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THE NEW 5000
becc
blister express center

Compact packaging line for smaller batches

Paracetamol, Pantoprazole, Ibuprofen – these are the names of pharmaceutical bestsellers. However, anyone thinking that these tablets are packaged on large, high-speed machines in batches of 100,000 packs could well be mistaken.



Active agents covering a wide application spectrum are often available in different pack sizes ranging from 10, 20 and 50 tablets to larger clinic packs. Requirements vary according to pain intensity and the age of a patient. Furthermore, packs are distributed throughout the world with customized leaflets. As a result, even pharmaceutical blockbusters are frequently packaged in batches of no more than 3,000 to 50,000 packs. In view of this fact, Uhlmann has developed the new Blister Express Center 500 specifically for medium-sized batches. The integrated line for the packaging of solid dose products is extremely easy to operate and guarantees outstanding process reliability – at an output of 500 blisters per minute.

FORMAT CHANGEOVER IN JUST 30 MINUTES

When it comes to the economically efficient packaging of medium-sized batches, a fast format changeover is essential. Consequently, Uhlmann Pac-Systeme GmbH & Co. KG has combined proven technology with innovative solutions in the new Blister Express Center 500. One example is the new SmartControl operating system: SmartControl guides the operator through the packaging process step by step. Texts, videos and graphics can easily be integrated and ensure that even new staff members can perform the necessary steps in the shortest possible time.

Above:
The new Blister
Express Center 500

Uhlmann has simplified the format changeover itself. Very few steps are involved so a changeover is completed within 30 minutes at the most. Practically all parameters can be saved and then automatically set at the touch of a button. The few format parts to be replaced are foolproof and light in weight. Here again, Uhlmann is breaking new ground, for example, by using hollow instead of solid format parts, or integrating the cooling into an adapter plate instead of into the actual format part. These intelligent technical solutions not only reduce weight but also cut format part costs. These, in turn, pay off in the long term as the total cost of ownership is lower.

The new Blister Express Center 500 is quick and easy to clean. Smooth surfaces, the clearly arranged layout and enclosed mechanics simplify work for operators. All parts are easily accessible or removable. As an example, the plates that guide the web are simply clamped so

they are quickly removed for cleaning. The shatterproof glass doors are easy to clean – and the integrated silicon seal ensures good sound insulation. Other effective features also facilitate operation: the leaflet folder, for instance, can be pulled forward to rectify problems or reset the format. A colour coding system signals to the operator which parts of the machine can be operated. A forming material trolley allows fast, easy reel replacement, and a cutting and splicing table ensures accurate splicing – to name just a few examples.

COST-EFFECTIVE PRODUCTION

Not only fast format changeovers qualify the new Blister Express Center 500 for the packaging of medium-sized batches. The output of the blister module at 500 blisters per minute likewise guarantees high economic viability and, parallel to this, the cartoner module handles 250, or optionally 500, packs per minute.

“ Pharmaceutical manufacturers are currently facing diverse challenges: decreasing batch sizes, stricter quality standards – and not least, lower investment budgets. An investment to replace older packaging lines is mostly only then cost effective when the new line promises greater flexibility and productivity, i.e. brings about an improvement in the overall equipment effectiveness (OEE). With the new Blister Express Center 500, we have developed a line that offers genuine benefits in this respect. ”

Jürgen Walser
Product Manager
Uhlmann

Continued



Right:
The leaflet folder, which can be pulled forward and turned.



Compact packaging line for smaller batches

- Continued



Above: SmartControl operating system

WELL-ENGINEERED TECHNOLOGY WITH NEW FUNCTIONS

All in all, the new Blister Express Center 500 takes full advantage of tried and tested technical solutions. However, Uhlmann's design engineers have supplemented these with intelligent functions. The servo-regulated drives are one example. These are now separated and can be controlled individually for each station. Consequently, it is possible to maintain constant

processing times during forming and sealing even when the number of cycles varies. This ensures consistent blister quality. The time-tested direct blister transfer to the cartoner module promotes process reliability as well as flexibility. One advantage is that the blisters are continuously guided so they can be stacked easily. A changeover to a different blister size is straightforward and fast as only two format parts have to be replaced.

MODULAR DESIGN

Lines for the packaging of solid dose products are often extensively tailored to pharmaceutical manufacturers' needs – and this should continue to be the case in Uhlmann's opinion. Nevertheless, the company has begun to lay emphasis on an intelligent modular design principle: functional modules are produced in larger numbers and supplied in a set order and cycle for just-in-sequence assembly. This helps cut production costs. Uhlmann assembles the modules to form a blister line within a short lead time. Customers can select from a range of standardized options: different feeding systems for all types of solid dose products, the choice between rotary and platen sealing, identification and inspection systems or a leaflet feeder with semiautomatic buffer systems. The cartoner module also allows the option of 250 or 500 cartons per minute.

LINE FOR TOMORROW'S TOP-SELLERS

It is difficult to predict today which preparations will rank among tomorrow's top-selling medications. However, one factor is certain: internationalization and the specific needs of different groups of patients or markets will promote the trend toward smaller batch sizes. The new Blister Express Center 500 is not the answer to all business questions – but it is a future-oriented line that offers pharmaceutical manufacturers key benefits in terms of medium-sized batches and tighter budgets.

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