

MANUFACTURING

A Steady Rise in Activities

As with all other companies, a machine manufacturer's growth is always a welcome relief for managers, owners, shareholders and employees, who see ongoing activity as a sign that their jobs will still be there for them in the future. However, it is easier said than done to maintain strong sales, keep up with full order books and increase the number of units manufactured. A production tool that can meet the demand and sustain a relentless pace is a must.

Such a situation is certainly not unique, but when it involves one's own business, it takes on a whole new meaning. This is the case for Jalbert Automatisation, a leader in the automated production industry, which proposes customized solutions for the pharmaceutical, cosmetics, agri-food and chemical sectors. This company has already completed hundreds of projects with major companies around the world.

A Busy Business

Known for its beltorque® technology that uses two sets of lateral belts to screw and tighten caps instead of the discs found on conventional inline cappers, Jalbert Automatisation is enjoying impressive growth, explained Alain Lamer, business development manager.

"By the end of the year, we will have more than fifty employees compared with about twenty just sixteen months ago. And, in the last four years, we have tripled our sales." That's not all. "To house all these people and succeed in filling all the orders received, last year we doubled the size of our engineering department and will soon increase our manufacturing plant space by 60%."

How did we do it? In two words: beltorque® capper. This machine "represents the greatest innovation in the field in recent years." The number of units sold since its introduction on the market confirms this statement.

"Last March, we calculated that we had already sold some 225 beltorque® inline cappers since the product hit the market. Our sales were worldwide, but especially in the United States where over 74% found takers, and also in Europe, South America and Asia. In fact, we can say that we sell an average of 28 units a year and, together, these machines have screwed on over five billion caps!"

The sales success has led to the company receiving a highly deserved honour this past October. Jalbert Automatisation was presented with the MercadOr in the "Market

Diversification” category. This award was given by Laurentides Économique, a regional economic development agency located in Mirabel, to recognize the involvement of a business from the Laurentian region at the international level.

To be chosen, the business had to meet certain criteria, including having 30% of its sales related to export, exporting to at least two different markets and having developed a new market in the past three years. These criteria were all abundantly met by Jalbert Automatisation since its percentage of export sales alone reached 71%.

The company was also singled out for other awards, a further testament to its wealth of expertise. It received the 2014 Innovation Investissement Québec award and the 2014 Business of the Year award in the SME category at the 2014 Gala des Mercuriades organized by the Québec federation of chambers of commerce (FCCQ), the largest business network in Québec.

Unique Projects

Jalbert Automatisation has also made a name for itself by delivering one-of-a-kind machines. They include a bottle orienter. This type of machine makes it possible to align a production line’s bottles in the same direction. As pointed out by the manufacturers, “This minimizes intervention by operators who must ensure the proper direction of the bottles before inspecting the product’s quality. These operators can then focus on the visual inspection of bottles so nothing is left to chance.”

A “bottle unscrambler” was also developed for a body-care company. The company wanted a station that could sort bottles as they enter the packaging line. They also wanted a tablet elevator that would “make it easier to transfer tablets from one piece of equipment to another, for any tablet or capsule shape and size.”

A Very Special Machine

More recently, the company designed a very special machine for a client from the agri-food processing sector. As pointed out by Alain Lamer, “This machine is one-of-a-kind in the world. It does what no other machine can do and does so with incomparable regularity and reliability.”

“Early on in the mandate we deconstructed any task that employees did manually which we thought a machine could do automatically. We very quickly realized that we were headed in the wrong direction and needed a solution that would avoid duplicating the same tasks as the employees. We rolled up our sleeves, set to work and, after several months of testing, developed a very unique three-step technology that does what needs to be done on the product it receives, handles or rejects.”

Made entirely of stainless steel, this machine can be thoroughly washed down with water, which is always a challenge for designers. To move the delta robot (see photos)

so it can perform the three-step process for which it was designed, this machine was equipped with guide rails made by Bosch Rexroth.

“We chose these rails because of their intrinsic quality and because they could easily be installed on a machine that could withstand being thoroughly washed with water.” Bosch Rexroth happens to be the only manufacturer or one of the rare ones that can supply this type of product.

As pointed out by the supplier, “The NRFG rail system was designed with materials and engineered components that make it ideal for use in wet working conditions. The profiled rail and the ball rail system are both made of corrosion-resistant steel and can withstand relative humidity above 70% and temperatures above 30°C for an indefinite period.”

A Solid Partnership

The fact that there are Rexroth brand components in a machine designed and made by Jalbert Automatisation is hardly surprising when you consider the close-knit relationship forged over time between this manufacturer and this supplier.

“In fact, we started working together a good two years ago,” said Nelson Pacheco, Technical Consultant, Factory Automation, at Bosch Rexroth Canada.

“Since then, Jalbert Automatisation uses products from our Linear Drive and Control (DCL) line,” he pointed out.

“Recently, we also had the opportunity of working with this machine manufacturer to help it develop a major project/machine for one of its largest customers, which uses products from our Electric Drives and Controls (EDC) line.”

