

Kawasaki robots at Fabryka Farb i Lakierów Śnieżka S.A.



System user:

Fabryka Farb i Lakierów Śnieżka S.A. in Lubzina

Products used:

- Kawasaki palletizing robot

Fabryka Farb i Lakierów Śnieżka S.A. is one of the leading manufacturers of paints and varnishes in Poland. It is a modern plant, employing over 600 people and producing annually about 90 million litres of various types of construction chemicals for the domestic and international markets.

Needs

Śnieżka's long-term development strategy involves achieving a leading position on the paint and varnish market in Central and Eastern Europe. Strengthening the position achieved on the main markets, expansion into new markets and appearance and development in other segments requires many innovative solutions. In order to fully satisfy the needs of the growing market, Śnieżka has been investing



Figure 1. The Kawasaki robot during work

in the development of its production and logistics base almost since its very beginnings. These efforts are of various nature and include systematic expansion of warehouse space, increasing production capacity and replacement or modernisation of the machine park.

One such investment was the modernisation of a production line for white emulsion and masonry paint. The project included launching an efficient robotic workstation for palletising buckets with the capacity of 3, 5, 10 and 15 litres from two filling lines. In order to achieve the planned performance, two Kawasaki palletizing robots from ASTOR's portfolio were used.

Implementation

Śnieżka's wide range of products and high quality requirements resulted in equipping the robotised palletising station with a number of interesting and advanced solutions, including bucket positioning ensuring that the company logo is always visible. The use of a mechanical gripper ensures safe stacking of buckets on the pallet, protecting them from uncontrolled fall, which in turn prevents downtime associated with such falls and ensures tidiness at the station.

Easy operation of the station is provided thanks to an operator panel with the Wonderware InTouch software, allowing the selection



Figure 2. Operator panel for line operation.

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of the currently manufactured assortment and of the way in which buckets or dividers are arranged.

The robotic workstation from ASTOR was designed and built by Zakłady Mechaniczne Rufus from Dębica. Even before choosing the integrator, Rufus completed a series of tests and trials to demonstrate its high competence and skills, while also proving its ability to deliver the workstation according to the customer's expectations. ASTOR leased the Kawasaki robot to carry out the tests. So far, Zakłady Mechaniczne Rufus has been involved in building complete production lines, machines and equipment as well as manipulators, transporters and conveyors, often delivering prototype solutions on a global scale.

Benefits

Increasing the efficiency and reliability of the entire production line is only one of the effects of the modernisation. Ensuring high quality and repeatability of stacking products on pallets is yet another, measurable benefit. The main advantage of this system is also relieving the employees of manual stacking of buckets (a 15 l bucket weighs 22 kg), which improves working conditions. It is worth noting that the level of employment has not changed. People who used to stack buckets are performing other tasks that are less demanding for the human body.

Both the customer and the integrator have experienced the advantages of cooperating with ASTOR, which not only distributes automation and robotics systems but also provides a package of additional services. These include technical consultation, pre-implementation business consultation, professional technical support (including ASTOR Service Contract for the Kawasaki robots 24/7/365) and periodic reviews. ASTOR also has a robot and spare parts warehouse in Poland, which significantly shortens delivery time.

The use of a robotised station for palletising paint buckets enhances the prestige of Śnieżka and is another step towards modernity.