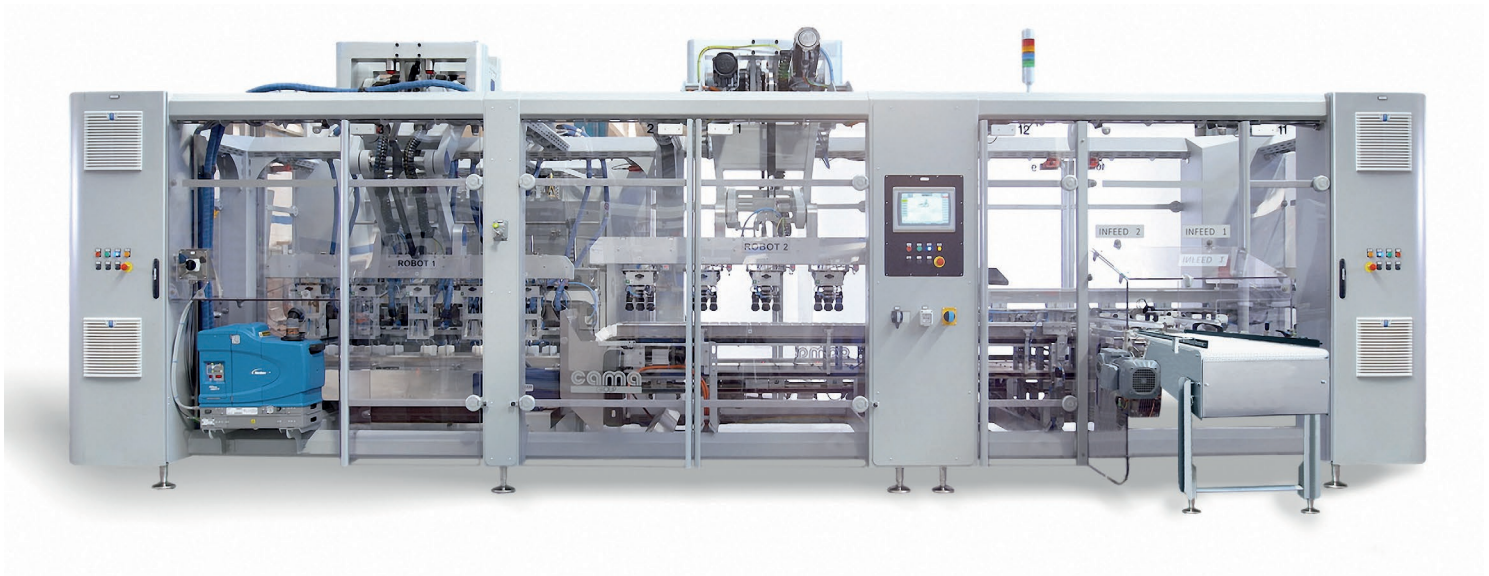




Extensive pre-order development work leads to highly flexible, rapid-changeover packaging solution



Cama Group commits significant pre-order engineering work to create highly flexible and efficient packaging solution for major upcoming product launch from leading multi-national confectionery company

For companies that operate across multiple sites and from different geographical locations, standardisation of manufacturing assets becomes a very attractive proposition, especially if the same or similar products are being manufactured on the various sites.

Having a common machine, line, control and software format delivers economies across many operational facets, including spares, maintenance, upgrades, development work and, of course, site-to-site exchange of knowledge to promote best practice.

But standardisation does not necessarily mean off-the shelf. Companies are still looking for bespoke machine and line

solutions that offer the flexibility and agility that will help them address contemporary business pressures.

In a recent project, Cama Group was approached by a leading international confectionery company, that wanted a packaging solution that could be repeatable across multiple sites in multiple countries. "This was a brand-new line and platform for an important upcoming product launch," explains Alessandro Rocca, Sales Engineer Director at Cama. "As it was a new product launch, expectations were high... as were the pressures on us to deliver a packaging solution that matched the customer's precise needs."



To ensure that the machines were right first time, Cama agreed to flip the project timetable and undertake significant engineering development prior to the order being placed. "This is quite unusual for packaging companies," Rocca explains. "Normally you would receive the order and then develop the machines to the customer's specifications, but in this instance, we dedicated several months' worth of effort into engineering, design reviews and meetings in order to meet the very high expectations of the customer. All this was before the order had even been placed."

Address all operational requirements

"There is an advantage to this approach," he continues, "as in the pre-development phase, you can address all the operational requirements, such as features, product formats, efficiency levels, and then, once all the factors have been successfully addressed, you press the metaphorical start button and commence with manufacture. I think it is fair to say that we are relatively unique in this aspect. There aren't many companies that would be willing to undertake this level of development work without an order being confirmed."

