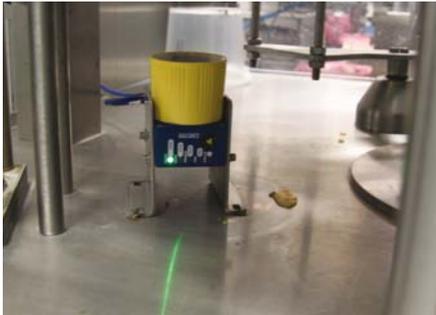


Customer Application Summary

CHRIS' DIPS

INDUSTRY:	FOOD & GROCERY (CHILLED SECTION)
APPLICATION:	VERIFICATION of CORRECT PRODUCT + BARCODE SCANABILITY
TECHNOLOGY:	VISION SYSTEM
PRODUCTS:	DATALOGIC CAMERA + iDSnet SOFTWARE



BACKGROUND

Chris' Dips produces a range of home-style dips (125g-500g tubs for retail, 2.3kg for food service) and yoghurts, available in major and independent supermarkets, Australia wide. The 35-year-old family business prides itself on innovation, driving some of the leading dips on the market.

A nominee in the 2012 Northern Business Achievement Awards, the company has been a signatory to the National Packaging Covenant since November 2001 (and is transitioning to the Australian Packaging Covenant); it is committed to the sustainable design, use and recovery of packaging.

SITUATION

Workers on each line manually and visually checked the right product was in the right tub, including that the barcode was correct.

In line with the company's packaging philosophy, they wanted to improve their quality control (QC) processes, eliminate any potentially costly packaging errors and simultaneously enhance output and productivity.

BUSINESS NEEDS

It is imperative the right tub has the right product in it to avoid potentially large recalls. It is also vital that barcodes are GS1 compliant and scannable for each product to avoid penalties from retailers.

Future functionality

The solution needed to allow Chris' Dips to easily expand its functionality in the future, such as automate other quality on-line checks.

PROCESS NEEDS

The vision system needed to integrate with Chris' Dip's existing production machinery and equipment footprint.

It also needed to be flexible enough to check tubs presented throughout a 360-degree

rotation, as tubs do not travel down the line in exactly the same orientation every time. Also, the system needed to be capable of checking multiple SKUs.

Centralised control by line managers was desirable to free them for other duties.

Accuracy, repeatability and reliability were other necessities.

SOLUTION

Chris' Dips compared systems from different suppliers, choosing to work with iQVision because of its ability provide a turnkey solution, and not just supply the hardware. iQVision's affiliation with Matthews Australasia, which projected managed the entire project from trials to installed solution, was also an advantage to Chris' Dips in integrating the system.

The iQVision-recommended solution uses Datalogic cameras and Matthews' iDSnet packaging automation software.

iQVision and Matthews tailored the system to Chris' Dip's processing lines: cameras inspect single tubs on several lines and multiple tubs on other lines.

A camera sits underneath tubs passing overhead; it takes a picture of the tub base then processes it, sending the result to iDSnet via the CIM (communications interface module). iDSnet software compares what the scanner has sent back with what it should be, so no mistakes are made.

The Datalogic cameras cater for the varying orientation of the tubs as they are presented, which could be anywhere in a 360-degree rotation.

The benefit of this over a linear, laser-type scanner is that the latter needs every tub to be presented in exactly the same orientation, every time.

Incorrect tubs or barcodes set off an alert and stop the line, allowing operators to quickly fix the problem.

OUTCOME

The iQVision system verifies that the right product is in the right tub, and that the barcode is correct and scannable. Automated what was previously a laborious manual task has objectified QC, and thus removed the potential for error.

Only line managers have access to the central PC, so operators aren't required to facilitate set-up, again, simplifying their role. The system is very simple for operators to use.

When the solution was first installed it rejected barcodes that, when manually checked, were found to be correct for each product; however, a large proportion of barcodes failed further random tests. Analysis showed that these barcodes, which were applied by the tub supplier, were not within GS1's specifications due to print quality and contrast. Specific results from the iQVision system allowed Chris' Dips to go back to their supplier, allowing them to improve their own product.

The iQVision system has saved a substantial amount in manual labour and vastly improved accuracy for Chris' Dips.

"Rather than just being suppliers of hardware, iQVision has the ability to provide a turnkey solution. We didn't just want 'the parts' but the overall complete package of the system being integrated as well."

"When our company name is on every pack, quality becomes paramount."

— Harley Lushaj, Engineering Manager, Chris' Dips