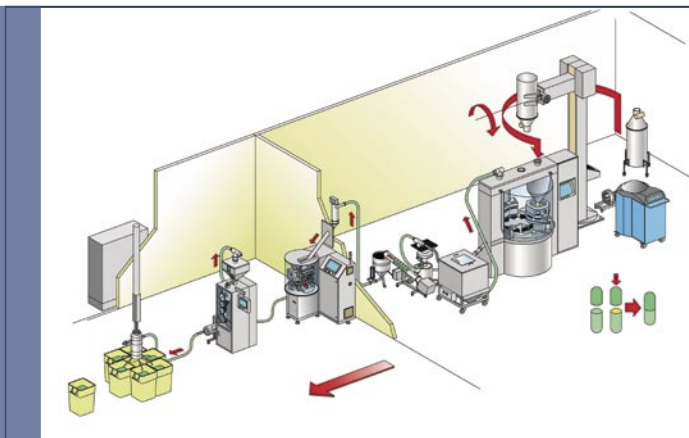


Capsule filling and sealing lines from a single source on the march

Astellas Ireland Company Ltd. is banking on the trend to entrust a single-source supplier with the overall responsibility for the line. The result is a capsule filling and sealing line operating with perfectly reconciled modules and requiring minimum operator intervention.



1
Stereoscopic picture:
process steps

2 and 3
Fully automatic
capsule filling line



Production capacity increase with high objectives

Astellas Ireland Company Ltd. (formed in 2005 following the merger of Yamanouchi Ireland & Fujisawa Ireland) is part of the Astellas Pharma Inc. which has its headquarters in Toyko. In order to meet increased productivity requirements for the immunosuppressive drug Prograf (used in transplants), Astellas needed additional equipment to their existing Bosch lines. These lines process Prograf and incorporate extensive measures to protect operating personnel. When placing the order for the new equipment Astellas was therefore interested in a solution, which increased productivity while minimizing technical and processing expenditure for operator protec-

tion. To meet those and other objectives Bosch developed a complete solution consisting of a capsule filling, machine plus appropriate peripherals.

Perfect coordination of communication and planning

The Bosch development plan and the project communication tools introduced by Astellas made major contributions to the completion of the complex line system on time and within budget. The customer and the project team had access to a perfectly coordinated flow of information during the whole course of the project. Special customer-specific machines such as an inspection machine were combined with "core" machines represented by the GKF 2500 ASB

capsule filler and a KKE 2500 capsule checkweigher as well as peripheral equipment such as product infeed, capsule polisher, drum distributor, conveying units and a metal detector from the Bosch portfolio were combined to form a total package. The challenge of combining all components into an ergonomic and completely automated whole, which was nevertheless capable of being closely monitored, was achieved to the customer's complete satisfaction. The whole line is operated from a single user-friendly touch screen, thus reducing operator intervention (and therefore the associated security measures) to an absolute minimum.



3



Cooperation brings success

In fact, the agreed-upon project objectives were significantly exceeded thanks to the outstanding cooperation between supplier and customer. Project Manager Rory McShane (Astellas) was delighted by the lines extreme efficiency. Its productivity exceeds 99.5%. In addition, product losses dropped by about 60% as a result of improved filling techniques. Extremely accurate when filling, precision weighing technology, modern sensor technology, process control and the use of the inspection machine have resulted in a major increase in product quality. As well as completing the technical implementation of the scheme, to support the commissioning of the line Bosch also developed extensive validation and

qualification documentation for each of the line components. The supply package was rounded off by special operator training and production support. When Rory McShane spoke at the Bosch Capsule Symposium he made his enthusiasm about the success of the overall project and the collaboration with Bosch clear to all conference participants.

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