



D/3[®] DCS



FlexBatch[®]



TotalVision[®]



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John van Nassauw
E shift Packaging Operator

D/3[®] Expansion into Packaging

D/3 manages monorail and feeding systems, mixers, and extruders implemented in FCP packaging area.

OVERVIEW

The D/3 DCS was already being used at a Flexible Compounding Plant in the Netherlands for central systems, including a monorail system, the feeding systems, the mixers, and all extruders. A decision was made to implement the D/3 Operating System in the FCP Packaging Area for packaging the finished product. This means that more than 90 percent of the process can be viewed and controlled from one system.

NEW PACKAGING SOFTWARE PROVIDES FLEXIBILITY FOR FCP

FlexBatch[®], a batch application, was added to the operating system to allow more flexible programming and process control. TotalVision[®], the graphic interface, were applied for use everywhere within FCP so that the machine controls will present the same graphics. With TotalVision being used in Packaging, its implementation in the entire plant is progressing quite well. “When I came from another plant to work for FCP five years ago, I immediately noticed that operating the machines from behind a computer was different for each machine. Everywhere there were different graphics, screens, etc. Since then I have been investigating, together with others, the possibility of introducing a user interface that could provide uniform operation. A complete system for the operators. With TotalVision, FCP has such a uniform user interface.” These are the words of Jan Heeren, Process Automation Technician.

MORE FLEXIBLE

In addition to ease of operation, Packaging also investigated whether the system could be used to make the department more flexible. Etienn Timmermans, Senior Process Automation Technician, says, “The packaging system is older and implementing changes was difficult and very costly. With FlexBatch, the production process can be set up more flexibly and changes are much easier to implement. With this system, Packaging can package at least four percent more.” The additional capacity is very much needed. In the last few years, the number of tons to be packaged by the department increased from 700 tons to 1400/1500 tons a week. By working more flexibly, the same machines can do more now. John van Nassauw, E shift packaging operator says “But there are limits. To get even more out of the machines, a second packaging operator is needed. I do the work by myself now and I can only fold so many boxes a day. That’s it.” Packaging gained flexibility by dividing the production process into five separate parts – washing, requesting containers, dumping containers, packaging and transporting – which may be more or less compressed if desired or even done in a different order. Now the department has the option to let certain operations such as cleaning or dumping a container start earlier or later or to prolong them.” The plan is to use FlexBatch also for extrusion to set up a more flexible production process.

LESS DEPENDENT

Finally, this implementation of new technology also has beneficial side effects for other parts in the 5 block. With TotalVision, job satisfaction in Packaging increased. John van Nassauw explains, “Before TotalVision, as an operator you hardly knew what was going on. If the containers stopped coming, you didn’t know why. Now you do, you can see on the screen what is happening in the whole factory. That makes you a lot less dependent. I don’t have to make calls or walk all over the place to see what’s wrong. A great improvement.” The system required a large investment from Packaging. “These costs will be recovered soon, because with this system you can respond to malfunctions sooner. Downtime is expected to decrease too. FlexBatch, whose batch application is written based on the well-known S88 standard, could also get to play an important role in the other plant,” said Etienne Timmermans.

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