We are pleased to present to you our latest "Focus On FILAMATIC" eNewsletter - Volume 4, Number 1

FOCUS ON FILAMATIC®
Solutions FOR THE LIQUID PACKAGING INDUSTRY

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Happy New Year from Filamatic®!

National Instrument extends to all of our customers our best wishes for a healthy and prosperous 2006.

In This Issue:

Packaging Trends Changing for the Biotech Industry

Not so long ago, if a company was going to select containers for holding liquids in the Biotechnology Industry, all they had to think about was glass vials.

That was "back-in-the-day" when the science of plastic molding hadn't yet resolved the problems with formulations that leached toxins from plastic resins. It was also in a time when molders hadn't yet figured out how to mold with low levels of mold release agents and with non-toxic and non-reactive mold release chemicals.

Plastic Vials

Although glass is still the container of choice for the pharmaceutical folk that make injectable liquids, plastic containers have taken over as the vials of choice for Biotech companies that package sterile and non-sterile reagents.

Plastic vials present many benefits to the Biotech Industry.

Pack Expo In Las Vegas a Success

Once again, Filamatic® had a successful presence at the PMMI Pack Expo held in Las Vegas in September of 2005.

Every day, the booth was crowded with interested customers for the integrated equipment demonstration. National Instrument introduced its new Integration System for unscrambling, cleaning, filling and capping of containers. Servo motors were programmed to provide specific product settings to help manage the smooth flow of the fill/finish process. The operator inputs the operating parameters needed for a particular product size and the integrated equipment is ready for production.

Designed specifically for individual requirements, Filamatic's® integrated equipment is functionally arranged in a manner that is based on customer budget. Simple or more complex, comprehensive systems can be engineered to meet project requirements, while considering special monetary restrictions.

In-Case Filler

Also of interest at the booth was information concerning the Filamatic® large volume In-Case Filling & Capping machine. These machines fill and cap containers up to 300 oz. in capacity while the containers are in their final shipping cartons. Empty containers without caps are supplied to the liquid manufacturer in the cases or cartons that are used for final shipping and warehouse storage. The carton flaps are opened by the machine, the containers are filled, and the caps applied and

- Plastics allow for vials that resist breakage more than glass, reducing risks of lost product.
- Plastic vials are much safer to use than glass and lack sharp chards if a breakage occurs.
- Plastic vials will handle a much larger temperature range than glass, especially in temperatures of – 20 degrees Celsius or colder (dry ice temperatures at which Biotech reagents are stored).
- Plastic vials are molded with much better tolerances than glass, allowing for more uniform container dimensions and near flawless screw necks so that small screw caps will work without leaking.
- Plastic vial dimensional tolerances are better than glass so plastic containers operate in automated equipment more reliably without jamming.
- Plastic vials are lighter in weight than glass containers, reducing shipping and handling costs.
- Plastic vials have smaller overall dimensions than glass containers of the same capacity allowing for less warehousing and storage space.
- Plastic vials have low endotoxin levels and low levels of "extractables" and "leachables".

Given all of the benefits of plastic over glass, there is no wonder that the Biotech Industry is changing to plastics at an increasing rate.

Companies supplying plastic vials to the Biotechnology Industry are offering new vial sizes, new closure options, and new vial configurations each year, allowing a plastic container solution to almost every packaging problem.

Even with the benefits of plastic containers, there are still some situations where plastics are not used, particularly where high heat is required as part of the product filling or where terminal sterilization of the filled product is required using steam heat.

For startup operations filling plastic vials by manual processes, the Filamatic® line of bench top filling machines using piston pumps will allow accurate filling of sub- 1ml fills to + or – 0.5% accuracy at high filling rates.

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When batch sizes for small vials increase past reasonable levels for manual fills, National Instrument offers its line of Filamatic® Monobloc Filling and Packaging Machines as THE solution to automate the packaging of liquids into plastics.

Filamatic® Monoblocs can handle filling at high rates of fills as small as 0.1ml, can handle rubber stopper insertion, crimp seal application,

tightened while the bottles are still in the cartons. The savings in time and labor for end users is substantial. The machines eliminate post filling packaging steps so that carton packing equipment and the staff to operate the carton equipment is not required.

Many visiting the booth were excited to hear about the DFS filling machine product line. The DFS line of filling machines combines the user choice of any fill metering technology (Piston pumps, Rotary Lobe Pumps, Peristaltic Pumps, Flow meters, and Rotary Piston Pumps) with the ability to have the fluid pathway on a trolley that can be docked to the machine filler drive frame. This allows for the user to quickly remove a used fluid pathway from the machine in a few minutes and replace it with a fresh fluid pathway for the next batch. While a batch is being filled, previously used fluid pathways can be cleaned and prepared for subsequent batches. In this way down time in multiple batch operations is kept to a bare minimum. Great interest was expressed in the potential for labor and time savings.

Bench top fillers were another attraction. Even though Filamatic® Bench top fillers have been available in the industry for over 50 years, new interest was shown in the robust and reliable machines. The Filamatic® Bench top provides the ability to fill very accurately (+ or – 0.5% or better) in fills from 0.1ml up to 1100ml, at high cycle rates (over 30 cycles per minute) with liquids of various viscosities from water to creams.

What's new on our website – www.

fitment insertion, seal crimping, screw cap application, screw cap torque application, labeling, and vial inspection.

Filamatic® Monoblocs are competitively priced and will save tens of thousands of dollars on labor expenses compared to manual processes. One Filamatic® Monobloc can take a manual vial packaging process requiring as many as 6 to 10 operators and possibly reduce it to only one or two operators. At the same time, the overall output can be increased from only a few units per minute for manual processes to rate of 10 to 100 containers per minute for some plastic vials used in Filamatic Monobloc machines.

Monobloc

Contact your Filamatic® sales representative for more details on how Filamatic® can solve your plastic vial packaging filling and packaging problems. Or, contact us now at sales@filamatic.com .

Interphex 06 –Make Plans Now for the Show

Interphex show dates are March 21 – 23, 2006 at the Javits Center in New York City. Mark your calendar now to stop by our booth #A-1848 to see the demonstration of the Mini-Monobloc, multi-functioning packaging system. With its small footprint and flexible functionality, it remains *one of the most popular liquid filling systems for those in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and diagnostic industries.*

Employee Anniversaries at Filamatic®

National Instrument has served its customers for over 50 years. The heart of our service is made up of the employees that have many years of experience in the liquid filling machine and packaging machine industry.

Filamatic® recently honored many employees who have significant employment anniversaries. Please join with Filamatic® in honoring the service of each of these very experienced workers.

Mary Burchard, Sales and Marketing - 5 years of service

Carl Warren, Machinist Assembler - 10 years of service

filamatic.com

Site Map
The recent addition of the Site Map provides another means of navigation to the various information sources on our website. Available data includes graphics, schematics and video for multiple product lines and industries.

Testimonials
Read what others have to say about us. The Testimonial tab provides comments from just a few of our many customers and captures their original statements. Read our customer comments related to the service expected and received before, during and after the installation of their liquid filling system.

Mauricio Moreno, Service Technician – 15 years of service

Rick Jensen, Program Manager - 20 years of service

German Santander, Technical Service & Pump Dept – 25 years of service

Robert Rosen, CEO - 35 years of service

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