

LEAN THINKING

→ from Foodmach

Dealing with Multiple SKUs



How to avoid waste when your packaging line must accommodate a wide range of products.

You may have a large range of SKU's, with each having its own dedicated primary and secondary packaging.

Dedicated packaging is intuitively sensible, but it's not a lean approach, as it generates these **8 potential production waste points**.

1. **Production downtime** during packaging material changeovers
2. **Material movements** from warehouse to and from the packaging line
3. Complexity with **raw material purchasing and management**
4. Warehousing **storage space** requirement
5. **Scheduling complexity** around availability of packaging material
6. Potential of using **incorrect packaging** is increased when artworks are similar
7. Packaging purchase **price negotiation** is hampered by multiple smaller runs
8. **Disposing of excess** purchased packaging for each individual SKU.

The Lean Solution

By using modern digital printing technologies, it's possible to use a **common generic packaging format that is pre-printed** with all common graphics, logos and text for each SKU family.

Online printers are then used to print any SKU specific information such as product descriptions, retail or trade-unit barcodes, ingredients lists, nutritional panels, use-by-dates and batch codes.

For example, a 130mm wide-format 300 dpi thermal transfer overprinter can be used to print all SKU specific information onto flexible packaging for snack, frozen or confectionary products for either food service or retail applications.

Keep in mind that the base flexible packaging material may still be printed with branding colours and logos, which with a print registration mark can be accurately overprinted within the vertical or horizontal bagging machine.



LEAN THINKING is our series of thoughtful ideas on waste minimisation strategies.

We bring you smart product solutions to reduce all types of waste on your packaging line. These are the very same principles we use to design and build turn-key packaging lines for Australia's biggest FMCG manufacturers.

FOODMACH

Automation | Robotics | Integration | Turnkey Projects

SOLUTION



Generic online digital printing solutions can significantly reduce waste in most packaging operations.

Foodmach represents a wide range of global packaging technology suppliers, from product traceability, coding and labelling, high-speed rotary product labelling and product inspection to stretch-wrapping and case packing.

Even better, we have the integration expertise to make it all work together with your existing equipment. Foodmach is simply the fastest way to get control of your packaging line. So call us!

A second more broadly applicable example is that of case printing.

Consider using a common generic case for all flavour variants of products packed in the same size primary pack. The case may be pre-printed with all common branding and logos, then all SKU specific information is digitally printed after the case packing station.

This printing can be performed with a range of technologies, including high- or low-resolution **inkjet, laser coders, or thermal label printer applicators**. Or a combination of label printers for barcode labels and inkjet or laser coding for human-readable text is also possible.

All eight waste points are addressed with this solution. And because software is used to integrate the printing solutions, product changeovers occur **rapidly and consistently, without error.**

Vision systems can also be deployed within the software solution to add a further layer of quality coding and packaging inspection.



Above: Example of generic high resolution online printing of export seafood boxes using Markem-Imaje 5800 printers.

Financial Impacts

The potential financial returns differ based on many variables, though it's not uncommon for a generic digital printing solution to have a payback of less than 24 months.

We can also provide a financial solution to overcome any potential up-front capital expenditure barriers. Foodmach **FLEX** is a pay-only-for-output arrangement that may better suit your budget.



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