



The packaging line is fully automated, improving safety and efficiency.

Concetti keeps upgrade on track through lockdown

Halfway through a major plant upgrade at Adelaide Brighton Cement (an Adbri Ltd company), Australia's borders shut down most international travel. Tara Gracie, National Packaged Products, tells *ABHR* how the company kept on track.

LIKE MANY CEMENT PRODUCERS, Adelaide Brighton Cement used valve paper bags for its preblended dry mix products. One of the issues with this type of material is that it could potentially allow water into the bag, which needs to remain dry.

The paper material also needed to be kept away from sharp objects like nails in pallets or forklift blades, which could tear and begin spilling the product.

Tara Gracie, National Packaged Products Manager at Adbri, says the company decided to introduce a new type of packaging into its product range to solve these issues, provide many added benefits to both retailers and end users and gain a competitive advantage in the market.

"Overseas and more recently in

Australia, there has been a market trend for dry mix products in form filled and sealed bags, to take advantage of the benefits plastic polyethylene (PE) packaging provides" she says.

"We previously saw success and wide market uptake in Western Australia, when Adbri company, Cockburn Cement introduced the innovative packaging in 2015. Both retailers and end users have since recognised the advantages of the rain proof packaging as it provides flexible storage options, less product wastage, longer shelf life and reduced dust."

"Stores that once might have been limited to indoor storage space can now keep the rainproof drymix products outside, which can greatly benefit their product range throughout the store. End users can also experience cost

savings by less product wastage due to moisture ingress".

In order to begin using the new packing material, Adbri needed to

To further support Australian customers, Concetti has also launched a partnership with Victorian-based company Automaint Solutions. Automaint has almost 50 years of experience in automation and technical assistance of highly mechanised systems. The companies work together to provide remote assistance managed directly by specialised Concetti technicians in Italy, and field interventions within a few hours, by Automaint engineers.

upgrade its bagging system. The company purchased two Concetti Continua Form, Fill and Seal turnkey packaging lines, each with an integrated net weighing scale and screw feeding system.

Adbri had worked with Concetti previously and was familiar with the performance and after sales support available to them. During the tender process, Concetti demonstrated a good understanding of what the company required from its new equipment. In particular, Adbri was looking to automate the machine as much as possible to remove human intervention and improve safety.

The previous plant required a significant amount of interaction with the equipment such as manually positioning valve bags, for filling onto the manual bagging machine. The process was labour intensive and meant workers were frequently close to moving parts. The Concetti packaging lines are fully automated – the mixture recipe and process parameters are set, and material is automatically fed into the machine, where it is packed and placed onto a pallet for storage and transport.

The integrated weighing system is significantly more accurate, which helps

avoid overpacking and reduces product wastage.

The packing system has been configured such that it connects back securely to Concetti's headquarters in

“...the company worked with us jointly through a video surveillance system. They could see what was happening and how it was performing and could tweak the system remotely if we were having issues.”

Italy, which Gracie says has been critical for the commissioning process during COVID-19.

The global pandemic hit just as Adbri's old packaging line had been removed, the new installation just completed and commissioning about to commence.

“To meet market demand, we needed to continue on with the commissioning, but Concetti weren't able to send their specialists due to locked down borders,” Gracie says.

“Instead, the company worked with us jointly through a video surveillance

system. They could see what was happening and how it was performing and could tweak the system remotely if we were having issues.”

Concetti's turnkey approach to the installation greatly simplified communications across the globe. The equipment testing in the Concetti factory is second to none with the entire line assembled and repeatedly tested with products, bags and pallets. This helps with the re-assembly on site and subsequent commissioning, made achievable with clear communication and video resources over WhatsApp.

Embracing digital communications meant the business could resume production within a tight deadline, even with the additional challenges presented by COVID-19.

Gracie says she couldn't imagine what the process would have looked like if multiple suppliers had been involved.

“Concetti's time-efficient assembly allowed us to build the packaging line on site much faster than if we had to wait to receive a lot of parts and information from multiple sources,” she says.

“Both teams deserve huge credit for their continued dedication to the project to complete commissioning.” **B**



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