

Beta-Pak builds a business

On quality, reliability - and simplicity

Turkish packaging machine manufacturer Beta-Pak specialises in high-quality thermoforming machines, which it exports to 35 countries across the Middle East and North Africa. The company, which relies on Omron for its automation equipment and systems, is looking to build its business in Western Europe, where it has already installed machines in France and Germany, as well as in Russia.

Thermoforming is one of the most versatile ways to create packaging, particularly for foodstuffs, as well as for medical and pharmaceutical products. Exemplifying this versatility are machines manufactured by Istanbul-based Beta-Pak Otomatik Paketleme. The company's best-selling BPT 20/40 and BPZ-400 machines, for example, are fully automatic thermoforming packaging lines that come in a range of formats to suit an exceptionally broad variety of products, including water, juice, jam, honey, ketchup, mayonnaise cheese, olives, sausages, fish and seafood, pastries and desserts, as well as medical and pharmaceutical products.

Each of the variants of the thermoforming machines have options to suit the particular type of product. For food packaging, it is manufactured using food-grade materials, including stainless steel for the main chassis, to maintain optimum hygiene. The BPZ 400 Medical is designed specifically to meet the particular needs of the pharmaceutical sector, complying with industry standards for printing, labelling and so on, as well as ensuring alignment of the automatic filling units, which have very precise dosing requirements.



Other machines in the Beta-Pak range are used for confectionary, water and fruit juices, soap, dairy products, individual portions of products such as jams, ketchup and butter – and much more besides.

For the past five years or so, the company has largely standardised on Omron products and systems for control and automation on its machines. Omron supplies PLCs, HMIs, sensors, servos, invertors, relays and other ancillary equipment, along with the related software. This has enabled the company to build a reputation for quality and reliability, as well as to extend its market base.



An excellent reputation for efficiency and reliability

As Beta-Pak's general manager Turgay Gezer explains, the company's primary export market is in the countries of the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa: "We have a good market in Turkey, but we needed to grow, so naturally we looked at neighbouring countries. Using the Omron control and automation equipment means that our machines are very versatile but also easy to use. These advantages have helped us to develop an excellent reputation in the market for efficiency and reliability."

Efficiency and reliability are, of course, key characteristics for all packaging equipment, but particularly for those used in the food industry, where unplanned downtime can lead to products being spoiled and/or wasted. With an extensive market outside of Turkey, Beta-Pak's customers look for machines that are both globally available and well supported, and this is another area where Omron's experience and expertise has proved invaluable.

Universal connectivity has been a feature of the Omron product offering for several years now, and this is also particularly valuable to Beta-Pak. The company's machines need to interface and exchange data with other machines and systems in the production process, including filling, inspection and boxing stations.

The ease with which Omron equipment and systems can communicate with other devices is vitally important for seamless integration across the packaging line. It helps to ensure maximum uptime, and also to simplify control and automation processes. Beta-Pak has standardised on the Omron CP1 PLC as its main control unit, interfacing with the NB series of HMIs. The PLC has a built-in analogue input, while the HMI incorporates Ethernet, serial and USB interfaces for straightforward connection to virtually every other automation device – whether made by Omron or supplied from other vendors.

Almost all end-users need machine customisation

Turgay Gezer says this is particularly important given the range of applications for which Beta-Pak machines can be used: "Although we offer standard products, they almost always need a degree of customisation to suit the end-user's specific needs. In some cases, this can relate to the ancillary equipment, in others to the products being packaged." A good example is where an end user might want to package a range of dairy products on the same line, each with different styles and sizes of pack. The Beta-Pak machine can be set up to form a range of containers using different mould profiles, while the Omron PLC and HMI combination can easily be tailored to meet the end user's needs.

As a result, there's almost no modification to the machine's control software, and none to the wiring and installation – simply a series of changes that can be created in-house and uploaded. This cuts down on manufacturing time, and ensures that the customer gets the machine quickly. It also enables Beta-Pak to maintain their competitiveness in markets where price is almost always an issue. In addition, installation and field support are entirely straightforward, so that machines are put into service as quickly as possible.

Building on established strengths for a broader market

In Beta-Pak's existing core markets, the requirement is for machines that are relatively uncomplicated and easy to use: there is, for example, little or no call for remote access for maintenance and service. However, Beta-Pak is now increasing its activity in Western European countries, where the proven efficiency, ease of use and reliability of the machines has led to sales in France and Germany, as well as to Russia.

As Turgay Gezer notes, "We are growing our business, and as we go into more high-end markets, we are confident that Omron has the products and systems we will need to help us get more from our automation equipment. We're always driven by what the customer

wants - it's how we have developed the business. So we will listen to what customers in Europe say to us, and when we need to develop more advanced solutions, we know that we can rely on Omron to help us."

Beta-Pak's relationship with Omron has already helped them build an enviable reputation in their established marketplace, and the company is ambitious to maintain this momentum. The fact that Omron has such deep and solid foundations in Europe means that the relevant market knowledge, design expertise and on-site support is already there, waiting to help.

