

CASE STUDY

Ampulla invested in an AirPouch® FastWrap™ system to increase productivity and reduce in-transit damage of its glassware lines.

Background

Based in Hyde, Greater Manchester, Ampulla is the consumer retail arm of Amphorea, Europe's largest wholesale supplier of glass, aluminium and plastic containers for applications including chemicals, foodstuffs, fragrances and paints.

The Challenge

"We retail glass bottles and jars in all shapes and sizes to individual consumers and to small businesses, handling one off orders for a single kilner jar at one end of the spectrum, and regular orders for hundreds of essential oil bottles, for example, at the other," explains Ampulla warehouse manager Andy Brogan. "The challenge is to ensure that however large or small the product or order value, the contents arrive in perfect condition, not in pieces. Making sure that all items are packaged suitably and handled with care secures our reputation that is key to growth."

"To meet our delivery commitments, our glass packers must be able to pick, pack and dispatch items within a 24 hour time slot. We were using 6ft rolls of bubble wrap that were taking up a large part of our warehouse, which could have been used more efficiently. Staff would waste time cutting the material to size, creating an enormous amount of waste and ultimately slowing down the process for products to be dispatched. Small bubbles also meant that we had to use multiple layers so we were getting through up to four £20.00 rolls a day."

Returns as a result of breakage were high. "Everything was up for review because our pack and ship operation was costing us money and reputation, and equally importantly, the old system of wrapping by hand with bubble wrap was so time consuming that the team was unable to keep up with growth in order volumes."

The Solution

Andy Brogan visited Automated Packaging Systems stand at Packtech and talked to AirPouch® sales executive Stuart Fish. "Ampulla needed to increase packing speeds and the security of its goods in transit so it could reduce returns and pack more units more quickly using existing space and labour."



Company Name

Ampulla - Europe's largest supplier of glass, aluminium and plastic containers or applications including chemicals, foodstuffs, fragrances and paints.

Products Being Packaged

Glass bottles and jars in all shapes and sizes

Equipment Used

AirPouch® FastWrap™

Custom Integration

AirPouch® FastWrap™ did not require custom integration for this application.

Materials Used

AirPouch® FastWrap™ bubble quilting

Return on Investment

"A large order which used to take one packer half an hour to prepare is now ready in under 10 minutes. All this means we have been able to triple our output; we pack 90 boxes in a day now."

FastWrap™ system meets all those demands and more, producing on-demand bubble and tube quilting with EZ-tear perforations for quick operator handling.

"One layer of FastWrap bubble quilting is enough – it's considerably deeper and so offers the same or more impact protection as several layers of traditional bubble wrap. As a result Ampulla cut down on the amount of plastic it uses, reducing waste and saving money. And there's no more cutting to be done; the FastWrap bubble quilt is sized conveniently to line their standard shipping cartons, and packers simply tear off the required length."

The Results

"We have our storage space back because one small box of FastWrap material can last us three days," explains Andy Brogan. "A large order which used to take one packer half an hour to prepare is now ready in under 10 minutes. All this means we have been able to triple our output; we pack 90 boxes in a day now."

"Historically, 40 returns through breakage a month was commonplace. Now we average around three a month – partly due to a change in courier and partly because the product is more secure now that FastWrap protects it. The time and cost savings as a result of fewer customer returns are huge, not to mention the improvements in reputation and customer satisfaction."

"We're not layering anymore so we can pack more products in the box, saving shipping costs. That's a saving we've passed on to customers who now pay an average of £4.00 less per order for shipping."

The Future

Ampulla have one AirPouch system in full use at the moment, switching between Automated Packaging Systems patent pending honeycomb bubble quilt and its tube quilt. "There is still scope for us to expand our glassware operation with our existing FastWrap machine, but when that changes we won't hesitate to get a second system," explains Mr. Brogan. "And we're investigating some other areas of the business which might benefit from the speed and security AirPouch offers too."

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