

X-ray Inspection is the Solution for Blister Packaging Line at Pfizer

Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, LLC is the largest drug manufacturer in the world and produces both prescription and over-the-counter drugs. Their state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico is Pfizer's largest with 800,000 square feet operating 13 production lines.

To protect their brand and maintain their high-quality reputation, Pfizer takes great measures to insure the quality of their products. Francisco Collazo, Technical Service Specialist who is responsible for managing all floor operations, noticed that one of their over-the-counter blister packaging lines had a problem with broken tablets and occasionally crushed or folded blister packs inside the packaging. Neither the vision system nor checkweigher was finding these defects.

Pfizer turned to Mettler-Toledo Safeline to address these issues. They chose a PowerChek x-ray inspection system that not only detects and rejects multiple contaminants, but also verifies product and package integrity. After installing the PowerChek at the end of the packaging line, they no longer have any problems.

"Since we purchased the Safeline PowerChek x-ray system, customer complaints about missing or partial tablets or crunched packages has been eliminated," remarks Collazo.



Tablets are dropped into formed plastic blisters and sent through a vision system that checks that all tablets are present. After the printed foil seals the package, the blister pack goes through a perforator, then cut into desired pack sizes and dropped into a sorter that can be set into stacks of one, two, or four. Running at up to 300 packs per minute, it then is put into the final packaging and through the PowerChek x-ray unit where any packages with broken, damaged or missing tablets or crushed blisters are air-jettted into a separate lockable bin for analysis.

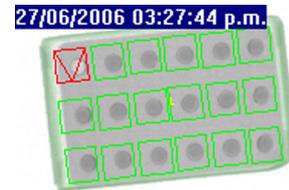
"When we were searching for an x-ray system, we turned to Mettler-Toledo Safeline as they were the only manufacturer that could inspect blister packs stacked up to four deep," says Collazo. "All other systems would only guarantee two layers."



The Safeline PowerChek x-ray system features superior image processing technology that optimizes the performance of the system. With an intuitive operator interface and Mettler-Toledo Safeline's innovative auto-learn function that automates set-up and makes frequent calibration unnecessary, the PowerChek x-ray system is easy to set-up and operate. Pfizer runs 13 – 15 different over-the-counter products on the production line and because the system stores multiple product profiles, product changeover takes only seconds.

"The system is extremely easy to use and product set up takes no time at all," states Collazo.

The system continuously analyzes product variations and automatically adjusts to achieve optimum sensitivity and eliminate false rejects. A high-resolution color screen provides a visual reference of the machine's operation using video images and provides real-time diagnostics.



"There are almost no false rejects," says Collazo. "Sometimes we open the package and have to shake the package and find that the system identified a tablet that was shaved off on the opposite side of the tablet – we would never have been able to see it."

"We purchased the Safeline PowerChek x-ray two years ago and we have had no problems whatsoever," says Collazo. "Reliability is fantastic; we are so pleased with the Mettler-Toledo Safeline system."

NOTE:-

*** The PowerChekPLUS brand is marketed under the InspireX brand name outside the USA**

**** The PowerPhasePLUS brand is marketed under the Signature brand name outside the USA**

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