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APPE WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH INTRAVIS TO DELIVER GROUND-BREAKING QUALITY TECHNOLOGY

APPE, the packaging division of LSB, has invested €1.5m to develop and install Sample-PreWatcher technology from INTRAVIS GmbH for the automatic inspection of the key quality parameters of preforms.

The manufacture of PET preforms is becoming increasingly challenging as demand increases and more rPET resin blends and performance additives are used.

With the ever-present challenge of ensuring high, consistent quality products, APPE turned to INTRAVIS GmbH. In recent years, INTRAVIS has developed some excellent applications now extensively used throughout APPE, including a ColourWatcher system, which ensures preform colour consistency, PreWatcher for high speed preform selection, and BottleWatcher for container inspection.

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The ground-breaking Sample-PreWatcher technology has been developed by INTRAVIS, with significant input from APPE's pan-European Quality team.

Replacing manual inspection, the system provides an automated, rapid and more in-depth analysis of preforms.

Sample-PreWatcher carries out tasks such as a complete visual inspection, colour analysis, cavity number recognition and neck dimension examination. With input from the APPE quality team, INTRAVIS engineers developed the technology further to include weight control, thread-flash analysis and wall thickness variation.

The benefits of this advanced system are huge, as Billy Jansen, APPE's Group QSE & Sustainability Manager explains: "This off-line tool provides rapid analysis of key preform quality parameters. It supports APPE's operational and quality teams with fast and accurate data at the most critical periods of production, namely start-up and process interruptions, as well as routine quality activity.

"The extended feature-set has resulted in more consistent quality, earlier identification of quality issues and therefore reduction of scrap, as well as the freeing-up of operators' time to focus on other value added tasks."

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APPE has deployed the INTRAVIS Sample-PreWatcher technology across all its major manufacturing plants and is the first leading preform manufacturer to do so. The significant investment underlines the company's commitment to quality in all areas of the production process.

“Working with the professional, expert team at INTRAVIS has enabled APPE to reach the goal of fully automated quality control and data analysis of PET preforms,” continues Jansen. “The direct input from INTRAVIS' CEO, Dr.Gerd Fuhrmann, displayed a clear commitment to this project, and both teams were able to define the specification of the new Sample-PreWatcher very quickly.”

Dr. Fuhrmann adds: “INTRAVIS is extremely pleased to have worked with an industry leader such as APPE to develop the Sample-PreWatcher technology. Teams from both businesses have collaborated to produce a tool that contributes real value to the APPE business.”



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