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More Safety and Efficiency through Retrofitting

In 2016, the Schützengarten AG brewery in St. Gallen replaced all systems in the dry section, including the packaging system. In 2017, Schützengarten decided to retrofit Robatech's hot melt adhesive systems with the automatic filling system RobaFeed 3 with granulate container GlueFill. This way, not only did this increase employee safety and production efficiency, but it also reduced the risk of downtime.

In 2016, the Schützengarten AG brewery replaced the entire dry section in the bottling area to fill crates and cardboard boxes using the same plant. KHS in Dortmund, Germany, was commissioned with the planning and realization of the overall project as general contractor. The packaging system made by Gerhard Schubert from Crailsheim, Germany, which was included in the new plant, was to be equipped with a Robatech adhesive application system. Schützengarten was pleased with this proposal. As a longtime customer of Robatech, the company had already had good experiences with the systems in the past, and above all, with the uncomplicated and fast service from Robatech.

The Customer

The Schützengarten AG brewery was founded in 1779 in St. Gallen, making it the oldest brewery in Switzerland. Today, approx. 175,000 hectoliters of beer are brewed each year and filled in bottles, kegs or containers. The brewery regularly invests in modern and innovative technology to maintain the high quality level of the Schützengarten beers.

Manual Granulate Filling

When the new production plant was commissioned, the adhesive application system in the new packaging system consisted of two Concept Diamond type melters for manual filling with adhesive granulate and ten SX Diamond double jetting heads with corresponding heated hoses. In the first section of the packaging system, the erected cardboard boxes are glued on the bottom fold and the sides. After that, the bottles are inserted into the cardboard boxes. The last section glues the cover fold. Thus, the cardboard boxes are closed and ready for shipment.

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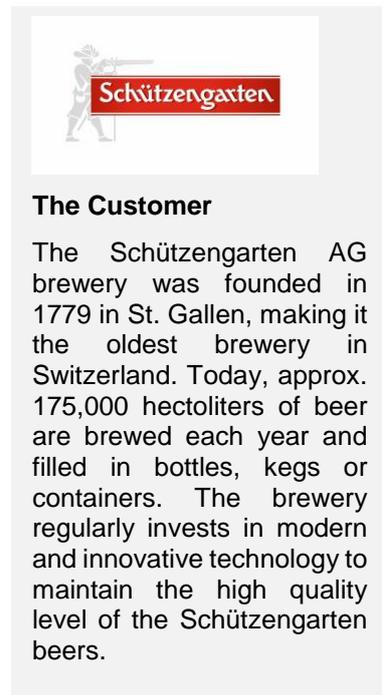
Erected cardboard boxes after first bonding

Schützengarten uses the packaging system to achieve a throughput of around 27,000 bottles per hour. With manual filling, this means that the operating personnel must refill the tanks of the two melters with granulate every twenty minutes. Although the tanks are equipped with level sensors and warn against idling, the staff must continuously monitor and be ready for refilling.

Ready-to-ship cardboard box

The tank of a melter can reach a temperature of up to 200 °C. With manual filling and as high a refill frequency as at Schützengarten, there is a risk that employees could contract burns. In addition, cold air flows into the tank during frequent opening and cools down the inside temperature. However, only a constant hot melt adhesive temperature guarantees an optimal bonding quality.

Easy Retrofitting, Unbeatable Advantages

When Jürg Baumann, Area Sales Manager Switzerland at Robatech, visited Schützengarten at the end of 2016 to get an idea of the installed hot melt systems, he was immediately aware that safety and quality in the adhesive application area, as well as the efficiency of the entire pant could be significantly improved. He, therefore, proposed to retrofit the existing systems with the granulate feeder RobaFeed 3 and the associated granulate container, in this case, the largest variant, the GlueFill L, to an automatic filling system. "If you consider how easy it is to retrofit and how high the immediately usable added value is, the system should be used everywhere," says Jürg Baumann.

Smooth Production and More Safety

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Unlike with manual filling, the automatic filling process does not fill granulate directly into the hot tank of the adhesive melter, but rather into the granulate container GlueFill, which is unheated and stands separately. The GlueFill delivers the granulate into the melter tank as soon as the level in the tank is low. This system offers several advantages at one go: "This is awesome for our employees and makes the job a lot easier. Safety is noticeably increased, and the employee in the line has more time for the cardboard boxes. Despite our high bottling capacity, the granulate container only has to be topped up every two hours," says Holger Gärtner, Head of Bottling at Schützengarten.

Schützengarten was convinced and retrofitted at the end of 2017. Holger Gärtner is thrilled: "The automatic filling system for adhesive granulate has been running at full load from day one. It immediately paid off for us, as we can virtually eliminate production downtime in the packaging line."

Jürg Baumann, Robatech, with Holger Gärtner, Schützengarten brewery

Area Sales Manager Jürg Baumann from Robatech is satisfied as well, as he focuses on making sure that Schützengarten can produce safely, smoothly, and efficiently with an optimized solution.

Would you like to learn more? Visit the Robatech website
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The Robatech Group with headquarters in Muri/AG in Switzerland is a worldwide leading provider of adhesive application systems for a variety of industry sectors. The product portfolio of the service and technology leader for green adhesive application solutions comprises hot melt adhesive and cold glue as well as PUR solutions. Robatech is present in more than 70 countries. Since 1975, the company has delivered high-quality controls, application heads, and dosing systems that are unmatched in terms of speed, precision, and reliability.

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