

PRESS ARTICLE

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Two experts in wine pair up: Domaine Chandon Australia partner with Sidel for custom bottling End-of-Line operation



Part of the LVMH group, Domaine Chandon Australia (DCA) are an Australian sparkling wine specialist and producer with genuine French heritage. DCA made the decision to collaborate with Sidel on a project to improve the efficiency of their bottling operations. By choosing Sidel's expertise in complete End-of-Line solutions, DCA were able to increase the utilisation rate of their manufacturing assets and produce more consistent case stacking quality on pallets, outcomes that eventually led to improved downstream logistic operations. The fully automated Cermex WB46 Wrap-Around case packer – including a partition inserter module and coupled with the PalAccess® palletiser – has enabled Domaine Chandon Australia to accommodate the growing local demand of premium wine.

Chandon have a history going back decades, when Moët & Chandon started to produce premium sparkling wines outside of France. Chandon's founder, Robert-Jean de Vogüé, first travelled abroad in the late 1950s to collaborate with winemakers in foreign countries, applying his Champagne expertise to new world sparkling wine creation. In the mid-1980s, a team of Chandon's experts discovered Green Point, an old dairy farm in the Yarra Valley in the state of Victoria. There, the climate is cool and the soil is rich, making it the perfect spot for Domaine Chandon Australia to produce *méthode traditionnelle* sparkling wines.¹

¹ <https://www.chandon.com.au/about/story>

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Staying on top as sparkling wine wave sweeps across Australia

The sparkling wine segment is currently accounting for 6.9% of the wine and cider market in Australia and expected to grow further over the next five years. This positive trajectory is due to the increasing consumer preference towards premium and more sophisticated drinks, including French champagnes. Since 2014, more and more wine lovers have been shifting from low-value wines to higher-value ones, leading to a growth of 5% and an expected revenue of USD 6.9 billion through 2018-2019.²

New companies are expected to enter into this segment, and to stay competitive, large industry players will have to further adopt automation as part of their production routines.³ What has been achieved at Domaine Chandon with Sidel is a great example of such an initiative, delivering a safer, more automated and efficient solution.

Sidel's strong heritage in line integration for the wine and spirits market

Sidel and DCA began working on the project a few years ago, starting with a number of conceptual layouts based on the available floor space, the packaging design specifications and Domaine Chandon's technical requirements for the equipment. Wrap-Around packing is not widely used in this industry but the Australian sparkling wine producer quickly identified the benefits of using this type of case versus the more commonly seen Regular Slotted Case (RSC) designs. "DCA are a true pioneer, and despite the challenges they represented to couple this case design with the integration of a partition inserter module within the same piece of equipment, we were very excited to be part of this journey," says Julien Claudin, Country Manager for Australia at Sidel. DCA's objective for the new installation was to partner with one supplier to provide an end-to-end solution that embarked on a high level of automation for each and every step of the process.

The Cermex WB46 Wrap-Around case packer is perfectly suited for the packing operation involving premium product handling. The machine provides extremely smooth bottle handling, regardless of the bottle's design or applied label type. All the contact points between the machine's parts and the products are designed to maintain the products integrity and to avoid the risks of product marking – no matter whether it is handling Special Editions decorated with sleeves, or regular Domaine Chandon bottles, which come with paper labels. The carefully designed picking head grabs and transfers six bottles at a time onto the automated partition inserter module that is built into the case packer unit. "We spent time verifying the proposed technical concepts to make sure that the bottles would be handled with extra care, minimising the risks of damaging any part of the container, including hoods, labels and sleeves," adds Julien. Afterwards the product collation is transferred into the Wrap-Around blanks that are then

² IBISWorld Industry Report, "Wine Production in Australia", 2019

³ IBISWorld Industry Report, "Wine Production in Australia", 2019

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fully enclosed around the bottles to provide a strong and perfectly squared case. The latter is fundamental to ensure proper palletisation and successful downstream logistic operations.

Chris Fraser, Production Supervisor at Domaine Chandon comments, "Our cartons have an extremely squared shape and also stack very well on the pallet; this means that there is minimal impact on our quality once the product is transported." Richard McCaughey, Operations Director, DCA, adds: "We already had a case packing solution onsite but this one still included a high level of manual handling: we inserted case partitions by hand, palletised by hand and forklifted between machines for stretch wrapping."

Coming out of the Cermex WB46, the cases are labelled and conveyed into the Sidel PalAccess palletiser. This piece of equipment is another fully automated unit with tool-less changeovers, requiring neither a change of parts nor manual adjustments. Looking into the future, the HMI's built-in PalDesigner® software enables operators to design, simulate and load new pallet patterns without the need of additional programming or specific service intervention. The new operating panel's interface also allows access to the machine's technical documentation, One Point Lesson (OPL) sheets and specific videos to assist with trouble shooting operations.

Richard concludes, "Throughout the whole process, the Sidel teams were very proactive and helped us analyse some of the most difficult challenges of the project, in particular the automated partition insertion into the cases."

Sidel expand local footprint in Australia and New Zealand

"One of the doubts we initially had during this project was working with a supplier who have their roots in Europe: we were afraid that the local support they might have provided to an Australian customer was less than what we usually get from local players. Looking back, it was very encouraging to see that Sidel are rather able to combine local proximity with a global footprint; this is key if they want to increase their operations in our region," Richard highlights. "We are currently expanding in the Australian and New Zealand markets," Julien adds. "For us, Chandon are a very strong partner here, especially since we want to grow further in this market, building on our longstanding legacy in the wine and spirits segment."

The End-of-Line project has now been running successfully for more than one year and Domaine Chandon are seeing positive results all around: the sparkling winemaker have been able to achieve higher efficiency levels and reach their production targets in a growing business environment.

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Sidel is a leading provider of equipment and services solutions for packaging beverage, food, home and personal care products in PET, can, glass and other materials.

With over 40,000 machines installed in more than 190 countries, we have nearly 170 years of proven experience, with a strong focus on the factory of tomorrow with advanced systems, line engineering and innovation. Our 5,500+ employees worldwide are passionate about providing solutions that fulfil customer needs and boost the **performance** of their lines, products and businesses.

Delivering this level of performance requires that we stay flexible. We continuously ensure we **understand** our customers' changing challenges and commit to meeting their unique performance and sustainability goals. We do this through dialogue and by understanding the needs of their markets, production and value chains. In turn, we apply our solid technical knowledge and smart data analytics to ensure lifetime productivity reaches its full potential.

We call it **Performance through Understanding**.

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