

# Reed-Lane prescribes new topserter for solid-dose bottling line

New machine accurately applies topserts to solid-dose pharmaceutical bottles, with the benefits of high-speed throughput, quick changeovers, and sanitary operation.

**JIM BUTSCHLI** FEATURES EDITOR

**C**ontract packagers (CPs) demand flexibility from their packaging machinery to handle multiple package types and sizes. Quick changeovers, maximum throughput, and the ability to easily clean and maintain equipment are also imperative for CPs in serving customers.

added serialization and aggregation capabilities to several lines, but increased throughput and speed changeovers on a key solid-dose bottling line by adding a TopSerter II™ glue-and-apply outserting machine from **MGS Machine** ([www.mgsmachine.com](http://www.mgsmachine.com)).



**The TopSerter II accommodates Reed-Lane's wide assortment of bottle sizes and changes over quickly.**

Those attributes are critical for **Reed-Lane** ([www.reedlane.com](http://www.reedlane.com)), a Wayne, NJ, pharmaceutical contract packager that's served prescription and over-the-counter pharma manufacturers since 1959. The CP specializes in blister packaging, bottling, pouching, and vial filling. Not surprisingly, Reed-Lane also continues to invest in equipment to meet customer track-and-trace efforts.

Last year was a particularly busy one for Reed-Lane as it not only

"To meet our customers' expectations, we rely on the best new technology," points out Richard Wrocklage, Reed-Lane's Director of Package Development. "Out of all of the topserters we've used, the one we purchased from MGS several years ago is the highest performing. That's why we went directly to them this time. I've been in this industry for 35 years and have come to regard MGS as a manufacturer of top-of-the-line machines." A video on the MGS website demonstrates how bottles index through the TopSerter II, with hot melt adhesive applied to the top of the bottle caps before a topsert is applied and pressed down onto each bottle top.

## Versatile line

This bottle filling line packages a wide variety of solid-dose softgels, tablets, and capsules. It can handle round bottles ranging in volume from 30 to 1250 cc and square bottles from 45 to 400 cc. Outserts vary in size, with the most common being 1-<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in. wide and 1-<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. high and between <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> and <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. thick.

MGS originally built Reed-Lane's TopSerter II to handle 11 different bottle sizes and four outsert dimensions. As the CP's requirements grew, the system was expanded to include three additional bottles and one more outsert size.

"When it comes to packaging equipment, we try not to paint ourselves into a corner. We like being able to add new capabilities as the industry evolves and the needs of our customers change," explains



# Reed-Lane

Wrocklage. "We designed this line to do a lot of different things, and the TopSserter II can handle it all."

Ralph Manubag, Reed-Lane Technical Support, adds, "This line experiences frequent changeovers—up to four times in a shift. We sometimes

have orders as small as 800 bottles. That's why we need a topsserter that's very quick and easy to change. Compared to our other topsserting machines, our new one takes about a third of the time to changeover."

The TopSserter II applies outserts inline. The folded outserts from

a powered magazine are picked up with a rotary pick-and-place head and placed onto bottle caps where hot melt glue was applied. The standard model, with its two-arm pick-head and random-cycle bottle handling, operates at speeds up to 120 bpm. MGS equipped Reed-Lane's system with an optional servo motor, four-arm pick-head and a timing screw to achieve speeds up to 240 bpm.

"One of the main reasons we purchased the TopSserter II is its high throughput. We usually run at speeds up to 180 bpm, so this machine isn't even breaking a sweat," notes Wrocklage. "The system is also extremely accurate. We see negligible placement drifts even at the highest speeds."

**Reed-Lane achieves accurate outsert placement with their TopSserter II, even at the highest speeds.**



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Reed-Lane's TopSertter II also includes a barcode scanning option. To confirm the literature matches the product in the bottle, a camera verifies that the barcode on the outsert correlates to the recipe programmed via the touchscreen control panel. If the barcode is incorrect or the outsert is missing, the topsertter automatically rejects the bottle.

"This system was designed with sanitation in mind," says Wrocklage. "We clean and inspect our equipment every time we changeover—that's easy to do on the TopSertter II. There are no areas for product to get trapped or places you can't access. The ergonomic setup and guarding protects our employees, too. That's a big deal for us, and it's clearly a high priority for MGS as well."

"Overall, this equipment is simple to use. Our technicians rarely get called in to service this machine because it just doesn't give us trouble," says Gino Zarate, Lead Packaging Technician at Reed-Lane. "Our operators also find it entirely hassle-free. For example, the outsert magazine has a unique shelf that allows the operator to load the whole tray of outserts at once. This makes loading fast and easy and gives the operator more time to take care of the rest of the line."

Wrocklage says, "MGS has been a good partner. In addition to giving us the best technology for our challenging situation, they've provided exceptional service. The entire process has been very smooth."



From left to right, Reed-Lane's Rich Wrocklage, Director of Package Development; Gino Zarate, Lead Packaging Technician; and Ralph Manubag, Technical Support.

The TopSertter II has everything we need. Most importantly, it accommodates our enormous assortment of bottle sizes and changes over quickly. Plus, it achieves our high line speeds and maintains excellent accuracy." **PW**



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