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National Instrument Welcomes Terry Holinsky as New President and Chief Operating Officer

National Instrument Company, Inc. (NIC) is pleased to announce that Terry Holinsky has been appointed as President and Chief Operating Officer. Terry succeeds Robert Rosen as President and becomes the third individual in the fifty-year history of NIC to be entrusted with the duties of that position.

“My role is to actively support Terry, and to focus my energies on strategic planning, business planning, and special projects in an effort to help the company remain at the forefront of customer service and product innovation” said Robert, who will retain the duties of Chief Executive Officer. Founder, and first company president, Sidney Rosen will continue in his role as Chairman of the Board.

Terry grew up in Baltimore and graduated from the University of Baltimore with a B.S. in Accounting. Terry brings to NIC over thirty years of management and corporate development skills, including seven years as President of AMBEC, Inc. (a supplier of conveyor and process systems to the food, beverage, personal care, and consumer goods industries).

National Instrument Welcomes Geoff Perez as New West Coast Sales Engineer

NIC is also pleased to announce the appointment of Geoff Perez as its Western Regional Sales Engineer.

Geoff brings a record of accomplishment with a variety of packaging machinery manufacturers and a B.A. degree from the California Polytechnic University to his new role as NIC's Western Regional Sales Manager. He has served as a sales or major accounts manager for organizations such as DT Industries, Great Lakes Corporation, and S.V. Dice Designers. Geoff is based in Southern California and is responsible for NIC sales in the states of Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

Contact information for Geoff is as follows:

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National Instrument's Holiday Schedule



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With the end-of-year holiday season upon us, please note that National Instrument Company will be closed on the following weekdays:

Thursday, December 25, 2003
(Christmas Day)

Friday, December 26, 2003

Thursday, January 1, 2004 (New Year's Day).

As always, should you require emergency assistance over the holidays, or at any other time outside of normal business hours, contact us at (800) 526-1301 extension 301.

On behalf of all of us at NIC, we wish you a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season.

Optimizing the Filling Accuracy of Your FILAMATIC® System: Suggested Solutions to the Most Common Causes of Inaccurate Fill Volumes

Optimizing the accuracy of a FILAMATIC® liquid filling system is often a simple matter of being aware of the most common causes of fill inaccuracies. This is because a significant percentage of situations involving inaccurate fills stem from a limited number of causes. This article identifies those common causes and suggests means for addressing them.

Inaccurate fills may result from product being improperly fed to the piston-style Filling Unit. Often, this is caused by an intake line filter, the infeed head pressure present in the product supply tank, or product pulsation created by a diaphragm infeed pump.

A clogged intake line filter leads to an inconsistent and/or insufficient supply of product to the Filling Unit that can only result in inaccurate fill volumes. NIC does not recommend the use of intake line filters in conjunction with its Filling Units. Any filtration should preferably take place upstream of the product supply tank/manifold.

Insufficient/inconsistent infeed head pressure in the supply tank can also result in inaccurate fill volumes. A product supply tank should be equipped with some form of pressure monitoring device/system. Pressure monitoring devices/systems can be as simple as a mechanical float valve designed to maintain a relatively constant level (or volume) of product in the supply tank (thereby keeping the hydrostatic pressure in the tank within reasonable limits), to a complex sensor-based system designed to maintain a constant product supply pressure in a closed tank (i.e. not open to the ambient atmosphere) by adjusting the pressure of the gas in the tank.

Inappropriate product pulsation in the infeed system, generated by a diaphragm-type supply or transfer pump, may result in inaccurate fill volumes. When this type of supply/transfer pump is utilized, a line suppresser to absorb, or dampen, the "pulses" may be sufficient to bring the filling accuracies within acceptable limits. However, if that does not work, a different type of pump, or the use of a pressurized tank in place of a pump, may be required. Keep in mind that if you choose to pressurize the product supply tank, the use of FSV-type, spool valve Filling Units, which are designed to accept products under pressure, may be required.

For the full text of this article, click [here](#).

Drawing for Amazon.com Gift Certificate

We are actively seeking additional subscribers for our free FOCUS on FILAMATIC® eNewsletter, and we are seeking your assistance.

When you provide us with information (name, telephone number) for friends/co-workers that you believe would benefit by receiving FOCUS on FILAMATIC®, you will, as a “thank you”, be entered in a drawing for a \$100.00 Amazon.com gift certificate. Your name will be entered once for each friend/co-worker that becomes a subscriber to our eNewsletter.

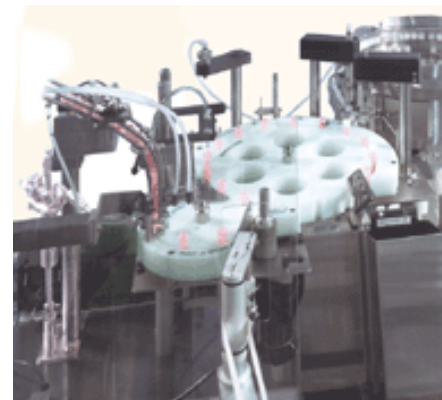
A NIC representative will briefly contact each friend/co-worker to verify his/her desire to receive FOCUS on FILAMATIC® . We will accept the submission of potential subscriber names until 5:00 PM EST on February 25, 2004.

