



Background

Established in 2010, Direct Imports UK selects and imports a vast variety of products, from cleaning commodities to drinking straws, from suppliers across the globe. These are then packed at their Derbyshire based factory and delivered to distributors across the UK to supply the wholesale and hospitality industry.

Scenario

Following a growth in demand for cleaning products, Direct Imports UK made the decision to automate a line packing 5 litre bottles of detergent. This line was proving to be an inefficient use of time as it was taking four staff three hours a day to make the boxes. Also, in order to adhere to weight compliance regulations only four 5 litre bottles could be packed into one box making the task lengthy. With a two day delivery promise speed was a crucial contributing factor in the decision to automate.

Solution

Endline installed a semi-automatic turnkey line, incorporating its newly launched entry level fully automatic 211 case erector (ELCE), a conveyor system and a fully automatic, high speed case sealer. At the start of the production line an operator loads the blank cases on ELCE, which automatically erects them, folds the lower flaps and tapes the base, of the case. They are then fed to a pack station where the operatives pack them. The filled cases are then pushed by the operator, onto the conveyor feeding into the fully automatic case sealer which tapes the top of the boxes which are then accumulated for palletising. Each pallet holds 100 boxes and the entire production process - from erecting the boxes and packing through to sealing and palletising used to take 90 minutes now takes 12 with a 50% reduction in manpower.

Results

-  Reduced man power by 50%
-  Packing 10,000 litres of cleaning fluid per day
-  Considerably cut packing operation time

“The filled cases have a much better appearance compared to when they were manually formed and sealed which gives our customers the perception of a better quality product. And, with a uniform look, the pallet is easier to stack and has a neater finish.” **Mark Unsted, Direct Imports**