

## CASE STUDY

# Highly flexible blister production at Remedica

The blister machines and cartoners at Remedica's manufacturing site in Limassol, Cyprus, are arranged in-line in a so-called Z-layout. Romaco tailored the configuration to meet Remedica's needs exactly

A portfolio comprising several hundred products, an enormous range of batch sizes and customers with rapidly changing requirements: day-to-day production at Remedica, the Cypriot pharma manufacturer and contract packager, holds plenty of challenges. Short changeover times, reliable processes and maximum flexibility are therefore high on the company's list of priorities. When it comes to packing solid pharma dosage forms, Remedica trusts in blister machines and cartoners made by Romaco, a leading international supplier of packaging and processing technologies for the pharma industry.

Remedica – Cyprus's biggest pharma manufacturer – specialises in the development, production and sale of a broad spectrum of medicines, including cardiovascular agents and anti-cancer drugs, which are its flagship products. The company is committed to corporate social responsibility and environmentally friendly practices and has received numerous awards in the past for its sustainability initiatives.

Today, Remedica's product portfolio comprises more than 300 generic, branded generic and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines in a variety of dosage forms such as tablets, capsules, oblongs, gels, creams, ointments, suppositories and topical aerosols. Remedica is also active in the market as a contract packager, meaning an enormous range of batch sizes, often very small, have to be processed – for instance as few as 500 blister packs with pharma solids.

### Frequent format changes

In view of this huge repertoire of products and the extreme variations in batch size, flexibility,



Remedica, the Cypriot pharmaceutical manufacturer, has its headquarters in Limassol



Remedica manufactures more than 300 generic, branded generic and OTC products

reliable processes and high availability are key in day-to-day production at Remedica. This is particularly true with regard to the format parts, because format changes are necessary on the company's blister machines every one and a half to two days

on average.

For more than ten years now, Remedica has trusted in Romaco technologies when it comes to blisters as primary packaging for tablets, capsules and oblongs or cartons as secondary packaging. The pharma

manufacturer presently has eleven Romaco Noack 921 rotary sealing machines at its disposal. Eight of these blister machines are used as modules of fully automated lines in conjunction with Romaco Promatic cartoners while the other three are

standalone units.

This standardisation of the solids packaging technology provides multiple benefits for Remedica in everyday production, especially where small batches are concerned, "Diminishing batch sizes are a growing trend in the contract packaging sector," reports Dimitar Vasilev, Production Engineer at Remedica.

"Against that background, using several machines of the same type enables far more flexible production planning because we can use the same format parts on all our rotary sealing machines. On top of that, standardised solutions make life easier for our operators and they need less training to become familiar."

### More than 50 Romaco blister format sets in use

All parts belonging to a format set – such as feeding formats, deflection rollers or sealing, coding, perforating and die-cutting tools – are tested by Romaco before they leave the factory on machines specially reserved for this purpose together with the specific customer product and the relevant packaging.

"Our stock of format sets has been regularly expanded ever since we first started working with Romaco. We currently have more than 50 blister format sets in total, and we liaise closely and constantly with Romaco's PacTech format competence center," Vasilev continues.

He adds, "We can rely on Romaco to supply us with precisely fitting format parts that let us resume production again without delay whenever we change the format. The light weight of the individual components is another important advantage here. Every format part can be lifted and fitted by a single person."



Romaco blister machines and cartoners have an ergonomic design with easy access to all components. The plug and play principle of the format parts guarantees fail-safe installation. Over the last few years, Romaco has systematically reduced the number of format parts for its machines and thus also the times for retooling. Romaco Noack's blister packaging lines permit reproducible, toolless format changes in under 30 minutes. Furthermore, the hygienic design of these machines means less downtime and optimal availability because with their smooth surfaces and their rounded corners and edges, all blister machines and cartoners built by Romaco Noack and Promatic are quick and easy to clean.

#### Individual, space-saving line layout

The blister machines and cartoners at Remedica's manufacturing site in Limassol, Cyprus, are arranged in-line in a so-called Z-layout. Romaco tailored the configuration to meet Remedica's needs exactly. The blisters are discharged at the front and the carter is positioned in front of the blister machine and slightly to one side of it. This individual layout and the compact design of the machines helped Romaco achieve a very small footprint overall and fit the blister packaging lines optimally into the limited space available.

#### Production expanded with a Romaco Noack 623 platen sealing machine

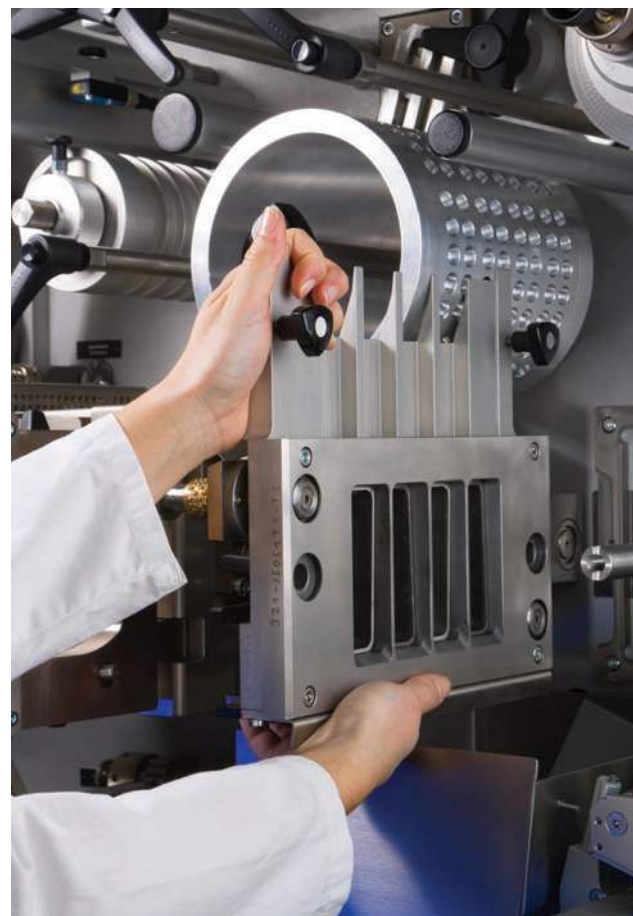


The blisters are packed in cartons on a Romaco Promatic carter

The products on Romaco Noack's blister machines can be fed using different systems. Remedica relies on dedicated feeders for making aluminium-aluminium blisters and universal brush-box feeders for PVC blisters. The pharma manufacturer is now planning to expand its production capacity in the near future and also to introduce a platen sealing machine – a Romaco Noack 623, which is capa-

ble of processing all common thermoformable and sealable foils with an output of up to 480 blisters per minute and a maximum forming depth of 25 mm.

Dimitar Vasilev, Production Engineer at Remedica, is confident, "By expanding our existing production capacity, which is based on rotary sealing, with a blister machine featuring platen technology, we'll be in a position to manufacture even more flexi-



Thanks to the light weight of the individual components, Romaco Noack's blister packaging lines permit format changes in under 30 minutes

bly and give the market what it wants better than ever, because we'll additionally be able to process very large or thick tablets and oblongs with the Romaco Noack 623. Apart from the technical aspects, we were convinced, too, by Romaco's commitment to take back the machines free of charge at the end of their service life in the interests of a circular economy."

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