The drawing for the gift certificate will be held on March 3, 2004 and the winner's name will be mentioned in the March edition of FOCUS on FILAMATIC®.

Click [here](#) to draft an e-mail to us. Please include your friend/coworker's name(s) and telephone number(s) in the body of the email.

National Instrument Company/FILAMATIC® Leads the Way with Monobloc Systems Designed for Microtube-Style Containers

FILAMATIC®'s line of Modular Compact Monobloc Systems is uniquely positioned to assist growing diagnostic and biotechnology companies that need to upgrade fill/finish operations for plastic, microtube-style containers from labor intensive laboratory/bench-top processes to automated production environments. The need for automated fill/finish systems of this type is the result of continuing growth in the development of expensive, genetically engineered materials such as drug reference/cell culture products and DNA/gene-based diagnostic products, reagents, and tests. Typical plastic microtube-style containers (1) are very small in size, (2) are shipped to end users in bulk in plastic bags, (3) are not free standing, and (4) require the application of screw caps. The associated liquid fill volumes typically range from 10 μ l. to 3 ml.



A typical FILAMATIC® microtube monobloc system is configured to sort/feed the containers using a vibratory or centrifugal feeder, label/code each container, fill using a servo-driven pump, sort/feed/apply a screw cap, and discharge each completed microtube directly into an accumulation bin or onto a horizontal accumulation track assembly. Any rejected microtubes are collected in a separate bin. A typical system also includes menu-driven programming and a touchscreen interface that is used to electronically adjust operating parameters. The touchscreen interface eliminates the need for manual adjustments during the set-up and changeover process.

Additionally, in reaction to the demand for pre-capped/pre-sterilized micro/cryogenic tubes, FILAMATIC® offers a monobloc that is the industry's first completely automated production system for handling those containers.

The system possesses a compact overall footprint, including the HEPA filtration module mounted on top of the interlocked safety enclosure, and incorporates a unique GMP design utilizing a single operating station. The multi-functional, single station configuration reduces the possibility of product contamination.

Additional images, video, and other information regarding FILAMATIC®'s line of Modular Compact Monobloc Systems for plastic, microtube-style containers may be accessed by [clicking here](#).

UPS Shipment Tracking Info

Shipment tracking information is now automatically supplied for all orders placed with NIC and shipped via United Parcel Service (UPS).

When our customer provides us with an e-mail address *and* UPS is the carrier of choice, an e-mail message containing shipment tracking information will be forwarded when his/her order leaves NIC's Baltimore, MD facility. As an order is entered into our computer system, NIC's customer service representative checks to see if the customer's e-mail address is present. If not, the appropriate address is obtained during the order entry process. Upon transfer of the order from NIC's shipping department to UPS, the automated message forwarding process is triggered.

The tracking information contained in the e-mail message may then be utilized on the [UPS website](#) to ascertain the status of the shipment.

FAQs

Q: What types of o-rings are typically kept in stock?

A: NIC typically maintains an on-hand inventory of Viton, Silicone, Ethylene propylene, and Buna-N o-rings.

Q: The model designation has worn off of our FILAMATIC® filling unit. What information is required to determine the filling unit's model designation?

A: In general, a FILAMATIC® filling unit can be identified by specifying (1) the bore diameter of the cylinder or the outside diameter of the piston head, (2) the "across the flats" dimension of the hexagonal material used in the valve assemblies or the diameter of the valve balls, (3) the outside diameter of the intake and discharge tubing barbs, and (4) whether or not the filling unit is equipped with a suck-back attachment.

Q: What is the process for identifying and ordering a replacement nozzle assembly?

A: The process begins with our forwarding to you a nozzle identification chart. The chart shows generic images of several nozzle types with a number of dimensions (e.g. tubing barb diameter, length/diameter of the nozzle tip) associated with each left blank. Once the indicated dimensions have been measured and recorded, and the completed chart has been returned to us, the nozzle assembly's part number and complete description can be determined.

Q: What components are typically included in a semi-automatic or bench top machine spare parts kit?

A: Separate mechanical and electrical spare parts kits are available for

FILAMATIC® semi-automatic/bench-top filling machines. A mechanical spare parts kit typically includes a volume control assembly and a pump post assembly (either upper or lower). An electrical spare parts kit typically includes an electronic controller, switches, and/or relays.

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Do you have any comments or suggestions regarding this eNewsletter or a specific feature of FOCUS on FILAMATIC? Please forward any comments or suggestions to [Mark Bennett](#), or call 1-800-526-1301 extension 219.

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