

# Optimal Flexibility Thanks to TQS

**Pharma contract manufacturer MEDA relies on Track & Trace solution from OCS Checkweighers**

The MEDA company of Sweden, is a leading European specialty pharmaceutical company and with more than two dozen subsidiaries, it has a presence almost everywhere on the continent. With respect to the forthcoming directive on serialization for drug packaging, the company decided to offer its customers maximum flexibility in meeting the new requirements and has placed its trust in the Track & Trace solution „Traceable Quality System“ (TQS) from OCS Checkweighers.

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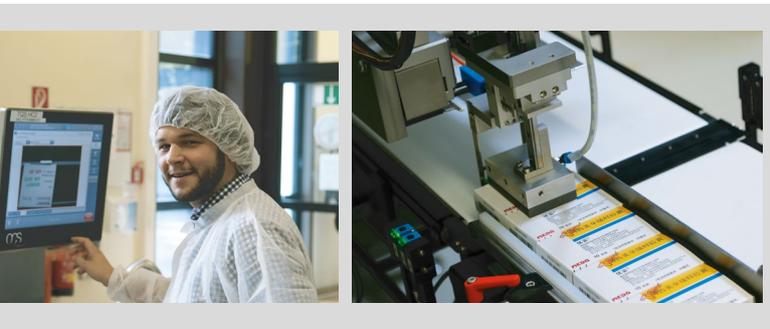
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Jürgen Back is a packaging production engineer at the MEDA plant in Köln-Mülheim. In this function, he is confronted with the mandatory implementation of EU-Directive 2011/62/EU to combat the counterfeiting of pharmaceutical products. „It is still not clear what to expect in terms of technical and organizational requirements globally. That is why we set an absolute priority on having the greatest flexibility in the technical approach,“ said the MEDA executive.



In addition to its own products, MEDA also produces for many of the best-known companies in the industry. To ensure a smooth and unrestricted production and delivery capability immediately following the release of the implementing arrangements, MEDA selected the Track & Trace solution „Traceable Quality System“ (TQS) from OCS Checkweighers. In the words of Mr. Back, the coherent and comprehensive concept takes into account all eventualities with respect to the global implementation and ensures maximum flexibility. That is why the decision went to OCS Checkweighers.

At the Köln-Mülheim plant, capsules with anti-inflammatory preparations and nasal sprays for allergy sufferers come off of multiple parallel lines. Both products must be labeled for the Chinese market with a valid code. The top/bottom conveyor belts of the TQS-HC-A serialization unit ensure exact and stable positioning of the folding boxes already filled and arriving from the cartoner. This very precise product transport is what allows for the best printing results (at least „B“ grade) in a fundamentally difficult printing operation that is performed directly at this stage. Verification follows immediately by means of cameras that control the printed codes. Products with defective printing are rejected as are those with excessive differences in weight when determined next by the highly precise weight control. In both cases, the faulty products are collected in a lockable container to ensure their safe separation from the error-free products.

The Weigh Cells used in the TQS operate on the principle of electro-magnetic force compensation (EMFC). This process provides significantly faster settling times and, consequently, faster measurement results than comparable methods of dynamic weighing on an industrial scale.

All products that are kept in the good channels are then bundled and sent to the TQS-BP Track & Trace module for the first level of aggregation. The serial numbers of each individual package are read and entered again and then summarized under a new bundle serial number. Again, the verification is performed directly after application of the serial number label onto the bundle. These individual bundles next proceed to the TQS-CP Case Packing module for seamless aggregation in the manual packaging area. At this stage all bundles are manually packed in layers and aligned in the shipping cartons. After each complete layer, the fully integrated camera of the TQS module creates a full area photo showing all the codes in that layer. When a shipping carton is full, to complete the aggregation step, a label is generated and applied to the carton.

Volker Ditscher is the Business Manager, Track & Trace Systems at OCS Checkweighers and has been busy since the start of the mandatory serialization project identifying the best possible solutions for all pharmaceutical customers. Ditscher considers the impending mandatory implementation to be one of the biggest challenges ever faced by drug suppliers. „A globally oriented production and delivery chain of more than 500 manufacturers, about 20,000 pharmacies, and approximately 700 million drug packages per year sets a premium on flexibility. With TQS from OCS Checkweighers, MEDA has purchased a comprehensive component system that performs a thorough serialization tied to the complete aggregation, which guarantees a consistent and reliable implementation of any possible requirement provided in national and international legislation,“ said the Track & Trace expert.

The MEDA decision in favor of OCS Checkweighers as sole supplier for Track & Trace is also because of the innovative operating concept of TQS. All system components are operated from a single software interface from which all components can be accessed directly and without switching between programs. „This is really simple and easy to learn,“ said Jürgen Back. „The error ratio on the part of the operator is kept to a minimum.“ In addition, the networking of the separate TQS modules within the production line is completed by the TQS Line Manager.

„With TQS, we are optimally positioned in terms of consistent serialization and complete aggregation,“ said the engineer in justifying the decision to select OCS Checkweighers as a cooperation partner. „In particular, with regard to future exports to the Far East, thanks to the quality and flexibility of this extremely compact space saving system, we can now confidently await all of the expected global labeling requirements.