

The cost-effective way to streamline traceability

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The world's first print-and-apply labelling system capable of attaching printed barcodes to adjacent sides of a case, as recommended by GS1-128 and without major disruption to existing production lines, is now globally available from Markem-Imaje, and locally from Pyrotec PackMark.



Tested on more than 100 production lines, the 2200 Flex SE system features an electrically driven arm that puts labels onto the front and/or side of a case without having to turn the pack. At high speed, labels can be applied at the rate of up to 90/min on the front and 140 on the side, and with as little as 250mm between items. A pivoting, soft application pad ensures labels can be put onto flat or uneven surfaces including cardboard, trays and shrink-wrap. Operable with less than five minutes of training, its long label lengths decrease line stoppages while the auto-change option eliminates downtime.

Traditionally, applying labels to more than one side of a case at high speed requires rotating cases and a gap of more than 400mm between each case. Moving the cases requires costly pack-turning devices, product separators, line speed reductions, and/or lengthening of existing lines.



A rise in pallet-splitting, greater automation, and high-profile recalls is driving demand from grocery, foodservice and healthcare companies for GS1-128 barcodes. These barcodes streamline traceability because of the extra information they can encode. GS1-128 advises providing barcodes on more than one side of a case to ensure that there is at least one readable label should one become damaged.

"Customers who have helped validate the system have expressed amazement at our solution. Meeting GS1-128 recommendations was a real challenge for them – it was either too expensive to replicate across many lines, and/or they did not have enough space to undertake the required line modifications," explains Mike Kirk, print-and-apply current product marketing manager at Markem-Imaje.

"Manufacturers using shrink-wrapped items, such as beverage six-packs, have seen another benefit of using the 2200 Flex SE. Here, the items often come out of the packaging machinery with the wide edge leading and the short edge to the side. This edge has what is known as a 'bullseye' – an area not sufficiently covered by the wrap," Kirk explains. "If you apply a label to the side as it comes down the line, you risk putting the label through the bullseye and onto the inner product – something manufacturers need to avoid. With the 2200 Flex SE, this is no longer an issue as the system can put the label on the front of the pack with no need to turn the tray. This helps production maximise throughput," he concludes.

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