"The customer came to us, not only because of what we could supply," he adds, "but also since we were an existing supplier. Their confidence in us was also boosted by the fact that we had more-generous-than-usual lead times in which to engineer the perfect solution. In terms of actual timeframes, the process lasted two years, with first

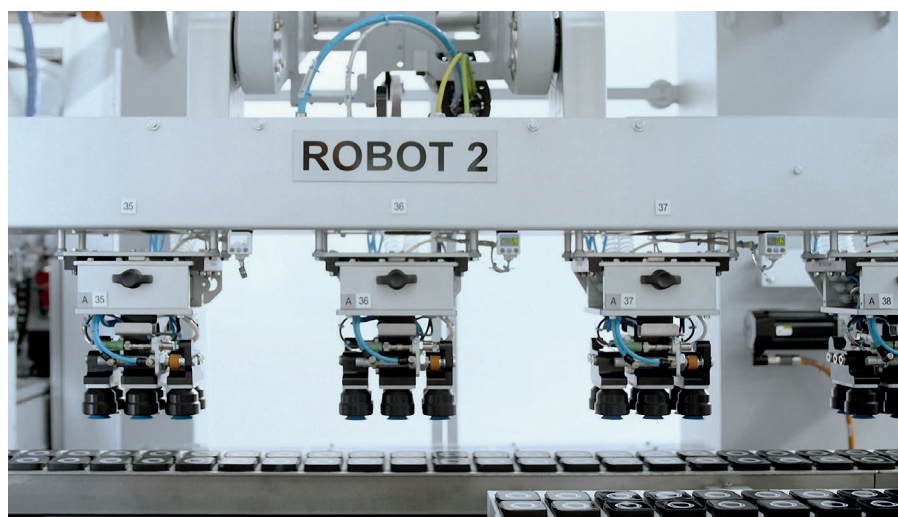
contact for this project being in 2016. For 90% of our customers this would not be viable, with around seven months being the normal timeframe."

The main features demanded of the line – which comprised an IF318 tray packer coupled to an IF294 case packer – were flexibility and fast changeover. "We worked a lot in reducing downtime for changeover," Rocca expands, "using significant levels of automation; including features that were new to us. In the development phase we explored many new ways of performing changeover more rapidly, with a constant eye on future plans and upgrades, without adversely affecting flexibility."

Multiple changeover options

"We decided that the new platform should have five or six possibilities for changeover," Rocca elaborates, "but in the end the customer only adopted two of the ideas. This was not perceived as a loss on our part, however, as the technology we developed is almost certainly going to be deployed on future projects. Our two development teams worked together very closely, combining our engineering knowledge towards a common goal. We looked at the automation of processes that were normally manual, and found ways of shaving minutes off the procedures, which over time would add up to significant time savings. And it was during this phase that we discovered that many standard features could be improved, too."

The line developed by Cama utilised a Rockwell Automation control platform, with part of the engineering effort devoted to migrating over from



another supplier. Thanks to this control platform the customer can now exploit enhanced connectivity and Industry 4.0 levels of data generation and exchange.

“Cama offers an incredibly high level of customisation,” Rocca explains. “Our award-winning modular Monobloc architecture delivers impressive efficiency and flexibility too, coupled, in this instance, to a throughput of 100 trays per minute, from an in-feed of 500 products. Using advanced, in-house-developed robotic forming and loading we can deliver 99% efficiency. The development work has also resulted in very quick automatic changeover – less than 15 minutes – with all changeable parts having RFID tags.”

Flexibility & efficiency

Cama’s IF series Monobloc-based machines are seeing an incredibly positive reaction from many different markets, due to their flexibility, positive handling and high efficiency levels. Thanks to highly capable robotics and advanced automation



solutions, they are Industry 4.0 ready and will comfortably fit into any smart-manufacturing environment. This project is a prime example where engineering design, customer support and technology have worked in synergy, resulting in a solution that will see a global roll-out for a worldwide product launch. And with a standardised solution, the end user will realise multiple benefits, not just those in terms of operational performance.

Cama Group, since 1981, is an international leader in engineering and production of high-technology secondary packaging systems. We offer completely integrated packaging lines, from primary packages up to final packaging, ready for palletizing, serving the Food (Bakery, Confectionery, Coffee, Ice Cream, Dairy, Ready Meals, Grocery), Non Food (Personal, Health & Home Care) and Pet Food industries.
Via Como 9 - 23846 Garbagnate Monastero - LC - T. +39 031 879811
commerciale@camagroup.com - www.camagroup.com

