

Increasing the Performance and Profitability of Tortilla Lines Through Automated Inspection

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A major tortilla manufacturer was investigating ways of reducing operating costs and improving the efficiency on their tortilla production lines. Automation was viewed as an obvious tool to achieve this goal, and one of the key elements of this process was to automate the inspection of manufactured tortillas. This approach proved to be beneficial not only from a labor savings perspective, but also from a process efficiency perspective as well.



The Dipix T60/In-Line Tortilla Inspection System

their production and quality data in real-time. Not only could they look at their rejection rates by lane, by fault type and by minute, they could also see real-time measurements such as diameters, toast mark percentages and out-of-roundness trends, and even get more detailed SPC charts and histograms for all of their measurements.

In addition to the immediate plant-floor impact, managers and supervisors were now receiving automatic reports that summarized all of the production and rejection information. The reports were configured to be automatically emailed from the Dipix T60/IL inspection system every day at 7am in an industry-standard PDF format. In this manner, every manager received his or her customized reports without any manual intervention, thus ensuring that everyone had the performance data they need to make the line run better every day.

In the final analysis, the Dipix T60/IL Inspection System had the following impact on the tortilla line:

- **Significant cost savings** coming from the reduction in manual labor in the packaging area
- Elimination of jam-ups caused by inferior and irregular products entering the counter/stacker
- Dramatic improvement in overall product quality as process issues were identified and eliminated by plant personnel
- Overall improvement in the operation of the line due to increased visibility and accountability of rejected product

After reviewing the available technologies for automated inspection, the customer selected the Dipix Technologies' T60/In-Line Tortilla Inspection System for their facility. The decision was based on the depth of experience of Dipix (over 200 installed food inspection systems worldwide), and the power and flexibility of their QualiVision inspection software.

The Dipix T60/In-Line provided immediate visibility of the production and quality metrics for the tortilla line. For example, it was now very obvious that the majority of all defects were generated from only one of the lanes. A complete breakdown of all reject percentages by type and by lane proved to be a critical tool for correcting process issues faster and more reliably.

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Side view of a Dipix T60