

BRADMAN LAKE ASSISTS CUSTOMER IN EXPANDING PACKAGING CAPACITY WITHOUT ADDING REAL ESTATE

PUKKA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH BRADMAN LAKE SPANS MANY DECADES, IN FACT ALL RETAIL PUKKA PIES ARE PACKED USING BRADMAN LAKE END LOAD CARTONERS AND WRAP AROUND CASE PACKERS.

High speed carton feeding with 'pre-breaking' feature

Due to ever growing demand, Pukka is expanding retail production by introducing a new high speed, flexible packaging line into their manufacturing facility in Leicestershire. BL was tasked with unlocking the challenge of feeding a new high speed packaging leg from two existing process lines, with the ability to pack

faster due to increased demands for a smaller SRP case collation.

Working alongside the customer, BL developed a new layout providing new bridging transport conveyors and newly developed small footprint packaging machines. With high speeds and limited factory space, BL utilised its small footprint SL Minor, a high-speed end load

cartoner with integrated servo driven star wheel feeder. The cartoner is coupled with a newly developed dual lane robotic six station wrap around case packer capable of up to 40 cases per minute.

The WR6 case packer is a fully automatic machine containing 'back-to-back' robots used to pick and place each carton collation into the case.

“WE ARE DELIGHTED WITH THE INSTALLATION OF THE NEW RETAIL PACKING LINE, FURTHER STRENGTHENING OUR ABILITY TO SERVICE RETAIL DEMAND, AND CEMENTING OUR ABILITY TO MEET OUR AMBITIOUS GROWTH STRATEGY.”

Peter Gull, Engineering & Projects Manager at Pukka Pies

Each side of the case packer is equipped with low level hoppers and independently controlled case management and sealing, giving the customer the flexibility to produce different count SKUs on each side of the machine during the same production run. In addition, BL fully integrated consumer protection and digital labelling units to provide full traceability.

Pukka's planned shutdowns, provided a window of opportunity for line modifications and installation and commissioning of the equipment. BL had already been onsite to undertake enabling work to the existing lines to minimise disruption and downtime, allowing quick and efficient installation of the new equipment on arrival whilst the existing 7 BL packaging machines were being serviced.

Peter Gull, Engineering & Projects Manager at Pukka Pies, “We are delighted with the installation of the new retail packing line, further strengthening our ability to service retail demand, and cementing our ability to meet our ambitious growth strategy. Having challenged Bradman Lake to find a solution to a complex set of constraints, they worked closely with our projects team to provide a tailored solution that met our requirements. Our relationship with Bradman Lake spans many years, over which they have provided Pukka with end of line packing solutions to support our growth plans and range diversification, ensuring there is a Pukka for anyone, anytime”.

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Automatic pie insertion



Dual 'back to back' pick and place robots



Bradman Lake, Beccles (inside shown below)

BRADMAN LAKE'S OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

BY ED BINSTED

In May, the announcement came through that Bradman Lake had been awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2022. The Queen's Award is the highest and most prestigious award a British company can receive and is a globally

recognised seal of Royal approval.

I had the opportunity to meet up with John Marlee, Group M.D of Bradman Lake, and Paul Holmes, Technical Sales Manager, to discuss the impact of the Queens Award, which the company

gained in spite of COVID, the invasion by Russia into Ukraine and a general slowing down of the world economy.

Clearly John and Paul were in great form and immensely proud of their recent achievement, as John commented, "The Queens Award is a real pat on the back for our whole team who have diligently got on with the job in very difficult times, continuing to build world class machines and supporting our customers in the Food and Pharmaceutical global markets. Throughout the pandemic we took all the right precautions to safeguard the health of the team and I am proud to say that no team member was hospitalised with COVID."

The current Bradman Lake story started when Langley Holdings plc, a privately owned UK based engineering and industrial manufacturing group, acquired Bradman Lake in 2007, shortly after John Marlee was appointed M.D. from his previous role as Technical Director. Bradman Lake has four component parts; Autowrappers who produce 'Product Handling and Primary



Packaging Machinery', Bradman Lake 'Product Handling and Secondary Packaging Machinery', Europack 'Product Handling and Tertiary (or end of line) Packaging Machinery' and Ibonhart 'Product Handling, Slicing and Bagging for Bakery Products'. The company is now the largest UK based packaging machinery manufacturer and operates from three sites, Beccles, Bristol and Rock Hill, South Carolina in the US with Regional Sales and Service in Mumbai, India.



Bristol site

Bradman Lake have a significant export business, John commented, "Initially the majority of our exports came from Commonwealth countries where we

followed Global Food and Pharma clients who have been such loyal customers over the years, our coverage is now global. I am particularly pleased with the fact that customers come back to us time and again, which demonstrates to me that we do our best not to let anybody down in after sales and service. We continue to support machines in the field that first went in in the 1960's and when asked to, we can strip them down and fit new components and the machines will continue to give great service."

Being the leading player in machinery for Food and Pharma requires the company to constantly invest in new innovation through an ongoing research and development program and technical staff through their Apprentice programme. BL have 20 apprentices across the business and budget for six additional apprentices every year, as John said, "Our apprentices are our future and now make up 10% of our workforce, it is vital that we have the correct skills in place where we need them."

There is a culture of openness and transparency within the whole

Langley Holdings group and at BL also, we are very aware of staff safety and are proud to say there have been no recordable incidents in the three manufacturing plants in the last decade, another great achievement.

I will be publishing three very interesting projects which I saw on the shop floor in Beccles; a shrinkwrapper that is going into a glass manufacturer, a high speed end load cartoner and wrap around case packer going into a leading UK savoury pie manufacturer and, for the Pharma industry, a system for collating and loading small aerosol components for inhalers into trays with an integrated automatic palletising system. All three systems are going to existing clients who have returned to BL for automation as their own production continues to increase.

It has been a real pleasure to be able to report on a UK engineering success story, the Bradman Lake team thoroughly deserve their latest award and I wish them every success for the future.

