

DUANE STALNAKER (LEFT), GENERAL MANAGER, AND PETE PAVEK, PLANT MANAGER, NEXT TO THE NEW BAYSEK C-170 DIECUTTER INSTALLED AT THE COVINGTON, KY. SHEET PLANT.

INVESTMENTS REFLECT GOOD YEAR FOR PACKAGING UNLIMITED

THE COMPANY'S FOUR SHEET PLANTS INSTALLED ADDITIONAL MATERIALS HANDLING AND CONVERTING EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING TWO NEW C-170 FLATBED DIECUTTERS FROM BAYSEK MACHINES. BY JACKIE SCHULTZ

2013 was a lucky year for Packaging Unlimited's four corrugated manufacturing facilities. The sheet plants, which are located in Franklin, Louisville and Covington, Ky. and Lincolnton, N.C., all were the recipients of new equipment. "We bought a couple of diecutters and flexos, some load formers, a bunch of conveyor and fork trucks and trailers. We acted like there was nothing wrong with the economy," says Bob Hanekamp, Chairman. "I don't know that I will ever see another year like that," adds Pat Humkey, Vice President of Manufacturing.

The investment, which totaled more than several million dollars, included two mini flexo folder-glueers from LMC (Latitude Machinery Corp.). The two-color machines were installed at the Lincolnton and Franklin plants. Packaging Unlimited also invested in two new load formers from Alliance Machine Systems International for each of the new LMC flexos.

The two identical flexos replaced older printer-slotter that had been upgraded and converted to flexos.

"That's what we've been operating with for the last 10 years. But they're tired," Hanekamp says. "They're old machines that have manual setup. But they got us through to this point so we just replaced them."

In addition, the Lincolnton and Franklin plants received new conveyor and upgraded mainline conveyors from ACS (Automated Conveyor Systems).

First Time Purchase

Packaging Unlimited also purchased two servo driven C-170 flatbed diecutters from Baysek Machines Inc. for its Covington and Franklin plants. They were the company's first Baysek purchase. Hanekamp says he and Humkey had noticed the diecutter at corrugated shows like SuperCorrExpo in Atlanta. "I was intrigued

with the machine and realized that we've got some business that will run better on that machine than it will run anywhere else," Hanekamp says, adding that he was looking for a machine that would run multiple outs with one die and could cut, strip and stack in one pass without a lot of manpower. "If you have multiple out jobs you can spend a lot more time finishing the product after it comes off the diecutter than it takes to diecut it. That's what intrigued me."

The C-170 features a large 55-inch through by 67-inch across die format and cuts F-flute through doublewall with some solid board capability.

A key feature for Packaging Unlimited was the labor savings. With only one operator, the machine precision cuts and 100% automatically strips waste. No stripping tools are required. Simple one-out to complex multiple-out jobs with up to 50 plus pieces are easily handled.

"It's not uncommon for us to run 20, 30 or 40 out and the units are perfect," Humkey says. "The units are super clean. There's no paper dust. Customers are just ecstatic over the quality."

Hanekamp says the Covington and Franklin plants have several jobs that are ideal for the new diecutters. "We could run an order in one day, but it would take six or seven people the rest of the week to break them apart and make a unit out of them. When it comes off that Baysek it's stacked and counted and it makes a better looking unit than we were ever able to make. That's a tremendous advantage.

"The machines do an excellent job of stacking the product after it's diecut," he continues. "It's clean. They get nearly all the scrap out. When it comes off it's like a brick. I don't think a human could make a stack that good."

Humkey says almost all of the company's diecut jobs are suitable for the machine with the exception of those that need matrix scoring. "There are some limitations. You can't do matrix scoring and if you put a high-end label on the machine, you're limited to how much scoring and cutting you can do. But we do run label jobs on our Baysek."

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1800 An Hour

According to Baysek, predetermined accurate counts of nick/tag and angel hair free finished units are neatly stacked upon the operator's choice of straight stack, step stack or with inserted tie sheets. Finished product is ready for banding or stretch wrapping upon unload.

The cutting method begins with the placement of a corrugated sheet on the flat die board via a suction cup load assembly. Vacuum generated suction cups hold the sheet in place on the reciprocating flat die while it is compressed between two steel rolls; the upper roll covered by an anvil sleeve. The die board is positioned at a 5° cutting angle to reduce anvil pressure, extend sleeve life, and produce cleaner cuts with each pass.

The finished pieces continue to be held in the die with suction cups while the waste is pneumatically extracted for recycling. Suction cup unload assemblies then lift finished pieces from the die

and precision stack them on the out-feed table at a rate of 1800 sheets per hour or 2.0 seconds per complete pass.

"There is no reason not to run that machine at 1800 an hour because the number of outs does not affect speed," Humkey says. "They run at maximum speed no matter what you put on them."

The average setup time per job is 10 minutes or less.

Humkey says it's important to choose a cutting die supplier very carefully when ordering dies for the Baysek diecutter. "You're only going to be as good as your cutting die supplier. Be careful who you use. They have to know how to build the cutting dies because they are unique to this machine. Our cutting die suppliers are very good," he says. "There are some growing pains if you're not familiar with these cutting dies. You need to listen to what the Baysek people tell you. Don't try to outguess the OEM."

The installation of the C-170 machines at Packaging Unlimited took less than a day. "You can have it running the same day they deliver it," Humkey says. "When it hits your dock, if you don't have it running that evening then shame on you."

Hanekamp says he has been very pleased with the machines. "I'm glad we bought them. I wouldn't hesitate to do business with them and buy another one or two. We have four plants that make boxes and two of them received the Bayseks and the other two are jealous."

He says he will more than likely be looking at additional investments for the box plants this year. What's Packaging Unlimited's secret to success? "We try to be the other guy that does the stuff that other people don't want to or can't do," he says. ■