

Tube infeed TZ 201 |
Tube filling machine FP 34/2 | Cartoning machine SC 4

FLEXIBILITY

The French pharmaceutical and cosmetics company Laboratoires Pierre Fabre, an international player, was looking for a fast packaging solution for their cosmetics creams – IWK was able to win their trust through flexible systems and intensive teamwork.



Pierre Fabre

With over 10,000 employees worldwide and a revenue of around 2 billion euro, Laboratoires Pierre Fabre is one of the most internationally acclaimed and successful producers of skin cosmetics and pharmaceutical products. The company's shares are invested almost evenly in pharmaceuticals and cosmetics. Located in Castres near Toulouse in the south of France, the company has a wide range of products already available on the market.

Laboratoires Pierre Fabre's packaging processes are just as varied as the products they produce, which makes them an ideal customer for IWK machines. IWK's modular packaging lines are particularly advantageous when it comes to processing different packaging sizes and types, and performing uncomplicated product changes. While the flexibility of the lines promises greater profitability, the demand for CIP/SIP and laminar flow systems is shifting the focus to increasingly stricter hygiene standards and changes to product composition.

Task:

Deliver a packaging line with a high cycle rate for cosmetic products. Integrate a reliable CIP/SIP system and configure the machine for fast, frequent product changes.

IWK's solution:

FP 34/2 tube filling and sealing machine with option to connect to a laminar flow system. Infeed the empty tubes via the TZ 201 tube infeed model, and finally package and add leaflet inserters using an SC 4 cartoning machine. Cycle rate: up to 220 cartons/minute

TUBE FILLING IN CLEAN ROOM CONDITIONS

IWK had around just 11 months between planning and starting up the packaging line for dermatological creams from Laboratoires Pierre Fabre – the customer specifications were varied and extensive. In addition to a fast cycle rate and flexibility when changing products, it was also crucial to include a connection to a laminar flow system. Laminar flow systems minimize turbulence in the air flow inside the machine and prevent particles from entering the tubes during filling. This is a crucial, GMP-related criterion particularly in the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industry.

Since the first IWK machines were installed in 2008, there have been numerous investments made in further IWK high-performance systems. These high-performance tube filling machines have cycle rates of 100 and 200 tubes per minute and ensure that tube weights are fully checked and controlled, which prevents over or underfilling them. The latest investment is a logical development resulting from positive experiences in the past, and is proof of the constructive collaborative work performed by project engineers responsible at IWK and Laboratoires Pierre Fabre. The specifications of the most recently installed FP 34-2 demanded a great deal of machine flexibility, high speed and clean room-similar conditions during filling.

Besides needing various settings, fast and frequent product changes usually require the format part to be changed, and the product area also needs to be thoroughly cleaned. To save time when changing parts, IWK's solution is fitted with a CIP/SIP-compatible rotary lobe pump without change parts. This procedure reduces the cleaning time by up to 70% and prevents the products, which containing few preservatives, from contamination. A further important aspect for observing the GMP guidelines for pharmaceutical products is to configure the machine for use with a laminar flow system. Using a precise, low-turbulence air flow inside the machine eliminates the chance of foreign substances entering the tube sleeve. Turbulence is prevented and any particles trapped in the air are each captured and expelled.

The TZ 201 tube infeed is equipped with a buffer area and automatic lid removal for empty tube cartons. The user-friendly return feed system for shipping boxes and lids rounds off the options the system offers.

An SC 4 cartoning machine carefully packages the filled and sealed tubes in a second packaging cycle. A leaflet inserter or a customer information leaflet is usually inserted into the package.

About IWK Verpackungstechnik GmbH

IWK Verpackungstechnik GmbH focuses on the efficient, precise, and attractive packaging of goods for the pharmaceutical, cosmetic, food, and chemical industry. IWK systems are used in industries with very exacting standards. The company has been known for its innovative and groundbreaking approach from its very early days. IWK currently holds a large number of patents for key technologies and each year invests significantly above the industry average in research and development, resulting in numerous innovations each year.

Further company information and contact details can be found on the company website at www.iwk.de