This collaborative effort in several projects between a manufacturer and a manufacturing supplier of high-tech products has resulted in Bosch Rexroth Canada providing technical assistance to Jalbert Automatisation, namely for consultation “when it comes to choosing which components to use in its machines and identifying the right employee training program regarding programming and our EDC products, for example.”

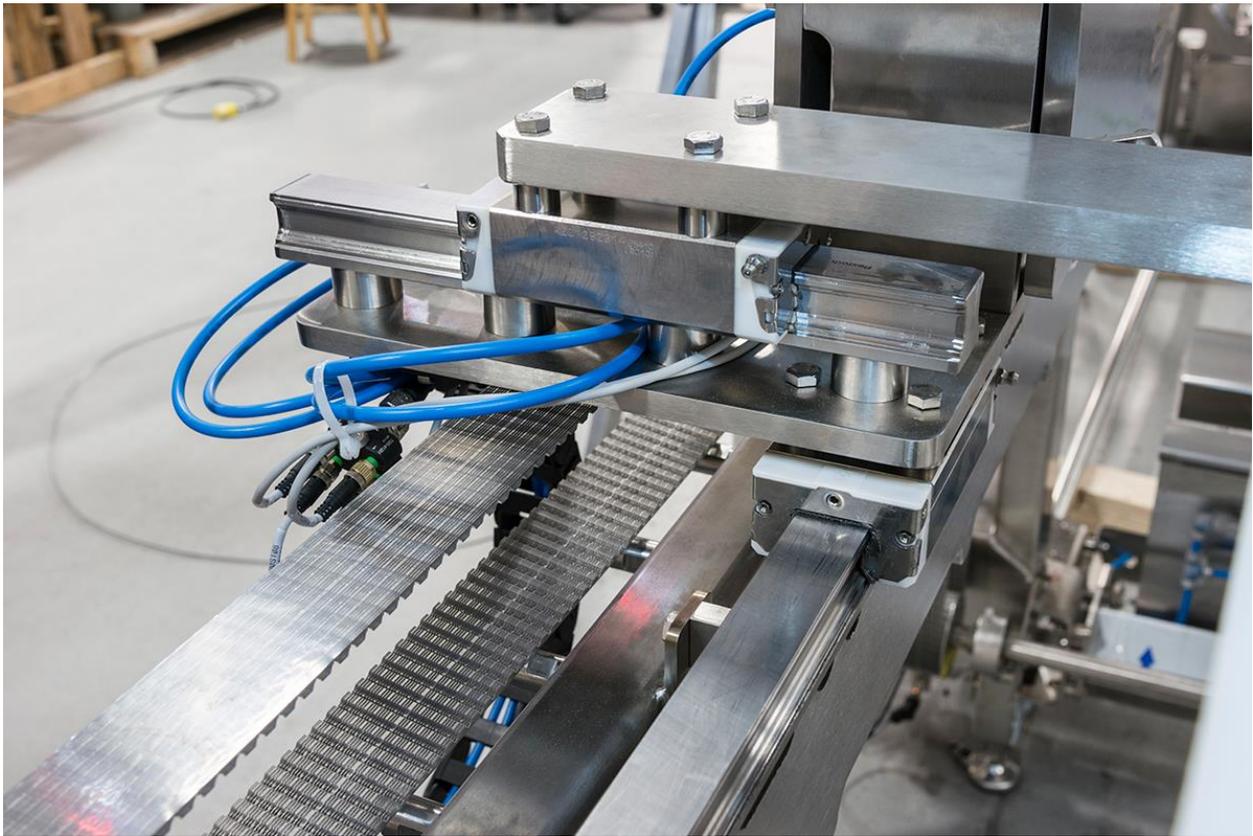
With this approach, Bosch Rexroth Canada was able to build a relationship of trust with the manufacturer. This has prompted Nelson Pacheco to say, “We are not just a mere supplier, but first and foremost a manufacturing supplier partner. It should be pointed out that it’s the kind of partnership that Bosch Rexroth Canada constantly strives for, not only with Jalbert Automatisation, but with all our customers.”

“In other words,” explained Nelson Pacheco, “Bosch Rexroth Canada contributes to building machines and facilities by providing its cutting-edge technologies and unique know-how. We devote all our energy to giving our partner-customers customized, reliable and resource-efficient solutions.” He added that “Our innovations bring about

many improvements in various fields, not only for those who build the machines, but also for those who use them.”



From left to right: Steve Boissonneault, Manager – Engineering and Operations, Jalbert Automatisation; Alain Lamer, Manager – Business Development, Jalbert Automatisation; Nelson Pacheco, Technical Consultant – Factory Automation, Bosch Rexroth Canada.



The NRFG ball rail system from Bosch Rexroth is well suited for the wet and high-temperature environments seen in the agri-food industry.



The machine manufactured by Jalbert Automatisation is equipped with a stainless steel Ironman gear reducer and a Leeson motor, both from Regal Beloit.



NRFG rail system, from Rexroth.