



Packazine: Novartis International AG is a big player in the pharmaceutical industry with \$32.2 Billion USD in sales and nearly 91,000 employees. What is Novartis Horsham's role within Novartis?

K. Hill: On the Novartis Horsham site there are four divisions: Technical Operations (PharmOps), Novartis Consumer Health, Research and Development. The site being the centre of excellence for respiratory diseases. Pharma Ops makes solid dosage tablets, the majority of these going into blister packs, while some are bulk-shipped in containers. Novartis Horsham employs approx 1,000 people, 325 of whom are working for PharmOps.

Packazine: In 2002, Novartis Global initiated this project to standardize the packaging of pharmaceutical solids. Among six potential suppliers Bosch was selected as the most suitable for this project. Would you please tell us about this project?

K. Hill: This project was initiated to develop a standard machine that could be universally accepted across the Novartis plants in the context of the global rationalization and standardization of the blister packs.

Packazine: What was your role in this project?

K. Hill: I was as representative for the Horsham plant involved in the initial user requirement specification (URS) for the cartoning machine. We worked out the blueprint of basic and optional requirements for the ideal cartoning machine.

Packazine: What does this project mean to Novartis Horsham?

K. Hill: In Horsham we ran our own project of harmonization. Obviously we had certain constraints because the existing equipment which had limitations in complying with some of the harmonization standards due to tooling

constraints. When this project was initiated we grabbed it with both hands because we saw the benefits in improved productivity.

Packazine: The project was challenging with many product and site-specific items. How did you organize all this in the project phase?

K. Hill: We knew from the start of the project exactly what our site-specific requirements of the equipment were. We set up a cross-functional project team, a project plan and a detailed action plan. The team evaluated each particular module of the line. All items were then cross-checked with the Bosch team to ensure complete clarity and understanding, nothing was left to interpretation. Three months before FAT we implemented a 'Fast Action for Results workshop' (FAR) in the plant. A cross-functional group of people who would be working with the Bosch line once it arrived, brainstormed all the potential issues they felt they would face and set about an action

Flexibility counts.

Blister line successfully installed at Novartis, UK

Kevin Hill, Manager of project engineering at Novartis, Horsham, gives us an inside view of the project at Horsham to harmonize packaging formats, coupled with the new installation of the Bosch blister packaging machine.

plan on how to deal with them. This fulfilled another agenda which was to introduce and engage all people working with the machine as early as possible, certainly before it arrived.

Packazine: In your opinion, how did Bosch deal with your specific requirements?

New developments introduced successfully

Basel, 03/14/2006: **Novartis releases four further high-speed blister lines out of the Preferred Supplier Agreement with Bosch.** These will be placed in various European manufacturing sites. With this, the total number of new Bosch installations at Novartis in Europe and the US increases to 14.

K. Hill: In my opinion our project was handled very professionally. All of my project team have worked very well with the Bosch team. For us it was a working partnership, which was very good. We are very pleased so far with our experiences with the machine. There are still a number of items that have to be resolved but we are working with Bosch to resolve them.

Packazine: Where did you see the key success factors?

K. Hill: First of all, the success came because the Novartis team was always well prepared and very interested in the new technology. Also, more importantly was the regular communication between the Horsham Novartis team and the Bosch team. We agreed to have at least once a week a telephone conference with the Bosch team to discuss the action plan so that the project stayed on track. We also had regular site visits with face-to-face discussions, checking on progress and last but not least getting into the neces-

sary detail of the machines functionality. This took a lot of hours work but at the end led to a successful result within the original time schedule.

Packazine: Your blister line processes Alu/Alu blisters, Triplex film, as well as standard PVC/Alu blisters. One of your products is a hard gelatine capsule that only weighs 12mg. The cartons are supplied either with or without an inhaler. How do you evaluate the blister line in terms of flexibility and product changeovers?

K. Hill: The flexibility of our medium speed machine is good. So far we have only used part of the machines capabilities but we believe we are equipped to



Kevin Hill,
Manager of project
engineering at
Novartis Horsham



Since September 2005 Novartis, Horsham runs a Bosch blister line TLT2800/CTC with an inhaler feeder, a Bosch checkweigher, a Neri labeler, Pester bundler, casepacker and palettizer.

tackle further challenges should they arise. The machine is user-friendly and can be easily adjusted.

In terms of changeovers it is difficult to put a fair assessment on it because the number/types performed have been limited due to the planned phasing of moving more products onto the machine. To date we have predominantly run the alu/alu packs on the machines.

Packazine: How do you find the pharmaceutical production security of the line?

K. Hill: We had very high expectations concerning the security of the line and the line met all of them. For example with our existing camera systems we had several difficulties to recognize one of our products on aluminum foil. It is a transparent capsule with very little powder in it. We had up to reject 3% good blisters on the old equipment. With the new camera system we could tighten the tolerances significantly down and reduce the number of rejected good blisters to less than 1%.

Packazine: Please tell us about your experiences with the Bosch training program.

K. Hill: We had an initial week of training for the operators and engineers when the machine arrived in the plant. We then had a refresher week of training about 6 weeks later. This was finally followed up by a visit from one of the Bosch designers to explain the design concept of the machine. We wanted the designer go through the design concepts of the equipment as this underpinned our technicians understanding and aided faster solutions when fault finding. The overall impression of the training was very good and the operational team were very pleased with what they had received.

Packazine: Mr. Hill, thank you for this positive feedback! We wish you and your team continued success in the future.

For more information please contact:

Katja Vollmer

Phone +49 711 811 576 37

katja.vollmer@boschpackaging.com

