

Carton Labelling System Delivers Payback in Just Six Months for UK E-Liquids Company



TOTALLY wicked®

UK business, Totally Wicked manufactures a wide range of e-liquids which it sells through its network of shops and online store. The company is using a udaFORMAXX carton feeder with ALS label applicator to put product and ingredient labels on cartons for its 20ml and 10ml products.

Totally Wicked was founded in 2008, starting life as an eBay business. Since then, the company has experienced huge growth and now serves customers through its network of 15 stores, 120 dedicated resellers, 130 concessions and an online store. It has built a strong reputation as a trusted supplier of high quality e-liquids.

UK manufacture of 500 variants

Totally Wicked produces its own Red Label range of e-liquids at its manufacturing facility in Blackburn. Technical Director, Liam Humberstone explains: "We do all of our own manufacturing, labelling and packing here in the UK.

This means that we can control product quality and very easily respond to the frequent legislative changes that affect our industry. In total, we produce a range of 500 different strength, flavour and brand variants."



We can label somewhere in the region of 40,000 units per shift.



Label applicator company, Advanced Labelling Systems (ALS) supplied and installed seven label applicators to put product labels on Totally Wicked's 10ml and 20ml bottles. These applicators handle as many as 40,000 bottles per day. There are three lines with double-headed applicators, as well as a mobile unit that it can move between locations as needed.

Product and ingredient labels on cartons

In addition to putting labels on bottles, Totally Wicked also labels generic cartons with product and ingredient information for different variants. Humberstone says: "We bought some low-cost box labellers from an alternative supplier in Germany to put labels on our cartons. Unfortunately, while they were incredibly quick in production we were only getting less than two hours uptime per machine in a seven and a half hour shift. We eventually had four machines, with an operator on each one. This simply wasn't sustainable."



Increasing production

Under the Tobacco Products Directive, e-liquid manufacturers will no longer be able to supply e-liquids in 20ml bottles after the end of May 2017. All liquids will have to be supplied in 10ml bottles. Customers who currently purchase the 20ml bottles will instead purchase two 10ml bottles.

Humberstone says: "We generally produce 25,000 bottles per day across the 20ml and 10ml sizes. When we move to the smaller size only, there will be a natural increase in the number of bottles that we need to produce. Add to this was the fact that our sales are increasing year on year and we knew that we had to get our automation right."



We knew that it would pay for itself in less than 6 months...



Carton feeder with integrated label applicator

ALS Sales Engineer, John Walsh recommended that Totally Wicked replace the four box labellers with a udaFORMAXX carton feeder from PrintSafe, fitted with an ALS label applicator. PrintSafe and ALS had supplied a number of integrated feeder and labeller systems to customers in the UK and Walsh was confident that this approach would give Totally Wicked the speed and reliability needed.

The udaFORMAXX is a semi-automatic machine that feeds flat-form cartons from stack to stack past the integrated label applicator. Operators can adjust the machine very easily to switch between the different sized cartons.

Once labelled the cartons are collected and erected ready for the filled and labelled bottles. By labelling the cartons on the semi-automatic system, Totally Wicked can very easily change between batches and make sure that labels are positioned accurately within the small area of the carton.

40,000 units per shift

Humberstone says: "We can now run just under 140 cartons per minute and I know that I will reliably be able to do that for 5 hours per day. We can label somewhere in the region of 40,000 units per shift."

"We can achieve all of our production on one machine. When we made the decision to invest in the equipment, we knew that it would pay for itself in less than 6 months if it performed as we hoped – and it has."

Fast Facts

- udaFORMAXX carton feeder with ALS label applicator
- Applying product and ingredients labels to generic cartons
- 140 cartons per minute, 40,000 units per shift
- Payback in 6 months

About PrintSafe

PrintSafe is a coding and marking specialist serving manufacturing and packing companies throughout the UK and Ireland with a comprehensive range of coding equipment and after-sales services. PrintSafe is the UK distributor for KBA-Metronic GmbH.

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