



**Cobalt Sentinel
Pack Validation**

PACKAGING VALIDATION



Incorrectly packaged product is removed into an intelligent reject bin

The increase in short run, customised packaging requirements is adding a new complexity to the packaging process. With so many operations involved in loading and setting up equipment there are often too many points where unchecked errors can occur. By adopting a coordinated and integrated approach, errors are eliminated and packs are accurately identified to meet all supply chain, retailer and consumer requirements.

PACKAGING ACCURACY

Just as the Production Recipe System knows exactly the product ingredients, so should the packaging process recognise the labelling and identification necessary for this batch, order and customer.

COBALT SENTINEL provides the solution for the setup, validation and verification of the packaging process. A secure setup process establishes the primary packaging requirements, sends variable parameters to line coding and labelling equipment and monitors actual activity. Every sleeve, pre-printed pot, film, pack and label is validated with secure reject processes designed to prevent incorrect product from progressing.

CONTROL FROM A SINGLE POINT

At the start of a new product run, an authorized supervisor selects the product to be packed, by scanning the barcode on the production schedule, works order or selecting from the product database. The Sentinel Manager validates the input across the corporate network - from recipe and production scheduling systems, to setup the variable parameters for this batch. Additional parameters can be entered via the screen.

The Sentinel Manager passes set up data to inkjet coding, primary pack validation, labelling and verification equipment in line, before the batch begins, automatically calculating 'display until' and 'best before' dates.

In production, the physical activity is monitored by laser scanning and /or camera technology, identifying unique characteristics of the packaging and matching to the batch settings. This includes validation of accurate and legible in line printed data. Any product failing to match is rejected, and an alarm condition is prompted. In the event of multiple alarms a controlled line shutdown is initiated to prevent significant rework.



Each device is sent individual setup variables from the control panel

PRIMARY PACK TO SECONDARY LABELLING

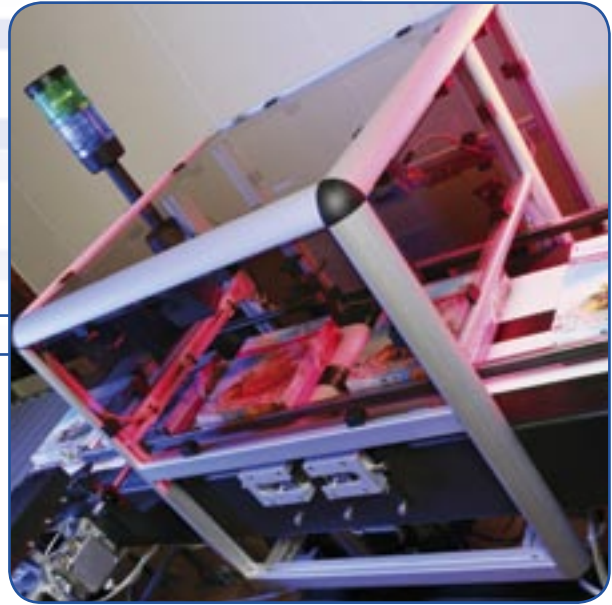
The unique pack requirements are also communicated to pack and pallet labellers, ensuring the consistency and accuracy of the identification at all levels. Using an integrated Print Manager function secondary pack label formats and variable data are passed to the pack and pallet labellers.

The COBALT SENTINEL verification features grade the traded unit barcode to ANSI equivalent standards, detecting quality degradation at its earliest stages. Corrective action is prompted at the next natural line stoppage, protecting productivity and maintaining the highest barcode quality.

RECORD OF PRODUCTION ACTIVITY

The logging function of the COBALT SENTINEL provides key data for the reporting and analysis of packaging activity. A pack by pack log is maintained of successful traded unit output, with product code, date, time and verification grading. For operations using GS1 128 barcode symbology, this provides a detailed record for audit and traceability purposes.

Production log data is made available across the corporate network via Ethernet. By populating SQL data tables the data becomes accessible to production reporting and analysis systems.



Scanner positioning optimizes the field of vision

SECURITY OF SETUP

Sophisticated access controls are simply operated using biometric technology. Fingerprint authentication means that no one has to remember user id and passwords, and no identities are 'shared' through group passwords. Permissions are granted at operator, supervisor, engineer and administrator levels, and only the functions available to each user are shown. Each button pressed is recorded in the event log giving a true history of setting changes, should they be needed later to identify interference or training issues. Engineer and Administrator logs show the setup and maintenance functions history. All activity logs are retained locally for a limited period. System data is interfaced to a local SQL server for analysis and retention.



Underside validation inline

SYSTEM INTEGRATION

The COBALT SENTINEL is designed to integrate with line equipment and the corporate infrastructure. The multiple comms and I/O ports enable direct communication with scanning and camera devices, printer applicators, coders and other line equipment. Set up parameters are sent and status and activity signals are received and interpreted by the Sentinel Manager. All ports are configurable to meet specific site requirements.

Through Ethernet connectivity the COBALT SENTINEL is able to become a device on the corporate network, to retrieve production and scheduling data as required for the batch setup. The system security limits user access to local functionality, controlling all host interaction in the background.

EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATION

APPLICATION

Primary packaging to contents validation
Variable in line coding validation
Batch setup for labeling and coding systems
Verification to ANSI equivalent standard of traded unit bar code
Validation of readability of traded unit bar code after application

CONNECTIVITY

16 Digital I/O channels
Ethernet, USB, parallel
SQL, Access and Oracle links

HARDWARE FEATURES

10.4" Touch Panel screen for HMI
Biometric scanner
Beacon for long range status
Bar code verification scanning
Laser scanning validation including 2D codes
Camera recognition
IP65 rated
Fanless, diskless technology

12 months warranty and CE conformity.
Patent Pending
Specifications are subject to change without notice. All rights reserved.

SOFTWARE FEATURES

Intuitive user interface
Customisable batch parameters
Scanned, keyboard or data interface input
Expected value control and comparison
User authorisation with related access rights
Barcode quality verification to ANSI equivalent standards
Barcode position indicator
Biometric authentication and password controlled access
Batch limit variable to control product count
Full log of verification and activity data
Access history logs
Print manager functions for controlling Print & Apply and coding equipment
Embedded XP platform
Diagnostic help
Constant consistency and logic checking

SERVICES

Universal power supply
100-240v AC
47Hz - 63Hz
Single Phase



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Winner of the 2005 PPMA Award for Innovation
in Design and Manufacture.