

ENDOLINE MACHINERY PROUD BRITISH MANUFACTURING



ENDOLINE STARTED AS ONE MAN'S HOBBY BUT HAS GROWN INTO A PROUD BRITISH INDUSTRY LEADER.

PROUD BRITISH MANUFACTURING

PROJECT MANAGED BY: RHYS COUSINS

Since 1981 the Endoline Group of companies have been manufacturing high-quality packaging machinery. Over the decades the business has moved from designing and manufacturing small case taping machines to taking on its role as a leading manufacturer of a wide portfolio of end-of-line packaging machines and systems.

The company's track record shows over 11,000 machines successfully manufactured and installed worldwide since its inception. Endoline handles all its design, build and technical support in-house so that customers can expect a level of professionalism and after-sales service that is second to none.

And yet, in many ways, the business started as a hobby.

"The company was founded in 1981 by my grandfather who was a chartered mechanical and electrical engineer," explains Andrew Yates, Managing Director of Endoline Machinery. "He started the company to design packaging machinery. He basically did it with a couple of friends of his from engineering school. They started it more as a hobby than a business. Granddad was looking at designing different forms of packaging

machinery out of a love for engineering, however, this soon escalated into him starting his own business to sell the machinery."

As the company developed Yates's father, Alan, also came into the company, bringing with him his business experience from working in the printing industry.

"He was brought in to run the management side of the company," Yates says. "Then we moved into Biggleswade, bought a factory there and started developing more types of machinery for erecting and sealing boxes."

40 years down the line Andrew and his brother, Richard, joined the company on leaving school, and they have now taken over the business for the third generation. They are taking on a company that comes to market with the highest standards.

"I would say we're the only British manufacturer of our equipment working at our level in terms of quality," Yates says. "From the moment we started my granddad was very passionate about high-quality products. He insists on no cut corners, and that methodology has stayed with us. Back in the day, he promoted us as the Rolls Royce of packaging machinery."

Endoline's clients are typically blue-chip companies, especially in the food industry where large businesses cannot afford to install cheap machinery because every hour of downtime costs them thousands of pounds.

However, sometimes making that case to new customers can be a challenge.

"The challenges we face as a company include competition from overseas. That competition is a lot cheaper, but the quality isn't there, so it's our job to convince the customer that you get what you pay for," Yates reflects. "We've had companies who have taken the cheap option but then come back to Endoline later."

Of course, a natural side effect of troubled times in the economy for any reason is that many businesses become reluctant to invest, and so Endoline must try >>



Andrew Yates,
Managing Director
of Endoline Machinery.

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even harder to make that case for automation. As he tells us, that case is made even stronger by the fact that a human workforce is even harder to maintain right now.

“The case for automation is the return you receive on the investment,” Yates says simply. “Covid has created an even greater need for that. Machines don’t get sick, don’t go on holiday, they work non-stop. It works a lot quicker and is more reliable than a human.”

Yates’s approach to showing companies the advantages that Endoline’s products can offer is to look at each customer’s individual facilities and show the efficiencies that can be made.

“The way we normally do it is looking at what operations are done manually and look at levels of cost. Minimum wage is going up, so employing people is expensive,” Yates says. “We say ‘You’ve three people making boxes. You can get a machine that’ll do that for



Working across the full breadth of food and beverage sectors, Endoline also creates end-of-line solutions for pharmaceutical, e-commerce and FMCG manufacturers.

you with a return investment in less than 12 months.’ It’s more reliable, more efficient and they can redeploy those people elsewhere. Robotics creates more jobs than it takes, but you’re helping companies become much more efficient. What’s happened during Covid is people have realised it’s difficult getting workers now. They need to work apart and have the right PPE. A machine doesn’t need that.”

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THE PEOPLE BEHIND AUTOMATION

At the same time as the efficiencies automation has over manual work, it is ever more challenging to have. It’s a challenge Endoline Machinery itself knows well.

