

Kuwait group installs FleXinspect

Kuwait's Gulf Glass Manufacturing Company undertook a modernisation in 2016 at its 300 tonnes a day plant. It selected Bucher Emhart Glass's inspection machinery for its cold end and was pleased with how smoothly the installation went.

Gulf Glass Manufacturing Company (GGMC) has chosen machinery from Bucher Emhart Glass for its cold end.

The Kuwait container glassmaker upgraded its production and inspection lines in 2016 and selected a combination of Bucher Emhart's (BEG) FleXinspect C with FleXinspect M, fitted with BEG's recently launched Scout technology.

The plant has two furnaces with a total melting capacity of 300 tons per day and manufactures glass containers of all shapes and sizes. GGMC serves major customers in the soft-drinks industry such as Pepsi, Coca-Cola, Cadbury-Schweppes, Sinalco and Vimto, as well as several customers in the food industry.

FleXinspect is Emhart's main inspection range. The range comprises the flagship FleXinspect T, FleXinspect M, and the modular FleXinspect B and C, which are also available in a combined unit, the FleXinspect BC.

Scout, launched last year, is BEG's system platform for controlling its FleXinspect machines. BEG says it is more than software, delivering concrete benefits in terms of inspection capability, including better lighting, higher resolution optics, faster and more powerful processors, and more advanced inspection algorithms.

Most existing BEG inspection machines can be upgraded to Scout and on all new FleXinspect machines it is supplied as standard, meaning almost all customers can take advantage of its capabilities.

Testing and training

The GGMC project began in summer 2016, when a combination of FleXinspect C & FleXinspect M machines were installed on a test loop built by GGMC itself. A BEG Field Sales Engineer spent time on site to

make custom improvements to both hardware and software, at the request of both GGMC and BEG itself. The test setup also facilitated operator training before full production began.

"The project got off to a strong start, with everyone relaxed and confident," said BEG's Project Manager Martin Frieg. "From the very beginning, there was a positive, collaborative atmosphere between the two companies.

Training had been planned in from the start, which helped to strengthen the customer's confidence and facilitate startup too."

Installation

In September, the first of three FleXinspect units, a FleXinspect C, was installed and commissioned in GGMC's shop 1.1. By this time, GGMC and BEG had built up a solid working relationship, and this phase unfolded practically without a hitch. After a few days the FleXinspect C was ready to begin operation, with just minor tweaks once production had begun.

In parallel, two FleXinspect M machines were also installed, with no issues. With comprehensive training provided by BEG, GGMC's operators were able to hit the ground running and handle all the equipment from day one.

By November, GGMC was ready to move on to the next phase of installation, with shops 2.4 and 2.5 receiving one FleXinspect C and two FleXinspect M machines.

Again, startup went smoothly and was completed in a short time.

Acceptance tests were carried out directly after commissioning. The customer had no complaints and was fully satisfied with the work.



▲ The FleXinspect C machine from Bucher Emhart Glass.

Plug and play

Following the installation, GGMC was able to immediately take over management of the machines for themselves, and was handling them independently with only minimal off-site support from BEG.

As well as more precise inspection and the resulting improvement in quality, job changes have been sped up dramatically, particularly on the FleXinspect C where changeovers can be completed in minutes.

"Thanks to all of the teams involved on both sides, this was the smoothest installation of completely new technology that I've ever seen," says Mick Simmons, Service Engineer at BEG. "More importantly, the customer is telling us that they love the technology and the quality it helps them achieve. I'd like to express special thanks to GGMC for all their assistance during this project."

"We were delighted with how smoothly this project went," confirms François Laenen, GGMC's Plant Manager and, coincidentally, a former BEG employee. "It was 'plug and play,' which is extraordinary—you might expect that for something like a conveyor or pusher, but not something as complex as an inspection unit. Now we're looking forward to the quality gains that FleXinspect and Scout will bring us for many years to come." ■

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