

Sealed with a Cap

While Mylan Pharmaceuticals, Morgantown, W.Va., hasn't been around as long as Charles Jacquin et Cie, Inc., its packaging machinery need hinged on a specific footprint requirement. Like Jacquin's, Mylan is constantly adding to its product line consisting of, in this case, pharmaceuticals. When a new line was needed for a recently developed drug, Electrical Engineer Ryan Moffa was a part of the team that conducted due diligence before settling on a capping supplier Mylan had worked with in the past.

Challenge: Companies with expanding product lines are constantly adding new machinery for new packaging lines.

Solution: If you have an established relationship with a supplier you are comfortable with, ensure that they are included in the selection process.

"For nearly a half-century Morgantown, W.Va.-based Mylan Pharmaceuticals, a subsidiary of Mylan Inc., has been a market leader in researching, developing, manufacturing, marketing and distributing generic pharmaceutical products.

Today, at Mylan Pharmaceuticals, we have one of the largest product portfolios in the U.S., consisting of more than 200 products. The company pioneered and continues to specialize in many groundbreaking delivery technologies and difficult-to-manufacture and -formulate pharmaceuticals that treat diseases ranging from angina to arthritis, depression to diabetes, pain to Parkinson's disease, and schizophrenia to sleep disorders.

The generics industry continues to grow as an aging population, a strong

desire to reduce health care outlays and an increasing reliance on generics continue to fuel demand.

In early 2009, we were installing a new pharmaceutical bottling line to increase our capacity. With a manufacturing capacity of almost 35 billion doses, our machinery needs are ever evolving. When we arrived at the capping station, we had a limited amount of space for the machine, making a small footprint a must. Speed was an issue, but we did not necessarily have a need to go faster. Our maximum speed for this particular application was going to top out at up to 150bpm (bottles per minute).

What we did need was a capper that offered quick and effortless setup and changeover that still maintained Mylan's high standards for cap application accuracy.

When dealing with pharmaceuticals, the most important aspect associated with capping is the quality of the seal. A foil liner in the cap is transferred to the

NJM/CLF's beltorque inline capper offered Mylan consistency, quicker changeover and easy setup.



bottle creating a crucial airtight seal. Naturally, a correct seal starts with the capper. The capping machine must provide reliable application and torque to ensure proper transfer of the foil to the bottle.

We have a working knowledge of what cappers are available through research and by attending tradeshows. We contacted several suppliers in search of a new capper, but we already have a longstanding relationship with NJM/CLF, Inc. In fact, we already had some models of their beltorque™ Capper in our facility. Mylan also uses their beltorque Retorquer, Auto-Colt III Labeler, and they provide support for our Cremer Electronic Tablet Counters.

Before making our final decision, we visited NJM/CLF's plant in Montreal, Que., to take a closer look. We were able to see the machine in action, do some ▶

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changeovers and talk to some of their technical staff about the machine in detail.

The key aspect of our decision was not about running a capper faster, but it was about quicker changeovers, easier setup and consistent running. The beltorque inline capper met these needs. All necessary adjustments for bottle/cap changes have dials or gauges for a repeatable setup. Since the cap feeder is a dedicated change part, no adjustment is necessary. The capper also employs a belt system for the application and torque of the cap. The belts provide constant contact with the cap, and, in our opinion, have proved much more dependable than the traditional spindles. The NJM/CLI capper also has an excellent inspection system to verify foil presence and proper cap application.

The lead time from NJM/CLI was



The belt system employed on beltorque cappers sealed the deal for Mylan.

about 10 weeks. The capper was being installed on a new line, so it is difficult to pinpoint exactly how long it took to install, but the whole line took approximately eight weeks for installation, commissioning, testing and qualification. From beginning to end the entire project

took 14 months from when we considered the idea until the new line was up and running at the proper speeds." **PMT**

Ryan Moffa
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