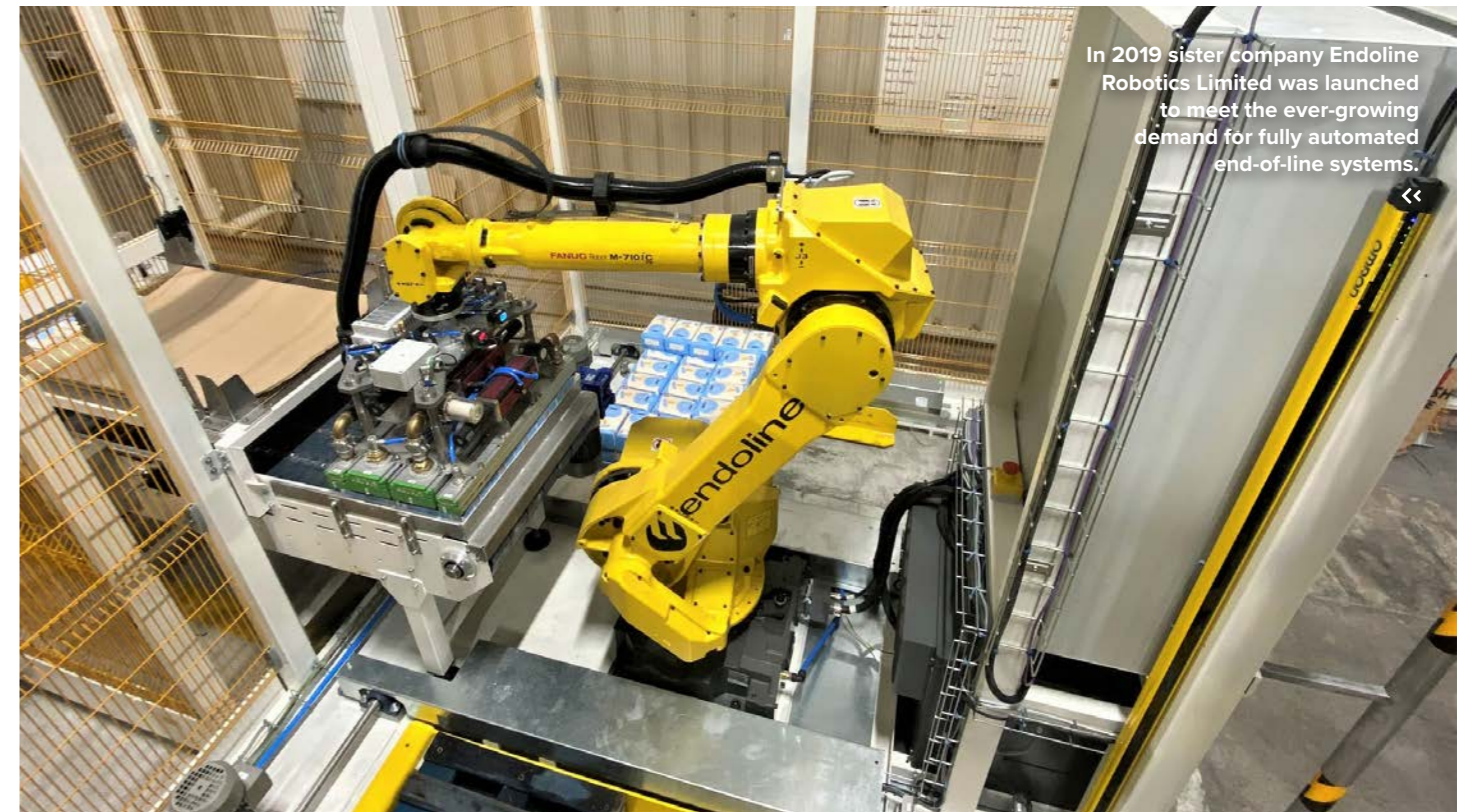
“It’s very difficult finding skilled people,” Yates acknowledges. “We have people who’ve been in the company a long time and we especially look after our skilled staff, design engineers, test engineers, mechanical engineers. But these areas aren’t very appealing to kids these days. They want to be in something modern and exciting. So, there’s a drive in the Processing and Packaging Machinery Association (PPMA) to give young kids a chance in mechanical engineering. We have



Endoline’s Case Packer system demonstrates the high-tech, flexible capabilities of end-of-line packaging machinery.



The company's unique dual opposing vacuum technology was first launched in 1990, to enable efficient opening of cases.



In 2019 sister company Endoline Robotics Limited was launched to meet the ever-growing demand for fully automated end-of-line systems.



three apprentices working for us at the moment, and we're sending people to college on day release."

The future is a topic Yates thinks about a lot, and he has big plans for the future of the Endoline Group.

"The company will evolve in the future in several ways," he tells us. "The first area is product development. We're in the technology game. People want their products faster, smarter, quicker more intuitive."

As well as bringing new products to market, he's also looking to expand which markets the company sells into.

"The second area we're developing is exports," explains Yates. "That's a big business for us- we don't have any direct employees outside of the UK, but we have partners who know machines similar to ours and we have a dedicated export guy who works with them. 40% of our machine turnover is export and the aim is to get that to 50% or 60%."

Finally, and perhaps unsurprisingly, Yates is excited about moving further into the field of automation, with an entirely new arm of the company opening up.

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"The last area of development is that we have set up the new company, Endline Robotics," Yates says. "We set up Endline Robotics two years ago. We can build and seal a box; the next step is to put it on the pallet. So, we set up Endline Robotics, partnering with a company in Greece and marketing robotic palletisers to get the boxes on the pallet and out the door. We have two systems out in the UK already and we're looking at growing that side of the business further."

More than anything, Yates is proud to be flying the flag for British manufacturing.

"British manufacturing is not easy and there's not many of us around, and we're proud to fly the flag and sell overseas," he says. "We're a small company but we punch quite high above our weight looking at our customer base." ☺



Endline's range of machinery vary from entry level, semi-automatic machines, to high speed, fully-automatic systems.



ENDOLINE MACHINERY

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