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#prosweetscologne

ProSweets Cologne as a signpost for the digital transformation in the sweets and snacks industry

Technology providers are betting on modular systems, hygienic designs and predictive maintenance

From elegant pastries, to bonbons, through to liquorice: ProSweets Cologne places the spotlight on innovative solutions that allow the companies of the sweets and snacks industry to react to the growing number of flavours at the point of sale. Diversity and individuality, paired with seasonal items are the benchmarks the manufacturers are orientating themselves on. However, productivity is equally important. Companies that want to remain competitive can no longer get around automating and digitalising their processes.

Unexpected flavours, novel textures, unusual appearances or surprising taste variations are more popular than ever in the sweets and snacks sector. It is thus no surprise that the sweets and snacks producers regularly expand their line-ups to include innovative delights - and that means: On the one hand growing diversity, on the other hand increased cost pressure. In order to be successful on the international market, both flexible and highly economic production processes are required. During the normal opening times of the trade fair, the technology providers at ProSweets Cologne will demonstrate how integrated automation can be achieved with the aid of digitalisation. The extensive portfolio comprises of technologies from weighing the raw materials, to the dosing, through to the packing at the end of the line. Furthermore, manifold implementation scenarios for quality management are possible. For example, the systems can recognise whether a cleaning cycle was correctly adhered to. What's more, today sweets can be more individually produced than ever before.

Modular systems

The digitalisation possibilities increasingly allow both the product itself as well as the packaging to be designed more originally. The best example of this are the chocolate moulding and casting machines of the latest generation. They are conceived to design the largest possible spectrum of filled and solid chocolates and bars. Thanks to their flexibility, the new machine concepts especially address those manufacturers, who plan a later expansion of their machines from the very start. Thanks to the modular design, they enable step-by-step upgrades to a higher degree of automation or to a higher performance level - through to the plug-and-play integration of a robot, which allows the decoration of hollow figures or filled chocolates. The individual components act here as intelligent units that communicate with each other within a network.

Optimise performance in real-time



ProSweets Cologne
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www.prosweets.com

Your contact:

Peggy Krause

Tel.

+49 221 821-2076

Fax

+49 221 821-3544

e-mail

p.krause@koelnmesse.de

Koelnmesse GmbH
Messeplatz 1
50679 Köln
P.O. Box 21 07 60
50532 Köln
Germany
Tel. +49 221 821-0
Fax +49 221 821-2574
www.koelnmesse.com

Executive Board:

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Accordingly, further tools such as condition monitoring or predictive maintenance are being implemented in the sweets industry, which further promote the concept of Industry 4.0. Background: The production and packaging machines are increasingly being fitted with smart sensors, which monitor critical parameters of motion and pneumatic systems or the engine vibrations in real-time. The aim is to increase the effectiveness of the whole plant (OEE, overall equipment effectiveness). All of the important operating and performance data can be displayed on the operating terminal as well as on a tablet or smartphone. Paired with quick access to diagnosis and remote maintenance functions unplanned machine downtimes thus becomes a thing of the past. Instead predictive maintenance enables repair measures to be planned - proactively and without restricting the OEE.

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Safely and efficiently packed

The modular systems with their standardised components extend right through to the quality controls. A critical point here is the packing process, because every delay can quickly end up in a stop in production. During the packing process, each chocolate is picked up individually by a pick-and-place robot and is literally "with intuitive feeling" placed into the trays or U-Boards. Beforehand 3D scanners with image recognition monitor the position and alignment. The robots can only place the products precisely if they receive this information. The goods are recorded three-dimensionally every time they are moved. But not only that: The shape, volume, colour and degree of browning, for example of filled sandwich biscuits can be checked using a modern vision system. Finally, the finished products pass through a check weigher and a metal detector. This ensures that only immaculate and ready-to-sell goods reach the consumer.

Fit for the digital technologies and processes

The technology providers are particularly raising the bar regarding automation in the sweets and snacks industry. ProSweets is exactly the right place for anyone, who wants to keep abreast of these developments. From 30.01.-02.02.2022, the supplier trade fair will once again take on the role of a signpost for the digital transformation. But not only solutions for the preventative maintenance of the machines and services that solve unproductive machine conditions fast are under focus. Hygienic design also plays a key role. This not only contributes towards food safety, but also increases the productivity because the cleaning and maintenance efforts and the format changing times are reduced as a result. The focus here lies on frameless and well-accessible constructions made of stainless steel. Above all the product-touching components of the covering, decorating or cooling devices have to display flat surfaces to enable optimum cleaning results. For example, product residues are prevented from sticking to the components to avoid the growth of harmful microorganisms. Further insights into the latest developments on the theme of hygienic design will also be available at the coming ProSweets Cologne 2022 as well as on the accompanying, digital platform, ProSweets @home.

Koelnmesse - Global Competence in Food and FoodTec:

Koelnmesse is an international leader in organising food fairs and events regarding food and beverage processing. Trade fairs such as the Anuga, ISM and Anuga FoodTec are established world leaders. Koelnmesse not only organises food and food technology trade fairs in Cologne, Germany, but also in further growth markets

around the globe, for example, in Brazil, China, Colombia, India, Italy, Japan, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates, which have different focuses and contents. These global activities enable us to offer our customers a network of events, which in turn grant access to different markets and thus create a basis for sustainable and stable international business.

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Your contact:

Peggy Krause

Kommunikationsmanagerin

Koelnmesse GmbH

Messeplatz 1

50679 Cologne

Germany

Telefon: +49 221 821-2076

Telefax: +49 221 821-3544

p.krause@koelnmesse.de

www.koelnmesse.de