

PRESS ARTICLE

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Pearlwater and Sidel: a successful partnership increasing performance for End-of-Line equipment



Producing a great diversity of bottles from 0,5 L to 1,5 L on a single packaging line for PET, Pearlwater Mineralquellen AG (Pearlwater) was determined to enhance the efficiency of its production line as well as bottle quality by upgrading its PaKombi Gripping palletiser's performance, installed by Sidel in 2011. Trusting in its OEM, Pearlwater were able to increase the palletiser's reliability and flexibility for the handling of various pack sizes and improved overall line efficiency by 5% with better pack and pallet stability.

Founded in 1993, the Swiss enterprise Pearlwater is a specialist in the beverage industry with comprehensive and always up-to-date knowledge of producing bottled water, flavoured water and soft drinks. The water, which is the very heart of its beverage's portfolio, comes from five unique mineral springs in the Valais Alps (also known as the Pennine Alps). The Pearlwater product range goes from discount to premium brands with a focus on product quality and sustainable production. Among its well-known brands are bottled waters "Swiss Alpina", "Aquina" and "Prix Garantie" – flavoured water for the sustainable private label "Coop Naturaplan" as well as soft drinks sold under the "Aquina" and "Prix Garantie" brands.

Since 2011, the company belongs to Coop Switzerland (Coop), which is an international group with various sales formats, including wholesale and manufacturing companies. Pearlwater bottles around 100 million litres of beverages per year and is one of the top 4 players in water and soft drinks market in Switzerland.

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Palletiser retrofit for a superior performance and product quality

The overall performance of the packaging line as well as top efficiency and product quality can be reached with the right combination of every piece of equipment of the line. To sustain the efficiency of already running lines and the state-of-the-art operation of the equipment over time it is important to maintain and optimise machine's performance. Therefore, Pearlwater reached out to its OEM and was particularly looking at how to increase performance for the End-of-Line equipment.

After analysing the performance of the line, Sidel's engineers identified that the main performance loss was coming from handling small bottle packs at palletisation stage. Upgrading small bottle packs conveying and rotation would enable to reach improved product quality and palletiser uptime. Therefore, Sidel proposed to enhance bottle positioning on the palletiser with a new pack conveying and rotation system "Electronic Spacer". "The upgrade for Pearlwater's PalKombi Gripping palletiser focuses on a new packs inlet module made of modular chain conveyors across which the packs are smoothly transferred and rotated forming rows before being pushed on the pallet," explains Danny Bollnow, Service Sales Manager at Sidel.

This new system increases palletiser performance towards maximised uptime, packs, and pallet quality as well as reduced changeover time for new format handling. The system reduces impacts and scrappages between packs when they are spaced to generate correct rows with fewer falls and damages, hence minimising downtimes for manual intervention to reposition correctly the packs and providing better product quality. With electronic spacing principles, smaller packs are smoothly positioned to form correct rows, ensuring pallet accuracy for more reliable production.

Partnership that exceeds expectations

Smooth project management and close and efficient collaboration between Pearlwater and Sidel exceeded Pearlwater's expectations in many ways. Firstly, the palletiser was running and ready to re-start production after only three days of installation instead of one week that was planned originally. Secondly, by installing the new pack conveying and rotation system, Sidel was able to optimise maintenance costs, which decreased by 30%, and time that was not an initial requirement by the producer. "We are very satisfied with the project execution, follow-up, and the great collaboration we had with the Sidel team," expresses Mr. Pascal Collaud, Head of Production & Logistics at Pearlwater. Thanks to the palletiser's upgrade not only reliability and flexibility for the handling of various packs sizes have been increased, but also the company can now produce very small packs as 250 ml bottle format in 3x2 packs.

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Additionally, right after the retrofit, Sidel`s team conducted a valuable training for Pearlwater`s operators on the new functions of the palletiser, allowing employees to be quickly and fully operational on the equipment.

After eight years of collaboration between Sidel and Pearlwater, with the upgrade of the PalKombi Gripping palletiser, Sidel once again proved its leadership and knowledge to the Swiss brand expanding opportunities of cooperation for continuous improvement of its production process.



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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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