the toughest vision inspection, line management, and serialization in the pharmaceutical industry.



Sharp Corporation, a contract packaging company, is undertaking these challenges daily. With over 75 customers, Sharp on average handles 10 or more products and various different package configurations on any given day. Sharp decided to look for a packaging information management platform that would ensure protection of their customers' products while optimizing their packaging services offering. The only way any solution could effectively handle the demands of their environment was if it is quickly configurable.

"Our customers rely on us to execute packaging projects to their quality as well as to our standards and to sometimes tackle the packaging challenges they haven't yet tried internally," explains Rick Seibert, Vice President of Business Development at Sharp Corporation. "We normally don't have time to customize and re-integrate lines for each new product configuration. We need nimble lines that can be set-up and configured quickly and change over in minutes versus hours."

Due to the requirements of their contract packaging environment, Sharp selected Systech's productized Packaging Execution System (PES) platform to address vision inspection, line management, and serialization. Systech's PES is a single system that integrates all critical packaging line information systems. Since the solution is productized, it is easily installed and replicable line-to-line or plant-to-plant. This repeatability reduces design, deployment and associated training costs.

Systech's PES is also configurable, enabling it to be adaptable and flexible. The PES platform's adaptability and flexibility allows it to quickly and easily accommodate line component changes and support a wide variety of packaging line functions without requiring code re-writes. Furthermore, the system easily expands to meet increased demands and new requirements, allowing manufacturers to leverage existing investment in infrastructure rather than make expensive changes to the technology. This helps manufacturers manage investments over periods, ensuring Return on Investment (ROI).

Vision Inspection

To meet the vision inspection needs of the numerous products they have per line, Sharp needed a user-friendly, configurable solution that could accurately inspect products at higher line speeds. They employed Systech Senti® for its ability to meet these requirements. Senti is widely deployed by the pharmaceutical industry. Its recipe-driven, one-click set-up enables fast, precise line operation, thereby increasing productivity, throughput, and speed to market for manufacturers. This set-up, along with its model-based font training, protects Sharp and the manufacturers it serves by ensuring packaging accuracy. In addition, Senti's adaptable software allows it to accommodate changes, such as product change-over and new products with different dosage and color requirements.

Line Management

Manufacturers use contract packagers for special products with smaller lot sizes, requiring them to perform frequent line set-ups and changeovers. Sharp is using Systech Advisor® to address these dynamic packaging demands in an ever-changing landscape.

"Whereas changing other lines with just vision inspection cameras takes an ET (electronic technician) a couple of hours, change-over on the Advisor lines is handled by a mechanic in just ten minutes. Because Advisor is recipe driven, all settings

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Abu Dhabi, UAE

Organizer: IQPC
Email enquiry@iqpc.ae
Phone +971 4 364 2975
www.plasticpackagingme.com

CFIA Rennes
9 - 11 March
Metz, France

Organizer: AGOR
Email cgeri@agor.net
Phone +33(0)5 53 36 78 78
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