



Over 25 years ago, bulk food was virtually unheard of in North America, but Johnvince Foods, a privately owned Canadian company, seized the opportunity to provide a lower cost alternative for a variety of foods. Purchasing foods in bulk has turned out to be a cost effective solution for customer and manufacturer alike.

With technological advances giving a competitive edge, Johnvince Foods decided to implement an investment program to equip its operation with “state of the art” processing and packaging machines, transforming raw material into finished goods for the bulk food and packaged goods trade. One of the capital investments made has been a Doboy robot, the Paloma Top Loader.

Seizing opportunity leads to automation

The success of the bulk food format allowed Johnvince Foods to purchase the sole Canadian rights of the Planters®

Getting a grip on large packages

“State of the art” processing and packaging machinery builds on leadership position

brand, from Hershey’s Canada, and this furthered the company’s market position. Currently, nearly every major grocery chain in Canada is purchasing food items from Johnvince Foods.

The Planters® account fostered the relationship between Doboy and Johnvince Foods. Local Doboy sales partner, Gerry Cellucci, worked with operations manager, Tom Copping, to find an efficient product handling solution which would accommodate various package sizes. The various Planters® products include shelled peanuts, salted peanuts, wal-



Doboy Robotic Paloma Top Loading Machine places products into cartons.

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nuts, pecans, smoked almonds, split almonds and more, and are packaged in several sizes: 75g, 100g, 150g, 160g, 300g, 400g and an extra large 2.5kg package of nuts which is hand packed in cases. However, as Gerry Cellucci explained, “by introducing automation to the operation, in the form of the Dobby Paloma robot, it was easy to deliver an affordable solution to handle all the different packages, which account for 90% to 95% of their product output for this line”. The challenging part was to find a highly efficient solution to handle many package sizes. Johnvice employees would have as many as 4–6 change-overs in one day, so quick change-over was critical. The Paloma resolved the issue with change-over time as little as 5 minutes.

Unique features for perfect product handling

The products are bagged on vertical form, fill, and seal (VFFS) machines and

then transported to the Paloma Top Loader to be loaded into various size containers. Containers range from small chipboard display cases to very tall RSC cases. The loaded containers are then transported to a hand loading/palletizing area.

Dobby engineers further enhanced the capabilities of the Paloma Top Loader by devising a heavy-duty case transportation conveyor, which included a device to fold down and retain the front flap of the cases. This allowed the Paloma to load higher cases without loss of control of the bags during the placement process. A product bypass option was also added, which allowed larger bags that were not being loaded by the Paloma (some bags were 2.5 kg and up) to pass through and be manually packed in cases. This allowed the products to be bagged on the same VFFS machines therefore increasing equipment utilization.



Customer satisfaction

Proving itself a great investment, the Paloma not only increased efficiency, but also saved on real estate by eliminating a separate line for the larger package size. Copping said, “We are so pleased with the performance of the Paloma, and the level of service, that we have taken delivery of a second robot. Dobby saw that there is still a need to manually pack and truly understood our operational needs. That level of cooperation makes a great partnership.”

Dobby Paloma Top Loader is an efficient product handling solution to accommodate the various package sizes used at Johnvice Foods.

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