Track & Trace on Display at INTERPHEX

OCS Checkweighers, Inc.

OCS Checkweighers, Inc. is displaying their Track & Trace solutions for the first time in the US at Booth 1832 at Interphex 2013 in New York after successful market introduction in Europe.

Track & Trace will be made compulsory

Counterfeit products in the pharmaceutical industry pose a severe health risk and cause enormous economic damage. Is the drug needed an original or has it been forged? What path did it take through the distribution chain until it finally reached the pharmacy where it was handed out to the patient? The end customer demands perfect reliability and absolute safety of the pharmaceutical industry with regard to the products they provide.

To achieve this safety, a traceable product flow from the producer through the distribution chain and the retailer to the patient is indispensable. The solution is called Track & Trace. This system uses a machine-readable code which is unique worldwide. It functions as a serial number and guarantees seamless tracing of each individual product. In addition to the tracing mentioned earlier, this system facilitates the accounting with the health care carriers and ensures that each transaction is unique. Furthermore, it specifically tackles counterfeit products. Only patients who are able to verify the origin of the medicine they bought can trust it to be genuine. Dangerous forged products must not be allowed to enter the market.

Back in 2009, Turkey was the first country in the world to implement mandatory Track & Trace systems. The USA have the introduction in some of the federal states scheduled for 2015. The EU has passed regulations for the implementation by 2017.

The unique approach: Traceable Quality System by OCS Checkweighers

OCS Checkweighers offers an intuitively usable system which treats coders as

actuators and cameras as sensors. It's a system that combines maximum flexibility with easy operation. Their solution is the Traceable Quality System (TQS). All components including the conveyor system, the coder and the camera are operated and controlled by one single software. Other systems usually need different user interfaces for the individual components. With this innovative approach this nuisance is a thing of the past.

An argument that convinces: Three parts have turned into one!

The layout editor is fully integrated into the TQS. It can be used intuitively and it generates a unique and customizable imprint. The data is then sent to the printer and to the camera in one single step. Thanks to this convenient integration the often time-consuming setup of proprietary hardware is no longer necessary. Furthermore, the camera receives a precise layout of the imprint. The operator works with a single, fully integrated system, which is controlled by one central, unified human-machine-interface. Having these three parts turned into one, offers the benefit of safety and ease for the customers' use. Dozens of clients in Europe have already taken benefit from this revolutionary approach and have been implementing the OCS Track & Trace Solution.

Functional integration into existing IT structures

A consistent Track & Trace concept can only work if the existing IT infrastructure can provide an easy and tamper-proof way to process the generated serialization data. Therefore, TQS from OCS Checkweighers is equipped with standard interfaces to facilitate its integration and to avoid the proliferation of proprietary, isolated systems.

The Line Manager of the TQS makes the customer completely independent. The system randomizes the numbers which you can enter directly into the machine. The TQS can easily be interlinked with existing ERP systems, such as SAP AII, SAP OER, IBM WebSphere and others. The whole system is controlled by one central management module that has access to a flexible SQL data base. Additional requirements which may arise in the future, such as mix-up inspection or tamper evident seals, can also be integrated by this module. The TQS allows for a customer-specific integration into existing IT infrastructures using established standard interfaces (SOA/XML). This guarantees simplicity and consistency.

Traceable quality and checkweighing for single packs: TQS-HC-A

The TQS-HC-A stands for serialization and check for completeness in one single unit. It combines a precise, weight-verification check for completeness and a reliable serialization of folded boxes limited space. A sophisticated, flexible and optimally synchronized top and bottom conveyor picks up the folded boxes from the cartoner up-stream.

The precise robust conveying system is a crucial prerequisite for an accurate coding (Thermal ink-jet or laser) and the subsequent verification. Incorrectly coded packages are ejected into a lockable rejection bin before they reach the weighing

conveyor. Packages with incorrect weight, however, are rejected by a separate rejection system after the weighing conveyor. One single software with a unified user interface allows for a convenient operation of all components. Therefore, the same user interface can be used to control all components of the system and no program change is necessary. The status of all items including the weight is recorded in the connected SQL database. This results in a direct, quick, easy and efficient 2-in-1 end-of-line check.

Traceable quality for single packs: TQS-SP

The TQS-SP (TQS-single pack) stands for a user-friendly complete solution for the serialization of individual folded boxes. An integrated layout editor sends the print data to the printer and an layout of the imprint to the camera. The intuitive operation of all components is conveniently implemented in one central, unified software. Therefore, the same user interface can be used to get direct, quick and easy access to all components of the system, no program change is necessary.

A sophisticated, flexible and optimally synchronized top and bottom conveyor picks up the folded boxes from the cartoner upstream or from a manual infeed system. This precise product conveying system can handle a wide range of formats and is a crucial prerequisite for an accurate coding and the subsequent verification. The codes can either be printed on the flaps or on the top of the boxes.

The TQS-SP can either be integrated into a production line with automatic infeed or it can be used as a stand-alone system with manual infeed. It can be retrofitted in a wide range of production lines and serves as the first stage of a comprehensive Track & Trace system. The convincing modular design of the TQS-SP is the ideal basis for future extensions such as Vignette or TE-labeling.

Traceable quality for bundle packs: TQS-BP

The TQS-BP (TQS-bundle pack) offers the perfect configuration for the implementation of the first aggregation stage. It can compile the serial numbers of several individual packages and can use them to render a serial number unique to the bundle. As a complete one-stop solution it comprises a format-independent conveyor system that can take over bundles directly from the bundle packaging machine.

The system’s advantage is its compact, space-saving design. It can either be integrated into a production line or can be used as a stand-alone system with manual infeed. Therefore, it can easily be retrofitted in existing lines and the success of the second stage of serialization is guaranteed by a sophisticated Track & Trace system.

The modular design of the system is impressive and it is the ideal basis for future extensions. All components are controlled by a single brilliant TFT color touch-screen that serves as a central user interface and no program change is necessary. Another feature is the megapixel camera with flexible light source that can read codes reliably even when they are covered by reflecting packaging film. The system

fits smoothly in the TQS series and rounds the complete solution of OCS off.

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