

Medical markers capped to perfection

TorqSense transducers are playing a vital role in packing medical test kits at Axis-Shield in Dundee, which develops new diagnostic compounds that help with the early identification and management of critical illnesses



Axis-Shield is inventing new markers for identifying cardiovascular and neurodegenerative diseases, rheumatoid arthritis, sepsis, vitamin deficiencies and diabetes. Spotting early signs of such conditions during routine medical check-ups means treatment can be started in a timely manner, which leads to improved patient management, either curing or managing the problem.

The compounds it develops are initially produced in low volumes, where automated processes are not appropriate. This moves to medium volume production once the product has been proven, approved and certified and the medical fraternity begin using it.

Some compounds later move into high volume production, but it is in the very nature of medical advancement that in other cases, Axis-Shield will keep on improving the formulations and developing new products fairly quickly. Thus Axis-Shield has a need for highly efficient medium volume packaging solutions that guarantee accurate and consistent adherence to performance parameters.

This led the company to commission a bespoke packaging line that could handle multiple products in a variety of different packaging formats at a rate of around 500-2500 units per hour. The line fills bottles or other forms of container with the compounds, caps them, labels them, groups them into multi-packs, applies outer wrappers and overprints key data such as production date, use-by date, storage, handling and usage instructions, etc.

“Our packaging line has four capping stations and each one is fitted with a TorqSense transducer,” explains Dean Harper, of Axis-Shield. “These work in conjunction with a computer to ensure the correct level of tightness and record the data for traceability records.

TorqSense met the design criteria of robustness, simple high speed operation and non-contact for sterility.

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